



Put Vision Safety to Work

No matter what you do, protecting your eyes is an important part of your job.

No matter where you work—in a factory, laboratory, construction site or office—workplace eye injuries can and do occur. Every day, more than 2,000 American workers suffer an eye injury that requires medical attention.¹ And nearly a million Americans have lost some of their sight due to an eye injury.² According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, these injuries account for more than \$300 million in lost time, medical expenses and worker compensation.³ The good news is that most workplace eye injuries are preventable. But different types of jobs call for different ways to protect your eyes. It's important to know what works best for your occupation.

It's estimated 90 percent of workplace injuries could be avoided with the proper use of safety eyewear.

Source: Prevent Blindness America, "Workplace Eye Safety," 2010.

Putting safety eyewear to work

Wearing proper safety eyewear is one of the easiest and most effective ways to reduce workplace eye injuries. An estimated 90 percent of workplace eye injuries could be avoided with the proper use of safety eyewear.⁴ In fact, nearly three out of five people who suffered eye injuries at work were wearing no protection at all.⁵ What should be worn depends on the work that's being done. For example, if you're on a construction site, you'll want to wear safety eyewear that protects your eyes from flying objects, dust, particles, tools and other hazards. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to make sure their workers have suitable eye protection. According to OSHA, selecting the most suitable eye protection for employees should take into consideration the following elements:⁶

- Ability to protect against specific workplace hazards
- Should fit properly and be reasonably comfortable to wear
- Should provide unrestricted vision and movement
- Should be durable and cleanable
- Should allow unrestricted functioning of any other required personal protective equipment (PPE)

All eye protection should be certified by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) as ANSI Z87.

Protecting against infection

Certain fields of work, like health care, laboratory, janitorial and animal care environments, face an increased risk of eye infection and exposure to toxic substances. If you work in these fields, it's important to consider special eye protection to reduce the risk of exposure to both minor and major illnesses and injuries via the eye.⁷

Annual eye exams: A smart move for any career

One of the most important steps you can take to protect your eyesight at work—and everywhere else—is to get an annual eye exam. Exams can help your doctor uncover any potential damage from prior eye injuries, which you may not even be aware of, as well as look for signs of serious eye conditions like glaucoma and cataracts.

Your vision is priceless. And it's likely you need it to get the job done. Wearing the correct protective eyewear and visiting your eye doctor at least once a year are proven ways to help keep your eyes safe and working for you for many years to come.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Eye Safety," 2010.
2. Prevent Blindness America, "Ten Ways to Prevent Eye Injuries at Work," 2010.
3. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, "Eye Protection in the Work Place," 2010.
4. Prevent Blindness America, "Workplace Eye Safety," 2010.
5. American Optometric Association, "Protecting Your Eyes at Work," 2010.
6. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, "Personal Protective Equipment," 2003.
7. American Optometric Association, "Protecting Your Eyes at Work," 2010.

Source: The Discovery Eye Foundation, Learning-related vision problems, July 2014.

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