

Hands-Down Protection

Hand injuries are second only to back injuries as the most common body part to be injured at work, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. How can you protect your hands?

- Wear your PPE, including the appropriate protective gloves for the type of work you are performing.
- Make sure your desk setup is ergonomically correct. Keep wrists at a 90-degree angle when typing.
- Don't grip, pinch or bear excessive weight on wrists for long periods of time.
- Take frequent breaks when doing repetitive tasks with your hands.
- Use a neutral grip with your wrist straight, switch hands regularly and alternate finger usage when using electronic devices.
- Make sure all machine guards are in place and avoid wearing jewelry when working with moving equipment.
- Don't place your hands between a load and a fixed object when handling or moving materials.



- Wash your hands immediately after using chemicals, even if you wore gloves.
- Use power tools with caution, always follow instructions and never disable the safety device.
- Take breaks when working with hand-held vibration tools, keep hands warm and grip the tool lightly while using it to not increase the vibration coupling and to prevent hand-arm vibration syndrome.

Scam-free Vacations

Ready to get away? Make sure you follow these FTC guidelines so you can truly relax on your next vacation:

Do your research. Ask friends and family for recommendations; check reviews and scam alerts; check cancellation and refund policies; beware of extra charges, fees and taxes; and bring copies of confirmation details.

Use a credit card. Paying with a credit card for travel spending offers you more protection.

Consider getting travel insurance. If you're taking an expensive trip, be sure to buy travel insurance, read the fine print to see what is covered and what isn't, and be sure the travel insurance company is licensed by checking with ustia.org.

Extend Your LADDER Knowledge

Ladder safety is basic — place the ladder on stable, even ground; inspect the ladder before use; keep three points of contact when ascending and descending the ladder; never carry tools or other objects in your hands while using a ladder and wear shoes that grip.

However, there are extra guidelines for extension ladders:

Read specific manufacturer's instructions regarding extension ladders — there are different guidelines for special situations.

Ensure that you don't place an extension ladder upside down.

Set the ladder at the proper angle. For example, when leaning a ladder against a wall, the bottom of the ladder should be one-quarter of the ladder's working/extended length away from the wall. Don't step or stand higher than the step label that marks the highest standing level.

Always extend the ladder three feet above the landing when accessing an elevated work surface.

Use extra care when getting off and on the ladder. Avoid tipping the ladder sideways or causing the base to slide off.

Never use an extension ladder horizontally like a platform.

Don't exceed the load rating of your ladder. Remember to include the weight of tools, materials and equipment.



Don't pay for prize vacations. Also, use caution when looking into timeshare or resort offers — watch for high-pressure sales and don't sign anything if people try to rush you.

Protect your identity. Take only the IDs, credit and debit cards you need. Make a copy of your insurance card to take with you. Lock away the rest of your documents at home. **Tip:** make copies of your documents to leave at home — in case of theft, you'll know what you lost.



SAFETY CORNER

S-T-O-P Vehicle Theft

More than three-quarters of a million vehicles were stolen in the United States in 2017 — and nearly half of those thefts were due to driver error, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Secure your vehicle by locking it.

Take your keys with you.

Obscure valuables or take them with you.

Park in well-lit areas.



Take the Sting Out of Outdoor Work

If you work outdoors, chances are you will encounter a stinging insect. While insect stings can hurt, sometimes they can also cause severe reactions. Be prepared and protect yourself with these tips:

Wear clean, light-colored, smooth clothing. Long sleeves and long pants are strongly suggested.

Tuck pants into socks or boots.

Avoid wearing cologne, perfume, scented lotions or scented deodorants.

Look over your work area before you start for hives and ant mounds.

Stay away from flowering plants, if possible.

Keep your work area clean. Clean up especially after lunch as insects are attracted to discarded food.

Carry an epinephrine auto-injector and wear a medical ID bracelet stating your allergy if you have severe allergic reactions to insect stings.

Take care when lifting things off the ground. You could be disturbing ground bees or ant mounds. **Caution:** Never disturb ant mounds (especially in a fire ant-infested geographic area).

Seek immediate medical attention if a sting causes severe chest pain, nausea, profuse sweating, breathlessness, serious swelling or slurred speech.



10 Tips for Safely Celebrating the Fourth

Fireworks Safety Month reminds us that setting off sparklers and other pyrotechnics requires caution. If you plan on lighting smaller fireworks, here are ten ways stay safe:

- 1 Check your state and local laws about fireworks and follow them.
- 2 Avoid purchasing fireworks that are wrapped in brown paper as they are usually for professional use only.
- 3 Never allow children to light fireworks. **Note:** Sparklers burn at 2,000°F — hot enough to melt some metals.
- 4 Light fireworks a safe distance away from flammables, children and pets.
- 5 Keep body parts away when lighting a fuse and back up immediately after lighting it. Only light one firework at a time.
- 6 Never re-light or pick up fireworks that haven't ignited.
- 7 Keep a bucket of water or garden hose close by in case of fire.
- 8 Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- 9 Don't carry fireworks in your pocket or shoot them off in a metal or glass container.
- 10 Douse spent fireworks with plenty of water before discarding them.

Bottom line:
Leave fireworks displays to the experts.



The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Sunscreen: The Real Cover-Up**, is at personalbest.com/extras/21V7tools.

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