CrewSigned

PPE Toolbox Talk

5-minute read-aloud · Last reviewed November 24, 2026

Personal protective equipment, or PPE, is the gear you wear to keep a hazard from reaching your body. Hard hats, safety glasses, gloves, hearing protection, high-visibility vests, safety boots and respirators are all PPE. Today I want to talk about why it matters and how to make sure yours actually works.

First, understand where PPE fits. It is the last line of defense. The best fix is to get rid of a hazard or put a barrier between people and it, like a guard on a saw or a rail on an edge. PPE is what protects you from whatever is left. That means if your PPE fails or is not on, nothing else is standing between you and the injury.

The company is responsible for looking at our work, figuring out the hazards, picking the right PPE and training you on it. In most cases the company pays for it. Your part is to wear it, wear it correctly, and speak up when it is damaged or does not fit.

Fit matters. Gloves that are too big get caught. Safety glasses that slide down your nose leave a gap. A hard hat with a loose suspension can come off when you bend over. Earplugs that are not inserted all the way do very little. If something does not fit, tell me and we will find a size or style that does.

Match the PPE to the task. A cotton glove is fine for carrying lumber but not for handling chemicals or sharp sheet metal. Regular glasses are not safety glasses; look for the Z87 mark. A dust mask is not a respirator, and a respirator only works if you have been fit tested and trained for it.

Inspect your gear before each shift. Look for cracks in a hard hat shell, scratched or pitted lenses, holes in gloves, and worn soles on boots. Clean it, store it out of direct sun and away from chemicals, and replace it when it is worn. Hard hats and suspensions do not last forever, so check the date and the condition.

Finally, set the example. New workers watch what the experienced people do. If you wear your PPE every time, they will too.

Discussion questions

1. What PPE does today's task call for, and is any of yours worn out or missing?
2. Which hazard on this job could we remove so that we rely less on PPE?
3. Where do we keep spare PPE, and who do you tell when you need a replacement?

OSHA standard

29 CFR 1910.132, Personal protective equipment, general requirements
https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.132

SOURCES

Personal Protective Equipment (OSHA 3151): https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3151.pdf
OSHA Safety and Health Topics, Personal Protective Equipment: https://www.osha.gov/personal-protective-equipment

This talk does not replace training that an OSHA standard requires. Scripts are based on OSHA and NIOSH publications and rewritten in plain language.

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

TOPIC
PPE Toolbox Talk

COMPANY

JOB / SITE

DATE

TIME

PRESENTER

#	Printed name	Signature	Company / trade
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			

Skip the paper: run this talk and collect signatures on phones at crewsigned.com