

OSHA Training Toolbox Talk: Personal Protective Equipment: Foot Protection

[Reference 1910.136 / 1926.96]

The OSHA regulations require affected employees to use protective footwear when working in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects, objects piercing the sole, chemical hazards are present, and where employees are exposed to electrical hazards.



Here is an overview of some of the different types of job hazards that could require the use of protective footwear or devices:

- Heavy materials that are being cut with a saw, shear, or cutting torch can fall and strike an foot;
- Handling heavy tools or building materials that are easily dropped or knocked over by an employee, such as when working with or around bricks, blocks, steel components, and other similar building materials, can fall and strike your foot;
- Rolling objects and equipment, such as heavy pipes, steel billets, wheeled carts, and other round objects, can roll over or onto your foot;
- Sharp objects on walking surfaces, such as nails, sharp rebar, shards of broken glass, or sharp pieces of metal, can pierce the soles or side of your shoe or boot;
- Toxic chemicals that could saturate your footwear can be absorbed through your skin.
- Working around energized electrical lines and equipment exposing workers to electrical current can travel through footwear with conductive soles.

Our company has worked to identify the jobs and tasks that present potential hazards to your feet, and require the use of protective footwear and safety devices that is appropriate for the type (or types) of hazards present. These could include safety-toe shoes or boots, attachable toe-caps, metatarsal guards that are built into the shoe or are attachable, shoes or boots with leather sides and uppers and/or steel shanks to prevent piercing by sharp objects, chemical resistant boots, and shoes or boots with non-conductive soles. So only use protective footwear or protective devices provided or specifically approved by the company, or you could become injured. And if you feel we have overlooked an operation that presents a potential hazard to your feet, or if there is a new operation or you perform that has not been evaluated, please alert your supervisor or safety manager at once so the hazard can be addressed.

Any question or comment about when or what type of protective footwear to use on the job?