

Hard Hats and Head Protection

About 8 minutes to deliver

When one is required, why the suspension is the part that saves you, and the ways a hard hat quietly stops working.

1926.100(a) requires head protection wherever there is a possible danger of head injury from impact, from falling or flying objects, or from electrical shock and burns. That is most of a construction site, most of the time.

THE SUSPENSION DOES THE WORK

The shell spreads the hit. The webbing suspension inside is what absorbs it, by letting the shell move about an inch before anything reaches your skull. Everything else follows from that.

- Never wear it backwards unless the manufacturer says the suspension can be reversed. Many can — check the label rather than assume.
- Nothing between the suspension and your head. A knit cap, a hood or a ball cap under the shell takes away the crush space that stops the injury.
- Adjust it to fit. Loose and it comes off before the object arrives; tight and the suspension cannot travel.

CLASSES

- Type I protects against a blow to the top. Type II also protects against a side impact.
- Class E (electrical) is tested to 20,000 volts and is the one you want near energised work. Class G general is 2,200 volts. Class C conductive offers no electrical protection at all — some vented helmets are Class C, which is a bad surprise near a live panel.

HOW THEY STOP WORKING

- Any real impact retires it. The suspension has done its job once, and the shell may be cracked where you cannot see it.
- UV. A shell that has gone chalky, dull or faded, or that crazes and flakes when you flex it, is brittle. Sun kills hard hats slowly.
- Drilling holes, painting or putting solvent-based stickers on it can weaken the shell. Keep stickers clear of the crown and use ones the manufacturer allows.
- Do not store it on the rear parcel shelf of a truck. Heat and sunlight, all day, every day.

CHIN STRAPS

If you are working at height, in wind, or bending over an edge, a chin strap keeps the hat on your head — and keeps it from becoming a falling object for the crew below.

ASK THE CREW

- Is anyone wearing something under their hard hat right now?
- Has anyone's hat taken a hit and stayed in service?
- Do we need Class E on any of today's work?

29 CFR 1926.100 · 29 CFR 1910.135

This is a toolbox talk, not a course. It is general awareness on one topic — not site-specific, not a hazard assessment, and not a substitute for assessment of your workplace by a competent person, your written programs, or manufacturers' instructions. It does not by itself satisfy any OSHA training requirement. Regulations change; verify against the current standard. Whoever delivers it is responsible for deciding it is suitable and sufficient for the work. Where a talk covers first aid, resuscitation, or mental health it is general safety information, not medical advice, not a substitute for professional medical care or certified emergency-response training, and it confers no certification — in an emergency, call 911. Free to print and use, as is, with no warranty of any kind. Migna Safety Solutions · training.mignasafety.com

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Hard Hats and Head Protection

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Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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