



FOOT PROTECTION

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In construction, we typically spend more than 10 hours a day on our feet. We walk on uneven surfaces, through mud, water, ice and snow, and expose our feet to all kinds of hazards. A work boot that doesn't fit properly or doesn't provide the protection you need can cause you long-term problems.

Foot protection means guarding your toes, ankles and feet from injury. Each foot has 26 bones for support and 38 joints for movement, along with blood vessels, ligaments, muscles and nerves. Protective footwear is designed to protect your feet from physical hazards such as falling objects, stepping on sharp objects, heat, cold, wet and slippery surfaces or exposure to corrosive chemicals.

Here are some tips for selecting the proper work boot:

- Select a work boot that will protect you against the hazards you'll be exposed to. Make sure the boot is puncture resistant and provides ankle support to protect against ankle sprains from slips and falls.
- If you'll be working around heavy objects that could possibly crush your foot, select boots with steel or non-metallic protective toe caps. Work boots can also protect your feet against weld spatter, electric shock, water, cold, etc.
- Make sure your boots meet the ANSI Z41 "American National Standard for Personal Protection-Protective Footwear (which should be noted on the boot tongue, sole or upper part of the boot). OSHA requires that work boots meet this standard.
- Make sure the work boot fits properly.
 - Work boots should feel comfortable from the first moment you wear them.
 - Measure both feet when being fitted. Often you will find your left and right foot aren't the same size, so select a size that fits the larger foot.
 - It's important to try the boots on in the afternoon after you've been walking for a while, because your feet swell as the day wears on.
 - When trying on boots, make sure you are wearing the same kind of socks you typically wear to work.
- When putting your boots on, lace them up fully and snugly for proper fit and support.

Don't shortchange your foot protection. Buy work boots that will provide your feet with the protection you need and will be comfortable to wear all day.

[Download the recording form here.](#)