

Gloves are Not One Size Fits All

Our hands are used for virtually every task. For a farmer or gardener, serious injury to hands or fingers can negatively impact the ability to work and overall quality of life. Properly used, gloves can protect from cuts, abrasions, burns, punctures, bites, and chemicals. However, no one glove will protect from all hazards. Consider the tasks and work environment before selecting the right glove for the job.



Did you know?

- ***Injuries to the hand are the second most common type of workplace injury***
- ***Annually 1 million workers are treated in emergency rooms for hand injuries***
- ***70% of workers who experienced a hand injury were not wearing gloves***

Work Safely

- When possible, use tools instead of your hands to complete work tasks that could result in injury to your hands or fingers (e.g., using tools such as push sticks when using a table saw).
- Avoid using fixed open blade knives, instead use safety knives that limit the length of the blade exposed, or knives with safety features such as retractable blades when pressure to the switch or handle is released.
- Never put your hand in an area that you cannot see.
- Always wear the proper gloves for the task and understand the limitations of your gloves.
- Never work on an energized piece of equipment. Lock and tag out the equipment to ensure there will not be unintentional start-up while you are working.

Avoid Improper Glove Use






- Fabric gloves may absorb liquids, including chemicals. Wearing cotton gloves while handling pesticides may cause dermal exposure if the liquid soaks into the glove.
- Nitrile and latex gloves do not provide protection from fire or heat sources and may be flammable if exposed to high temperatures.
- Never wear any type of glove when using or working near machinery with moving parts, including belts, pulleys, or rotating shafts. Gloves, as well as rings or other loose-fitting clothing, can become entangled in moving parts, putting you at risk of serious injury or amputation of hand or arm.

Ensure Proper Fit

- Glove sizes will not fit every hand perfectly, but look for gloves that are comfortably snug.
- Gloves that are too tight can restrict movement or circulation. Gloves that are too large will be cumbersome and reduce dexterity.
- Try several brands and styles of gloves to find the best fit for you.

Selecting the Proper Glove - Which Glove is Right for the Job?

Unprotected hands are more susceptible to injury and exposure to harmful substances. Not every glove provides protection for all tasks, hazards or substances, but many injuries can be prevented by using the correct type of gloves. When selecting gloves, the specific elements of the task should be considered to perform the work safely.

| Glove Type | Level of Protection |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| General Use Gloves | |
| Fabric and coated fabric  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects against dirt/grit, splinters, blisters, and abrasions. Helps grip smooth or slippery objects. Use for general chores, raking, shoveling, weeding. Do not use when working with chemicals or sharp objects. |
| Leather  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects against rough surfaces, sparks, moderate heat, and abrasions. Use for general chores, construction, fence maintenance/installation. Do not use when working with sharp objects. |
| Gloves for Specific Hazards | |
| Anti-vibration  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects against effects of vibration while using power tools. May offer some crush protection. Use when operating a chain saw, jack hammer, sander/grinder or push mower. Check the label to ensure that gloves conform to American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards for vibration reduction. |
| Metal mesh and Kevlar knit  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects against cuts from sharp objects. Use for pruning, hand harvesting, and cutting with knives. No glove is completely cut proof, only cut resistant. Read the package label to understand the level of cut resistance and match to your task. |
| Rubber, neoprene, vinyl, nitrile, and latex  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects against chemical, fluid, and pathogen exposure. Read chemical label for instructions and glove-material guide. Use for pesticide and chemical handling, painting, livestock care and medication. Do not use when working near open flame or in high-heat conditions. |

Remember that all gloves need to be inspected each time they are used and replaced immediately if any damage or degradation is found. Decontamination or laundering must be effective in removing the contaminant and still maintaining the integrity of the gloves; cleaning certain types of gloves is not always practical or cost effective. Refer to the glove label for guidance.