

# CHOOSING AND USING WORK SHOES

## *Safety Shoes And Boots*

Who thinks about their feet? Well, each year at least 120,000 workers certainly do. That's because each of them suffered from an accidental foot injury while on the job. And what are most of them thinking about? Chances are, it's the realization that their accidents could have been prevented by using common safety sense and wearing the appropriate protective footwear. The following is a guide to the most common types of protective footwear and the types of hazards they protect against.

### **Steel-Reinforced Safety Shoes**

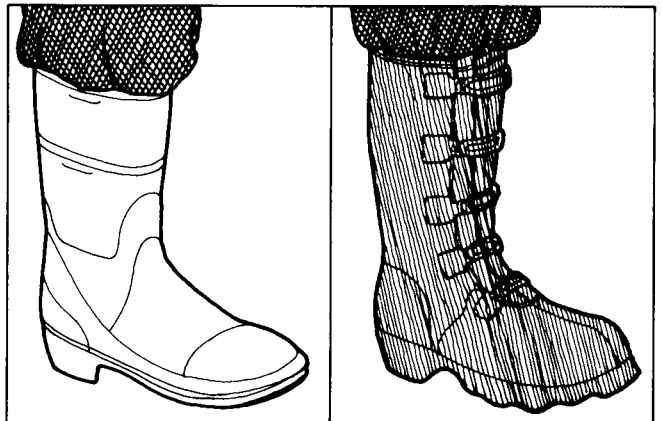
These shoes are designed to protect your feet from common machinery hazards such as falling or rolling objects, cuts, and punctures. The entire toe box and insole are reinforced with steel, and the instep is protected by steel, aluminum, or plastic materials. Safety shoes are also designed to insulate against temperature extremes and may be equipped with special soles to guard against slip, chemical, and/or electrical hazards. Other protective footwear (such as metatarsal and shin guards) can be used in conjunction with standard safety shoes.



**Steel-reinforced safety shoes protect your feet from falling or rolling objects, cuts, and puncture injuries.**


### **Safety Boots**

Safety boots come in many varieties and which you use will depend on the specific hazards you face. Boots offer more protection when splash or spark hazards (chemicals, molten materials) are present. When working with corrosives, caustics, cutting oils, and petroleum products, *neoprene* or *nitrile* boots are often required to prevent penetration. *Foundry* or *"Gaiter"* style boots (often used in welding operations) feature quick-release fasteners or elasticized insets to allow speedy removal should any hazardous substance get into the boot itself. When working with electricity, you may need to wear special *electrical hazard boots* which are designed with no conductive materials other than the steel toe (which is properly insulated).



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### **Using Protective Footwear**

There are many types and styles of protective footwear and it's important to realize that your job may require additional protection other than that listed here. Features such as slip-resistant soles, for example, will vary from one shoe to the next, depending upon the particular type of slip hazard you come in contact with. Whatever your specific requirements are, you can ensure that your footwear meets established safety standards by checking for the American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) label inside each shoe. 

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