

Head Protection: Check the Match and Fit

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Why this matters

Head protection can look intact and still be wrong for the hazard or assembled with incompatible parts. Check the selected protection, condition and fit before entering the exposure area.

Objective: Verify suitable head protection and recognize reasons to remove it from use.

Key hazards or failure points

Falling or fixed objects; side impact; electrical contact; damaged shells or suspension; poor fit; incompatible accessories; hidden impact damage.

Practical controls

- First control falling objects and hazardous access through the task plan. Head protection is one part of the protection, not permission to stand under a load.
- Use the employer's hazard assessment to select the required impact protection and electrical class. Confirm the actual model and instructions.
- Use compatible suspension, straps and accessories. Follow instructions for adjustment, care, storage and replacement. Do not drill, alter or mix parts without approval.

Verify It in the Field

Read the identification and classification. Compare them with the assessed hazards; color, appearance or the word helmet does not establish suitability.

Inspect the shell, suspension or cushioning and attachments using the manufacturer's criteria. Check for damage, deterioration, missing parts and known impact history. Hold uncertain equipment out of use.

Adjust and check fit with the other PPE used for this task. Confirm accessories and any required retention arrangement are permitted and secure. Record the model, criterion and actual finding.

Stop and reassess

Do not enter the exposure area with damaged, impacted, altered or incorrectly selected protection. Stop for an unreadable identification or unresolved fit issue. Replace or resolve it through the responsible person before exposure.

Ask the crew

1. What hazard determines our required protection?
2. Which parts and accessories are approved together?
3. What history or defect requires replacement?

Use actual selection and replacement criteria; no universal service life.

Sources: OSHA 1926.100; OSHA Head Protection SHIB; product instructions.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/head-protection-selection-inspection