

# Regular eyeglasses *aren't* safety glasses

## Takeaways

- Regular glass frames and lenses can shatter and send shards into eyes.
- Unless ANSI rated, regular glasses are not meant to protect eyes from debris.
- Safety rated glasses will have an ANSI rating stamped on the bow of the frame. The ANSI Z87 rating stamp refers to protection against impact.
- If safety rated glasses are worn without side shields, they are not considered safety glasses.

Wearing prescription glasses into a hazardous work environment where safety glasses are required might seem safe. In reality, regular glasses don't protect a person's eyes as well as rated safety glasses.

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) develops safety specific requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE). To be stamped with an appropriate ANSI rating, safety glasses must pass many tests. ANSI Z87 is the rating for basic eye protection. The ANSI Z87+ rating means the glasses can withstand significant impact, like the blast of a pellet gun. For chemicals, dusts, and various lights, you may need different PPE, such as goggles, with a different ANSI rating.

Prescription glasses are made to correct vision, not for personal protection. Lenses provided with prescription glasses may shatter and the frames do not provide side impact protection. The good news? Safety glasses with ANSI ratings can be made with corrective lenses. They may look just like standard reading glasses, but the ANSI rating stamped on the bow of the frame means that both the frames and the lenses meet the safety standard.



## Take action (Complete one or more activities as a team)

- A. INVENTORY: What hazards require safety glasses in your workplace? Are these areas or tasks clearly marked that eye protection is required?
- B. FIELD TRIP: Where are new safety glasses kept? Can you get them without entering a hazardous area?
- C. DISCUSSION: What makes the use of eye protection a challenge (discomfort, fogging, accessibility, etc.)? How can these be addressed?

