

# Footwear

Toolbox Talk #2



## The Importance of Proper Footwear

Foot injuries can be debilitating, resulting in time away from work or difficulty performing a job. In fact, 25% of all disability claims worldwide are due to a foot injury. No matter the task or setting, proper footwear is essential to keep your feet safe and unharmed.

## 8 Ways Your Shoes Can Protect You

1. **Protect from Falling and Flying Objects:** When carrying heavy materials or working in busy environments, protective shoes like steel toe boots can effectively prevent crushing injuries to the feet
2. **Protect from Punctures:** Stepping on sharp objects won't be an issue if you have shoes with heavy-duty soles and thick materials surrounding the foot.
3. **Protect from Cutting Hazards:** Machinery that is sharp or contains moving parts can pose cutting hazards. If working with these sort of machines, boots with cut-resistant material would be required.
4. **Protect from Electrical Hazards:** Electricity poses a variety of risks in the workplace. Workers could face potential electric shocks or accumulate static electricity. To reduce the chance of an electrical accident, non-conductive footwear made from leather, rubber or other materials that don't conduct electricity must be worn.
5. **Prevent Slips, Trips, and Falls:** Shoes with appropriate traction can help prevent falls on the same level in slippery environments. They can also prevent falls from ladders, which are all too common when people don't wear shoes with proper treads. Footwear that fits well and feels comfortable can also improve balance, which will help prevent slips, trips, and falls too.
6. **Prevent Fatigue:** For workers who stand all day, especially on hard surfaces like concrete, fatigue can be a real problem. Muscles in the feet as well as the legs, back, and other parts of the body grow tired, and the situation can be worsened when appropriate footwear isn't worn. Shoes that provide adequate cushioning and arch support can make people more comfortable, which alleviates strain on muscles. This means employees will grow fatigued less quickly. This also helps protect against chronic lower back pain and other ailments.
7. **Prevent Burns:** Footwear made from durable materials can prevent burns from chemical splashes and other dangerous substances that could injure the skin on the feet.
8. **Protect from Extreme Weather:** Cold weather can lead to frostbite/hypothermia. Keeping feet warm and comfortable is key in these conditions. Waterproof, insulated shoes are recommended.

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