

# Your Hardhat Is a Safety Symbol - Safety Talk Handout

Your hardhat is a symbol of safety, showing you care about protecting yourself from injury.

The industrial hardhat was invented for miners following World War I. Head protection came into widespread use after it was required for construction workers on San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge in the early 1930s.

The hardhat has been improved over the years to today's models which can protect against impact on the side, top, front and rear. Hardhats are also designed with varying degrees of insulation against electric shock.

The hardhat combines two kinds of protection. The first is the tough outer shell which protects against impact and second is the suspension system which absorbs impact. The suspension system is adjustable to the wearer's head size.

The hardhat protects the most important and most fragile structure in the human body - the brain. Every movement made by the body is dependent on some area of the brain. Even a slight injury can have a crippling effect on the body or the mind.

**A hardhat won't do a thing for you unless you wear it. Here are some reminders about correct use and care of your hardhat:**

- The type of hardhat you need to wear is determined by regulations in your area for your industry. Follow the advice of your safety supervisor in choosing a hardhat.
- Inspect your hardhat each day. Check the shell for cracks, dents and holes. Also check the suspension for signs of wear and damage. Replace your hardhat if you find anything wrong.
- Always wear the peak forward to protect your face from falling objects. Hardhats may be worn backwards to accomplish specific tasks. It should be returned to the normal wearing position when this task is completed. Talk to your supervisor about when it is appropriate to wear the hardhat backwards.
- Do not store anything under your hardhat suspension. The space between the suspension harness and the shell must remain clear to absorb impact.
- Discard the hat if it has received a significant impact, even if you can't see any damage.
- Treat your hardhat gently. Don't drop it or throw it.
- Keep your hardhat out of direct sunlight and temperature extremes.

*Your hardhat has years of tradition and technological improvement behind it. Wear it with pride as a safe industrial worker.*