Footwear – Assessment Checklist Fact Sheets



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ASSESS FOOTWEAR?

Occupational health and safety legislation makes it mandatory for employers to assess the workplace and eliminate hazards at the source, and if that is neither possible nor practical, to implement controls to reduce the risk. These controls may include the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

When assessing foot hazards, selecting the proper protective footwear adequate to the actual and potential hazards is very important.

From time to time, and as new footwear styles become available and new processes or tasks are introduced, it is important to review your workplace's hazard assessment and safety policies to ensure that workers continue to be protected from any possible hazards.

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DRESS CODE AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS?

Yes, there can be. At minimum, a hazard assessment should be completed to ensure that workers are protected from any actual or potential hazards. In addition, workplaces may choose to require certain styles of footwear, shoes, or clothing for various reasons. These choices may (or may not) be related to safety concerns.

WHAT IS AN EXAMPLE OF A FOOTWEAR SAFETY CHECKLIST?

This chart is meant to be a sample only – when conducting your hazard assessment, please modify the following checklist to meet your workplace's specific needs. In all cases, remember to ask yourself "Is this a hazard for my workplace?" and "Will the footwear selected provide protection from this hazard?"

Hazard	Is this an issue for the workplace/ specific job or task? (Yes / No)	Is the worker protected by the style of footwear under review? (Yes / No)
Is there a risk of punctures, cuts, lacerations, needlesticks, falling objects, or other crush injuries?		
• Is there a need for a closed toe (vs. open toe)?		
• Is there need for additional protection such as an internal steel toecap? (recommended for persons lifting or carrying objects or heavy loads)		
• Is there need for metatarsal protection (top side of the foot)?		
• Is there need for a protective sole (puncture resistance for the bottom of the foot)?		
• Is there need for specialized footwear (e.g., protection from chainsaws)?		
Slips, trips and falls (does the footwear contribute to this risk?)		
• Is the sole made of appropriate anti-slip material for the flooring or walking surfaces?		
• Is there a risk of the soles quickly becoming dirty or worn out which reduces the slip-resistance?		

• Is the shoe secure on the foot (e.g., are laces or a closed back required)?		
• Is the sole of the footwear appropriate for the temperature conditions?		
Is there a risk of ankle injury from strains and sprains? (i.e., is there uneven ground?)		
• Is a closed heel required?		
• Is a boot-style required for additional ankle support?		
Is there a risk of contact with liquids or hot surfaces?		
• Is a liquid present that is hazardous or require special precautions? (e.g., corrosive, solvent, hot?)		
• Is complete coverage or additional protection required?		
Is there risk of contact with bodily fluids or other biohazards?		
• Does the footwear provide complete coverage of the foot? (are there holes or mesh?)		
• Can the shoe be cleaned adequately?		
Is there a risk of electrical conduction or shock?		
• Is there need for electric shock resistance?		

• Is there need for static-dissipative footwear?		
• Is there need for footwear that is electrically conductive?		
Is the shoe comfortable to wear?		
• Does the employee stand or walk for most of their workday or shift?		
• Does the footwear need to be waterproof or water-resistant?		
• Is insulation required?		

If there is a risk for foot injury at your workplace, be sure you recommend all employees wear the appropriate footwear.

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