

Information Sheet

Personal Protective Equipment

Eye and Face Protection

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is a pillar of the so-called STOP Principle. It must be implemented whenever a risk cannot be prevented through means of Substitution, Technical measures or Organizational measures (in this order).

Legal basis

The employer is obligated by law to provide the necessary protective equipment free of charge and the employees are obligated to use these (OR, UVG, ArG).

General information on eye and face protection

Depending on the type of work, eyes can be subjected to different dangers, e.g. hazardous substances, mechanical influences (e.g. splinters, chips, etc.), optical radiation (e.g. laser, UV radiation), biological materials, etc.

Depending on the type of hazard, suitable eye and face protection should be selected. Areas in which eye protection is required, as well as machines that may only be operated with safety goggles must be labeled with the corresponding mandatory sign.



Fig. 1: Mandatory sign
"Use eye protection"



Fig. 2: Mandatory sign
"Use face shield"

If safety goggles or protective face shields are defective (scratched, broken or cloudy), they must be replaced!

Safety goggles (labs and workshops) (Norm EN 166):

When do I need safety goggles?

Safety goggles are necessary in all areas of ETH where hazardous substances are handled. The same applies to work in which there is the risk of dust, chips or similar.

Important: Normal glasses are no substitute for safety goggles! Wearers of prescription glasses must either wear safety over-specs in addition to their regular glasses or use prescription safety goggles. Contact lenses combined with normal safety goggles are not acceptable in working with hazardous substances because in case of accident they are often difficult to remove and can also react with certain chemicals.

Where can I get safety goggles?

Normal safety goggles and safety over-specs are available at ETH, e.g. in the HCI Shop.

Prescription safety goggles may be obtained through SSHE (→ request form on [SSHE homepage](#)). The requirement is that you are employed at ETH for at least one year from the time of the request.

Face protection / Face shield (Norm EN 166):

When do I need face protection?

For work with higher risk, a face shield should be worn in addition to safety goggles. Higher risk exists, for example, when carrying out chemical reactions under high pressure, when filling large quantities of hazardous substances (also liquid nitrogen).

Where can I get a protective face shield?

Protective face shields are available at ETH, e.g. at the HCI Shop.

Laser safety goggles (Norm EN 207) and laser adjustment eye protectors (Norm EN 208):

When do I need laser safety goggles?

When working with class 3B or 4 lasers, all persons present in the room must wear laser safety goggles. Moreover, there are special eye protectors available for adjustment work on these lasers.

Important: Not all laser safety goggles are suitable for every type of laser! Use only laser safety goggles that are compatible with the respective laser (wavelength, intensity, mode of operation, etc.).

Where can I get laser safety goggles?

Laser safety goggles and adjustment glasses must be ordered by the research groups themselves. However, SSHE is happy to advise you and put you in touch with manufacturers of such glasses. Moreover, we are happy to request a quote from a manufacturer for you (→ request form on [SSHE homepage](#)).

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