Protecting the Head

Objective: Use head protection to prevent injuries.

How to Use This Module

Hard hats help prevent head injuries on the job. For this module:

• Read the information below on when and where to wear a hard hat.
• Ask your supervisor to show you how to:
  ◆ Inspect a hard hat for safety.
  ◆ Fit a hard hat.
• Try on and adjust a hard hat to proper fit while your supervisor observes.
• Review the important points.
• Take the True/False quiz to check your learning.

Background

Hard hats protect the head from overhead objects and from falling or flying objects in situations like these:

• Working below other workers or machinery, such as bucket lifts.
• Working in or under trees with work going on overhead.
• Working around or under conveyor belts.
• Working around exposed energized conductors.

Wear hard hats made of slow-burning, water-resistant molded plastic. They protect the head in various ways.

• The hard outer shells resist blows and penetration from above.
• Shock-absorbing suspensions (headband and straps) act as an impact barrier between the hat and the head.
• Slow-burning materials protect against fires and electrical burns.
• Water-resistant materials provide insulation from electrical hazards.
Hard hats come in different classes with different levels of protection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Level of Protection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Resists impact and penetration. Provides limited resistance to electricity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Resists impact and penetration. Provides high resistance to electricity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Resists impact and penetration only. Provides no resistance to electricity. Usually made of aluminum. Do not wear around electricity.</td>
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**Wearing Hard Hats Safely**

- Wearing a hard hat helmet over a cap or parka hood defeats the suspensions. Instead, use a liner to keep the head warm.
- Chin straps are also available to keep the hat in place.
- Inspect the hard hat before use. Wear the hat if:
  - The headband is not stretched or worn.
  - The headband fits comfortably.
  - The shell is not dented, cracked, or visibly damaged.
- Check the hat for damage after use. If the hat is damaged, destroy it.
- Wash the shell frequently using hot soapy water only; rinse thoroughly.
- Store the hat carefully in a cool, dark, dry place.

**Review These Important Points**

- Know when to wear a hard hat.
- Choose the best hard hat for the job.
- Wear hard hats that are in good repair.
- Discard damaged hats.

**About These Modules**

The author team for the training modules in the landscape and horticultural tailgate training series includes Dee Jepsen, Program Director, Agricultural Safety and Health, Ohio State University Extension; Michael Wonacott, Research Specialist, Vocational Education; Peter Ling, Greenhouse Specialist; and Thomas Bean, Agricultural Safety Specialist. Modules were developed with funding from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant Number 46E3-HT09.

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Answer Key: 1 = F, 2 = F, 3 = F, 4 = T, 5 = T.
Protecting the Head

Name____________________________________

True or False?

1. Do not wear a hard hat when working below conveyor belts. T F
2. Helmets worn over hats still offer protection. T F
3. A class C hard hat should be used when working with electricity. T F
4. Hard hats should be inspected before each use. T F
5. Hard hats should be stored in cool, dry places. T F