

HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR WORK GLOVES

Carefully examine your PPE before every work shift to look for excessive wear.



SOIL OR SATURATION

Always follow the manufacturer's washing instructions when a glove is soiled or saturated.



LIGHT WEAR

A used glove won't look brand new, but light wear can still be safe. Stay on the lookout for further wear.



LIGHT SOIL

A little soil is acceptable as long as it doesn't compromise glove usability or make it hard to check for wear.



BRITTLENESS

If gloves feel brittle or stiff when you try them on, you may also hear a crinkling sound like paper, show your supervisor.



CHEMICAL SMELLS

A chemical spill or leak could also leave the glove with a potent smell. Strong chemical odors are cause for concern.



REDUCED FLEXIBILITY

Glove material may expand or shrink over time. Replace gloves to ensure they fit the exact size and shape of your hands.



THINNING

Beware if the coating has started to peel. Thinning in the shell of your glove can compromise cut, abrasion and puncture resistance, and compromise grip.



HOLES OR TEARS

Never use a glove that has visible holes, tears, snags in the stitching or pulls. This includes worn-out fingertips. A damaged glove is an unsafe glove.



EXCESSIVE SOIL

If a glove is deeply soiled or saturated with oils or chemicals, it may be too far gone to launder.



HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR WORK GLOVES TO PROTECT YOUR HANDS

Purpose: To increase awareness of when you should replace your work gloves due to normal and abnormal wear and tear to prevent injuries.

Instructions: Before you begin this toolbox talk, make sure to collect a variety of gloves used at your workplace to use as a visual aid and demonstrate normal and abnormal wear and tear. Read aloud the following sections of this toolbox talk and show the front side of the poster to colleagues.

Duration: 10-15 minutes

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF WORK GLOVES?

(1-2 MINUTES)

Work gloves are designed as the last line of defense to protect your hands from injury. According to the annual injury trends released by the National Safety Council,* hand injuries consistently remain one of the leading causes of disabling job-related injuries. These statistics have led OSHA to mandate that employers must provide appropriate hand protection, including work gloves, as part of an employee's standard toolkit. To ensure you are wearing equipment that will actually protect you from the hazards of the workplace, formal and informal personal protective equipment audits and job hazard analyses have been completed. Therefore, gloves brought from home may not provide enough or the right kind of protection needed.

*Source: <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/work/industry-incidence-rates/work-injuries-and-illnesses-by-part-of-body/>

NORMAL WEAR AND TEAR

(2-3 MINUTES)

Hold up a sample pair of gloves to demonstrate for participants how to spot normal wear and tear.

All hand protection has a limited work life. The length of time that your gloves will last depends on the job you do and how often they are used. It also depends on how well you treat your equipment. Sometimes signs of damage to gloves are too small to see. This is especially true for chemical-resistant gloves. Even small pinhole damage can lead to a chemical exposure. That exposure may cause skin irritation or chemical absorption. Sometimes damage to gloves goes beyond normal wear and tear. When this happens, it is important to let your supervisor know so a new personal protective equipment audit can take place.

Damage to cut-resistant gloves:

- Worn-out fingertips
- Coating that has begun to peel
- Snags in the stitching
- Holes

Damage to chemical-resistant gloves:

- Thinning of the gloves
- Brittleness
- Chemical smells
- Reduced flexibility

ABNORMAL WEAR AND TEAR

(2-3 MINUTES)

Hold up a sample pair of gloves to demonstrate for participants how to spot abnormal wear and tear.

- A good pair of cut-resistant gloves can last up to a week. If you require a new pair of cut-resistant gloves every day due to rips, cuts or tears, talk with your supervisor. Poor performing cut-resistant gloves indicate that the cut level of the gloves currently being used require an audit.
- On the other hand, nitrile or latex gloves should be replaced regularly as they are intended to be disposed of after each use. They should be removed and discarded immediately after chemical exposure or if the glove is punctured.
- Most gloves are geared toward protecting the palms of your hands. If you are experiencing glove wear or have suffered a work-related injury to the back of your hands, speak with your supervisor to experiment with a new type of hand protection that has both front and back coatings.
- Abnormal changes to gloves, such as shrinking, releasing a chemical smell or showing discoloration, are signs that you may not be wearing the right gloves for the job. An updated personal protective equipment audit can help determine a suitable replacement.

DISCUSSION

(5-7 MINUTES)

Ask the following questions to the entire group. Allow 3-5 minutes for discussion.

As part of your daily routine, we recommend that you do quick evaluations of the gloves you are wearing.

Your personal evaluation should include looking for signs of normal and abnormal wear and tear.

- Have you experienced any issues with your gloves?
- Do your gloves properly fit (snug without gaps at the ends of the fingers or around your wrists)?
- How often are you replacing your gloves?
- Do you feel that you are experiencing normal wear and tear?
- Do you feel that you are experiencing abnormal wear and tear?
- Is there another type of PPE that is not working as intended?

Allow time for discussion about hazards that gloves may not protect employees from and identify other PPE that needs to be evaluated and maintained.

SCAN THE QR CODE



TO LEARN MORE