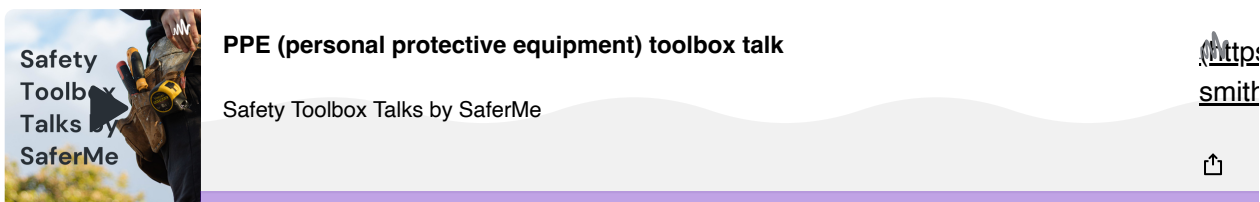


# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) toolbox talk

A simple, 5 minute outline of what to cover in a toolbox talk on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

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**PPE (personal protective equipment) toolbox talk**

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PPE is anything worn or used by a person to minimise the risks to a person's health and safety. It's designed to protect employees by reducing their exposure to chemical, biological and physical hazards. It is used by workers when other workplace exposure control measures do not completely manage the risk.

## Why run this toolbox:

- Reduce unnecessary harm and injuries from exposures and accidents that occur in the workplace.
- Duties of employers and employees regarding PPE required by legislation.
- The importance of selecting the correct PPE for workers and maintenance

## Who should provide PPE?

PPE can be provided to workers by:

- The employer (or A Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU))
- The worker themselves (if they genuinely and voluntarily choose to provide their own PPE.)

Other persons such as visitors or volunteers should be provided with appropriate PPE and instructed how to wear it correctly.

## Types of PPE

There are 4 main categories of PPE.

- **Hearing protection** – earmuffs or earplugs to protect from hazardous noise
- **Skin and body protection** – these protect from physical and chemical hazards
- **Face and Eye** – physical and chemical hazards e.g. UV light and acids, sparks, flying objects
- **Respiratory** – protection from physical, chemical, and biological hazards

## PPE Selection

For PPE to be most effective whilst the worker is wearing it, the following factors need to be considered:

- Identify the potential physical hazards and the potential exposure hazards
- Must be suitable for the nature of work
- PPE must be a suitable size, fit and comfortable to wear
- If you wear multiple garments of PPE, they must be compatible with other PPE
- Must meet industry standards e.g. AS/NZS 1715 – Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE).
- Any new risks associated with wearing PPE must be identified and managed

## Maintenance and fitting of PPE

- For respiratory protection that has a tight fitting seal, fit testing should be conducted to ensure correct fit and selection.
- Training has to be completed on how to put on and take off a respirator and how to maintain the respirator
- For hearing protection, ensure it is fitted correctly, have correct class and wearers know how to correctly wear hearing protection.
- Think about who is responsible for PPE maintenance
- How PPE will be stored in accordance with manufacturer's instructions
- Record the expiry date or the date the next inspection is due.

- Cleanliness of PPE – e.g. washing Hi-vis clothing, storing respirators away from contaminants
- Checking and changing filters in RPE
- Checking for damage or defects – repair or replace damaged PPE or RPE

### **Key takeaways:**

1. *PPE reduces risk but does not eliminate the risk*
2. *PPE should be correctly selected and fitted*
3. *Workers need training on how to wear PPE correctly*
4. *PPE needs to be maintained and stored properly.*

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