Eye Protection



What’s wrong with this picture?



The worker using the circular saw has a perfectly serviceable set of goggles to protect his eyes from flying debris. Too bad he’s got them wrapped around his baseball cap instead of over his eyes.

The Moral: *Providing* workers the right eye protection isn’t enough to prevent eye injuries—and OSHA citations. You also have to ensure workers use the protective equipment properly.

3 Reasons to Pay Attention

1. The workplace is full of things that can hurt your eyes like:
    - Flying particles
    - Molten metal
    - Acids & liquid chemicals
    - Chemical gases
    - Harmful light & radiation
2. Using the right safety equipment protects your eyes from these dangers
3. Eye protection doesn't work unless you *use* it properly—which the worker in the photo above is clearly not doing

THE 5 KINDS OF EYE PROTECTION

The first thing you need to do is select the right kind of eye protection to use. The 5 most common types are:

1. Safety Spectacles have safety frames (usually metal or plastic) + impact-resistant lenses + sometimes side shields



- Protect the eyes from flying objects, sparks & dust

2. Goggles completely cover the eyes, eye sockets and facial area around them



- Protect the eyes from impact, dust & splashes
- May come with tinted lenses

3. Welding Shields are made of vulcanized fiber or fiberglass and fitted with filtered lenses that must be of a shade number necessary to protect against the particular hazard



- Protect eyes from burns caused by intense light
- Protect eyes & face from flying sparks & metal splatter & slag chips from welding/brazing/soldering/cutting operations

4. Laser Safety Goggles protect eyes against harmful light produced by lasers



5. Face Shields are transparent plastic sheets that extend from the eyebrows to below the chin and across the entire width of the head and may be polarized to protect against glare



- Protect against dust, splashes & sprays
- Don’t protect against impact—unless you wear safety spectacles or goggles underneath

8 EYE PROTECTION DO’S & DON’Ts

There are 8 things to do/not do to ensure proper use of eye protection:

DO clean your eye protection regularly following company/manufacturer instructions

DON’T use goggles if they’re scratched, don’t fit right or the elastic band is frayed

DO inspect your eye protection each time before you use it

DON’T use safety spectacles if they’re scratched, bent or don’t fit right

DO ensure that face & welding shields are disinfected periodically

DON’T use eye protection that’s not designed to protect you from the actual hazard you face in doing the job

DO make sure you actually *use* your eye protection—don’t be like that worker with his goggles on his baseball cap in the photo

DON’T use eye protection equipment if it doesn’t fit right, obstructs your movement or blocks your vision