

Selecting the Right Shoes to Avoid Slips, Trips, and Falls

Choosing a safe, comfortable shoe is very important. When selecting your shoes for work, choose those that are designed specifically to keep you from slipping. Checking the shoe for an American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) label will show you what rating the shoe has for safety. If you see this label, the letter SR confirms that slip resistance has been tested.

Tips for Selecting Slip Resistant Shoes

1. Feel the weight of the shoes. Heavy shoes may cause extra tiredness when you have to walk for miles each day.
2. Check the back of the shoe at the heel. Added protection in this area can help grip your heel while when you wear the shoe and prevent your ankle from rolling or twisting. If you can pinch this part of the shoe together easily, then it does not have enough support for a work-shoe. Look for good cushioning in this area as well. 
3. The middle of the sole should be stable to support your arch. Hold the shoe at the toe and heel and twist it. If it easily twists where your arch should be, it would not give you good support as you move and shift your body weight. 
4. Now, try folding the shoe in half from toe to heel it should not be able to touch. When bending the shoe, look to see where the shoe bends. It should bend in the shoe where your foot bends, which is right behind your toes, when you walk. It should not bend at the arch. 
5. Inspect the bottom of the shoe. The sole of the shoe should have a soft rubbery feel and tread like on a car tire. Put your hand in the shoe and try to slide it on a smooth surface. Does it stick? Is it easy to slide? This can help you determine the slip resistance. 
6. You can also check the shoe for manufacturing defects. Place the shoe on the floor or a counter to see if the shoe seems set at an angle or wobbly. Press the shoe down at the heel, if the shoe shifts from side to side when pressed then the shoe alignment may be poor.
7. If all of these tests are good try the shoe on and check for comfort. Sixty percent of men and eighty percent of women incorrectly wear shoes that are half a size too small. Make sure that there is about 3/8" of shoe beyond your longest toe.
8. If you know that you have a high instep or flattened foot, let the store representative help you find a shoe that will help counteract these positions. These are called motion control shoes.

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