THE ULTIMATE BUYING GUIDE FOR COATED GLOVES

HOW TO CHOOSE THE PROPER GLOVES FOR YOUR APPLICATION.

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According to an analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, upper extremities continue to be among the most frequently injured body parts in the workplace, with hands and fingers accounting for a significant share of nonfatal injuries involving cuts and lacerations.

Despite knowing they should wear hand protection, many people do not, because:

- Gloves are too hot and make their hands sweaty
- Loss of fine motor coordination (can't grab a nail from a pouch or thread a nut onto a bolt)
- Hard to use tools and machinery
- Forgot them in their vehicle, at home, in a toolbox, etc.
- They are uncomfortable and/or do not fit correctly
- No one else is wearing them, so they don't want to look out of place

Which issue is most common for your team?

The US Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard 1910.138(a) requires the use of "appropriate hand protection when employees' hands are exposed to hazards such as those from skin absorption of harmful substances, severe cuts or lacerations, severe abrasions, punctures, chemical burns, thermal burns, and harmful temperature extremes." It's not enough to just wear gloves—workers need to wear the right gloves for their specific jobs.

Factors to Consider When Choosing The Right Glove

The basic coated glove has 4 primary attributes that give the glove its particular performance and dictates the proper applications that it should be worn in: liner, coating, grip, and glove gauge (or the thickness) of the liner.

National Safety Council. (n.d.). Work injuries and illnesses by part of body. Injury Facts. https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/work/industry-incidence-rates/work-injuries-and-illnesses-by-part-of-body/

① LINER:

The liner is the base material the glove is made of and provides the strength of the glove. All coated gloves will have a tight fit, but some fabrics will stretch more than others and not conform to the hand over time and use. Others fit very tightly, like a second skin.

The most popular types of material include:

COTTON
Strong, cool, light, with the ability to stretch for a tight & comfortable fit

DYNEEMA
Used for cut protection and will conform to the hand

NYLON/POLYESTER
Stretches, fits snugly, and will conform to the hand

KEVLAR
Used for heat and cut protection; may feel less elastic and loosen over extended wear

② COATINGS:

Common coatings and the advantages they give you:

NITRILE
- Excellent dry grip
- Thicker coating offers superior resistance to snags, cuts, punctures, and abrasions
- When enhanced with a foam coating, it offers very good grip when handling chemicals, including oils, petrochemicals, fuels, and most acids

LATEX
- Offers excellent grip in dry and wet conditions, including water-based liquids such as animal fats, caustics, acids, and alcohols
- Provides limited resistance to oils and petroleum-based products

POLYURETHANE (PU)
- Offers good abrasion resistance Excellent dry grip and a fair grip in slightly wet conditions
- PU properties allow for a very thin coating, which results in excellent tactile sensitivity and dexterity

③ GRIP:

SMOOTH
- Available in a variety of polymers such as latex, nitrile, PVC, neoprene, and polyurethane
- Smooth coatings provide the wearer an excellent dry grip
- Liquids will not absorb into the coating, which will keep the hands dry

FOAM/MICRO FOAM
- Available in nitrile, latex, and PVC
- Designed to channel liquids away to allow better handling in wet and dirty conditions
- Provides excellent grip and tactile sensitivity in dry applications

CRINKLE
- Latex crinkle coatings are designed to channel away liquids to allow better handling in excessively wet and dirty conditions
- The thicker coating provides additional protection against cuts and punctures

SANDY
- Premium sandy finishes enhance abrasion- and cut-protection while providing an excellent grip in wet and rugged applications

④ GLOVE GAUGE:

Most gloves are offered in a range of 7- to 18-gauge, and the higher the gauge number, the thinner the glove material.

CUT PROTECTION:

Cut resistance is a key glove performance attribute and is defined by standardized testing methods. There are two primary cut protection standards: ANSI/ISEA 105, used in the United States, and the European EN 388 standard. ANSI/ISEA 105 classifies gloves into nine cut resistance levels (A1–A9), allowing protection to be matched appropriately to specific tasks while maintaining proper fit, comfort, and dexterity.

Under the ANSI standard, cut resistance is measured using the ASTM F2992 (TDM 100) test method, in which a straight blade is drawn across the glove material under increasing force until cut through occurs. The amount of force required, measured in grams, determines the glove's cut level. Higher gram values indicate greater resistance to cutting hazards.

Schirn, A. (2025, August 14). ANSI/ISEA 105 2024: Hand protection & cut level ratings.
ANSI Blog. https://blog.ansi.org/ansi/ansi-isea-105-2024-hand-protection-classification/

ANSI CUT RATING	TYPICAL CUT HAZARD LEVEL	CUT RESISTANCE (Grams of Force)	TYPICAL APPLICATIONS (EXAMPLES)
A1	Light cut hazards	200–499 grams	Material handling, light assembly, packaging, and general use
A2	Light cut hazards	500–999 grams	Material handling, light manufacturing and assembly, & packaging
A3	Light to moderate cut hazards	1,000–1,499 grams	Manufacturing, light glass handling, drywall work, & electrical and HVAC tasks
A4	Moderate cut hazards	1,500–2,199 grams	Automotive assembly, metal fabrication and handling (task dependent), & food preparation
A5	Moderate cut hazards	2,200–2,999 grams	Metal fabrication and handling, recycling, & pulp and paper processing
A6	Moderate to heavy cut hazards	3,000–3,999 grams	Heavy manufacturing, metal fabrication, & recycling operations
A7	Heavy cut hazards	4,000–4,999 grams	Heavy fabrication, glass manufacturing, stamping, & sharp metal handling
A8	Heavy cut hazards	5,000–5,999 grams	Scrap handling, heavy glass, & high-risk recycling and sorting
A9	Heavy cut hazards	6,000+ grams	Extreme cut hazards & high-force sharp-edge exposure

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT GLOVE?

Selecting the appropriate glove should begin with a **Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)** to identify the specific hazards present in each task. In many cases, this evaluation can be completed quickly through direct observation of work activities. OSHA provides publicly available guidance outlining how to conduct a job hazard analysis and identify appropriate personal protective equipment.

In addition to task hazards, the physical work environment should be evaluated.

Consider:

- Exposure to heat or moisture
- The need for fine motor control or tactile sensitivity
- Use of tools, machinery, or touchscreens
- Contact with liquids such as water, oils, fuels, chemicals, or other substances
- Frequency of glove removal and replacement during the task

These environmental factors directly affect glove comfort, performance, and wearability.

Employee feedback should also be incorporated into the glove selection process. Fit, comfort, grip, and dexterity all influence whether gloves are worn consistently. Hand protection is highly individual, and while no single glove will meet every preference, selecting gloves that balance protection with usability increases the likelihood of regular use.

The objective of proper glove selection is to choose hand protection that matches the task and is worn consistently. Gloves that fit well, allow necessary dexterity, and provide appropriate protection are more likely to remain in use throughout the workday. Consistent glove use supports safer work practices, helps reduce hand injuries, and contributes to improved productivity and overall workplace safety.

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