

Army *Safety* Gram

Leading on the Edge for Safety Excellence

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Eye Injuries Occur in an Instant

An eye injury can happen in an instant, but the results can last for the rest of your life. Think what it would be like to be blinded in a workplace accident, just because you decided not to put on your eye protection. You would regret the decision for the rest of your life.

A seemingly minor burn or a cut can be disastrous when it involves your eyes. A piece of metal flying off a grinder might be barely noticed if it strikes another part of your body. But if it strikes your eye it could cause permanent vision impairment. A chemical splash on your skin might cause a painful burn but it may eventually heal. If that splash went into your eyes, you might never see again.

These injuries can be prevented, by working safely and wearing the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the eyes.

The eyes are subjected to many kinds of dangers at work. Here are just some of them:

- ♦ Small particles in the air
- ♦ Projectiles, from processes such as grinding and cutting
- ♦ Blows and impact
- ♦ Cuts
- ♦ Vapors
- ♦ Hot or molten material
- ♦ Splashes of chemical substances such as corrosives
- ♦ Certain light rays such as those from welding
- ♦ Equipment or even excessive sunlight.

Enlist your safety office to help choose the right kind of eye protection for your work. You might require safety eyeglasses with side shields, or protective goggles. You could need filtered lenses to keep out harmful rays. You might require a face shield to cover all of your face, or a hood to cover your entire head. You may have to wear a combination of these types of eye protection. For those that wear contact lenses, ensure the eye protection you are using is compatible with contact use. You may need to remove your contacts first and wear prescription eye protection. It all depends on what sort of work you will be doing and the kinds of hazards you will face.

It is also important to get the right fit. Your safety supervisor can help you out here as well. Correct fit will ensure the safety eye wear protects the way it should and it will encourage you to wear your eye protection when you should.

Today's safety eye wear is available in many styles and frame colors and looks as good as regular eye wear. But that's where the similarity ends. Safety glasses and street glasses are not interchangeable. Safety eye wear is made of special material designed to resist impact.

Don't forget about the importance of using safety eye wear off the job as well. Eye protection is required for many jobs at home, such as woodworking and using caustic cleaning products. Many kinds of sports also require eye protection.



Never lose sight of the importance of eye protection. Obtain the correct safety eye wear, and remember to wear it.