

Personal Protective Equipment

The best way to avoid injuries is to eliminate the hazards whenever possible, replace hazardous materials with less hazardous alternatives and use engineering controls.

In some cases, however, you cannot eliminate the hazard altogether and you must use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to guard against injuries. Before using any PPE, always refer to the manufacturer's operating manual to learn safety precautions and potential dangers of that piece of equipment.

Examples of PPE—and when to use them—include:

- eye protectors when operating powered tools, power tilling and breaking rocks or concrete by hand using a pick;
- sunglasses when working in direct sunlight;
- sunscreen with a high SPF factor, even when it's cloudy;
- face shields when using trimmers, brush cutters and chippers;
- hearing protectors when working in noisy environments or operating gas powered equipment;
- respirators when applying pesticides, painting or welding;
- safety footwear, such as steel toe boots, if lifting heavy objects or working around heavy equipment;
- hardhats when trimming trees, working with low overhead clearance or when play is underway; and
- insulated gloves when using vibrating equipment.

For certain tasks, you must use more than one type of PPE for safety. When handling certain fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, for instance, use nitrile gloves, eye protection, Tyvek coveralls and respirators. Always refer to the Material Safety Data Sheets when handling any of the above.

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