

Best Practices in Slip/Trip/Fall Prevention – Footwear

Evidence shows that slip-resistant shoes reduce slip and fall injuries and resulting work comp costs. Effectiveness of slip resistant shoes are based on design, condition due to wear, type and condition of floor/ground surface, and environmental factors. The following should be considered when determining safe footwear for employees in the workplace:

Slip-resistant Footwear Characteristics:

- **Anti-Slip** versus **Slip-Resistant**: anti-slip shoe (typical athletic shoe) is designed to improve traction, versus slip-resistant shoe is designed to improve friction between sole and surface while in the presence of possible contaminants
- Sole material: soft, rubber grips floor better; avoid hard plastic or leather
- Outsole tread patterns:
 - Random patterns perpendicular to travel are more slip-resistant
 - Patterns that create enclosed areas may cause hydroplaning
 - Large contact area is better, except if non-patterned
 - Small snips/incisions (siping) help move liquid to outer portions of outsole
 - Tread pattern shapes spaced at least 2 mm apart
 - Tread depth at least 2-3 mm from bottom of sole
- Heel design: round with raised tread pattern with leading edges in various directions

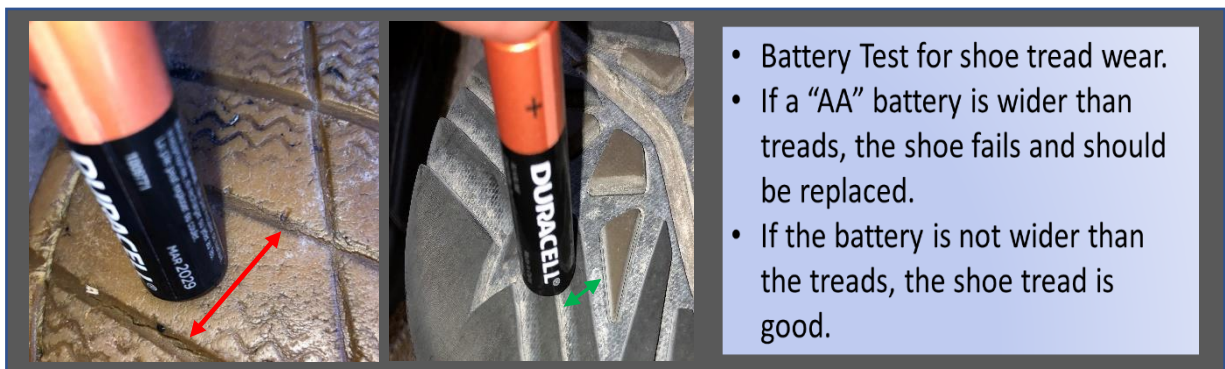


- Additional considerations
 - Fit – too big or loose can cause instability
 - Comfort – increases wearing compliance, normalizes gait and reduces fatigue
 - Try before buy
 - Properly measure foot for appropriate size
 - Try with normal sock/liner that will be worn

- Upper material (leather stretches and ventilates greater than synthetic)
 - Try on at end of day when feet are most swollen
- Labeling and advertising
 - Determine activities to be performed and typical conditions
 - scrutinize slip-resistance testing methods (coefficient of friction) if indicated (wet testing holds more water than dry testing)
- Other protective features
 - Toe caps (steel v synthetic)
 - Mid-sole (steel or composite) for protection against punctures
 - Electric shock-resistant
 - Static resistant
 - Conductivity for grounding
 - Metatarsal guards
 - Ankle support
 - Anti-fatigue
 - Thermal
 - Chemical resistant
 - Waterproof/resistant
 - Attachable traction wear for snow/ice

Employee Training

- Footwear policy should be included in employee handbook and reviewed at time of hire
- Daily inspection for wear and presence of contaminants
 - Shoe treads are like car tires – they lack performance and become unsafe with excessive wear
 - Keep clean of contaminants



- Should not be work to/from work if not working outside
- Provide lockers at workplace for storage
- Ideally rotate multiple pairs
- Supervisor should tracking age of footwear and inspect on routine basis

Footwear Programs

- Consult company legal
- Proper policy – consider sample from footwear company reviewed by legal
- Specify what is required/not allowed as clearly as possible
- Mandatory or Recommended
 - Employer-purchased: allows more control, tracking
 - Employee-purchased: discounts, payroll deduction
- Enforcement – disciplinary action for non-compliance with policy
- Corporate programs

Vendor	website	Industry Selector	Claim Reimbursement	ASTM Standards
Shoes for Crews	https://www.shoesforcrews.com/	X	Up to 5K of med	X
SRMAX	https://www.srmax.com/	X	Up to 5K of med	X
Zappos At Work	Zappos Corporate Shoe Program			
SlipGrips	https://www.slipgrips.com/Home	X		
SafeShoes	https://www.safeshoes.com/corporate			