

Hard hats

What you need to know as a busy builder

Want to avoid being dealt a knockout blow? Use your head and wear your hard hat. These are the essential health and safety tips you should follow, even if you don't directly employ the people working on your site.

It is important that you:

- Provide hard hats for your workers (and any visitors to your site).

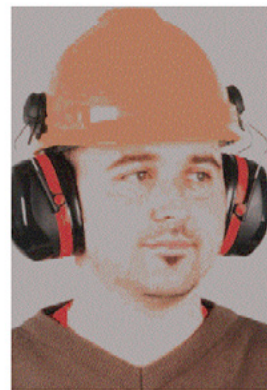
Hard hats should:

- be in good condition. If it's damaged, throw it away;
- fit the person wearing it and be worn properly;
- not stop you wearing hearing protectors as well (when needed);
- only be obtained from a reputable supplier – there are fake hard hats on the market.

- Make sure that hard hats are worn:

- by making it a site rule;
- always wearing your hard hat to set an example;
- checking others are wearing theirs.

Good example



Hard hat (with fitted ear protectors)



Hard hats
must be worn

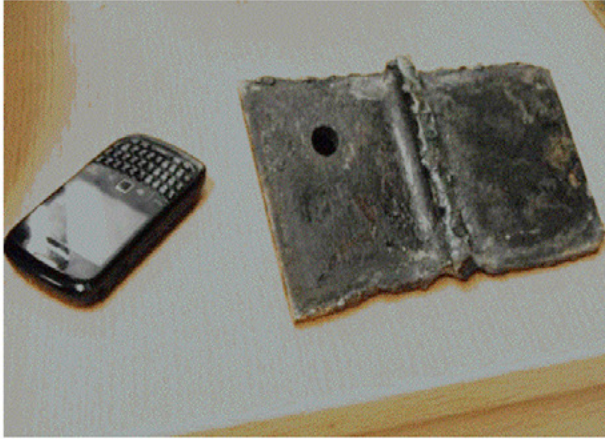
What can happen if health and safety is ignored?

A 61-year-old worker suffered severe brain and spinal injuries after a 14ft fixed box pillar he was removing fell on his head. The worker was not wearing a hard hat. He was in hospital for more than 6 months and is now permanently disabled and has difficulty speaking and moving. He is unable to work and requires full-time care due to the severity of his head injuries. The incident could very well have led to his death. The company was fined £14,000 and ordered to pay prosecution costs of £6808.

Fee for Intervention -

HSE now recovers the costs of time spent dealing with material breaches of health and safety law. This is known as Fee for Intervention (FFI). FFI generally applies when an inspector finds something wrong that they believe is serious enough for them to write to you about. A fee is charged for the time spent by the inspector in sorting it out. Following the simple guidance on this sheet may help you to avoid having to pay a fee.

Another worker used his head and wore his hard hat – without it he could be dead



A worker was injured when a piece of metal (see photograph above) fell from height during demolition work. The metal bounced off the worker's hard hat (see photograph right) and broke his shoulder/collar bone in several places. He could easily have been killed if he hadn't been wearing his hard hat.



Further information

Further information about managing risks to health and safety on construction sites, such as the risk of head injury, can be found in:

- The absolutely essential health and safety toolkit for the smaller construction contractor Leaflet INDG344(rev2) HSE Books 2008 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg344.htm
- FAQs – Personal protective equipment www.hse.gov.uk/construction/faq-ppe.htm
- Running a small construction site What you should know as a busy builder Construction Information Sheet CIS63 HSE Books 2010 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/site1.pdf
- Roof repair work: What you need to know as a busy builder Construction Information Sheet CIS60 HSE Books 2010 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/site3.pdf

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.

This leaflet is available at: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis70.pdf.

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The Working Well Together campaign aims to improve health and safety in the construction industry, particularly in small and micro businesses. For more information visit www.wwt.uk.com

