

DEBUNKING MYTHS ABOUT CUT-RESISTANT GLOVES: WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW

Did you know that cut-resistant gloves aren't as cut-proof as many believe?

While they play a crucial role in protecting workers from cuts, abrasions, and punctures in industries involving sharp objects, **there are a number of misconceptions about these gloves** that employers might not fully understand.

From the idea that higher cut resistance always means better protection, to the belief that these gloves eliminate the need for other safety measures, it's important to separate fact from fiction. Let's clear up common myths. We will offer practical advice on effectively selecting and using cut-resistant gloves to keep your workforce safe.

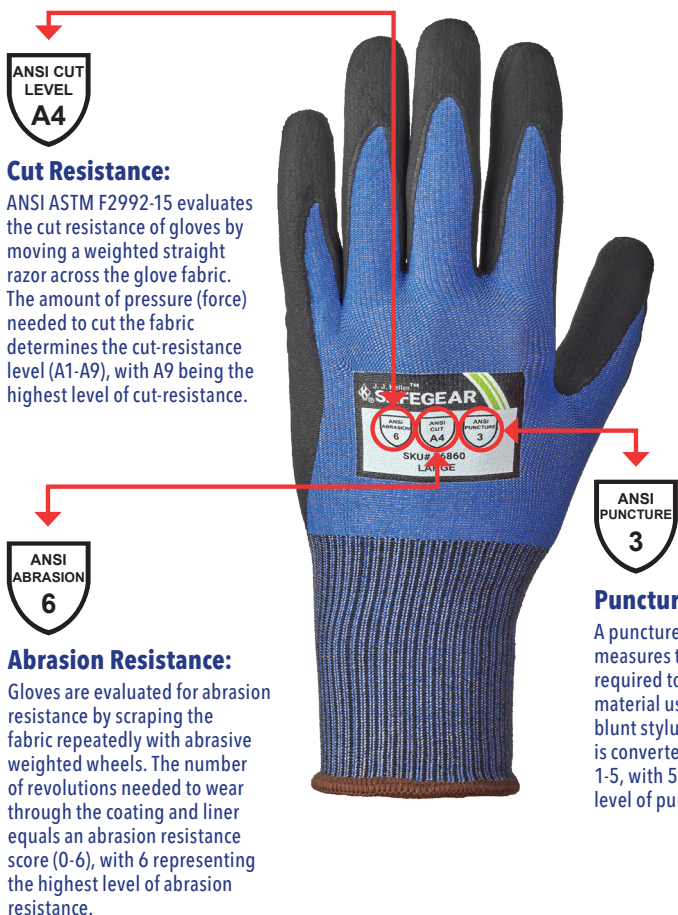


AREN'T MY CUT-RESISTANT GLOVES CUT-PROOF?

A common myth surrounding cut-resistant gloves is the belief that they are cut-proof.

This leads to the assumption that workers will be fully protected from cuts once they wear these gloves. **In reality, no glove is completely cut-proof.** Cut-resistant gloves are designed to reduce the risk of cuts significantly but cannot eliminate them.

The level of cut protection a glove offers depends on its material and its rating on various safety standards. For example, gloves rated at Level 5 offer more protection than lower-rated gloves, but sharp objects can still pierce the material under certain conditions. Employers should ensure that workers understand that these gloves reduce the likelihood of injury but do not guarantee absolute protection.



Cut Resistance:

ANSI ASTM F2992-15 evaluates the cut resistance of gloves by moving a weighted straight razor across the glove fabric. The amount of pressure (force) needed to cut the fabric determines the cut-resistance level (A1-A9), with A9 being the highest level of cut-resistance.

Abrasion Resistance:

Gloves are evaluated for abrasion resistance by scraping the fabric repeatedly with abrasive weighted wheels. The number of revolutions needed to wear through the coating and liner equals an abrasion resistance score (0-6), with 6 representing the highest level of abrasion resistance.

Puncture Resistance:

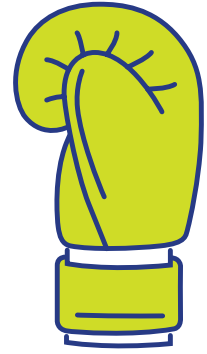
A puncture resistance test measures the amount of force required to pierce through a material using a standardized blunt stylus. The measured force is converted to a rating scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest level of puncture resistance.

IS A HIGHER CUT-LEVEL PROTECTION BETTER?

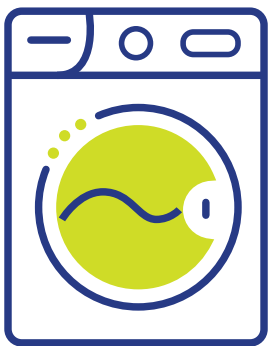
Many employers mistakenly assume that the higher the cut-resistance level, the better the glove.

While it's true that **gloves with higher cut-resistance ratings**, such as Level 5, **provide superior protection**, these gloves **tend to be thicker and less flexible, which can limit dexterity**. Workers who need precision or the ability to handle delicate materials may find high cut-resistant gloves too bulky for effective use.

Employers should select gloves based on the specific tasks workers will be performing. Higher resistance levels may be proper for jobs involving sharp objects where dexterity is less important. However, **gloves with moderate cut-resistance ratings may provide the ideal balance of protection and flexibility for tasks requiring intricate movement or fine motor skills.**



CUT LEVEL		ANSI CUT LEVEL A1	ANSI CUT LEVEL A2	ANSI CUT LEVEL A3	ANSI CUT LEVEL A4	ANSI CUT LEVEL A5	ANSI CUT LEVEL A6	ANSI CUT LEVEL A7	ANSI CUT LEVEL A8	ANSI CUT LEVEL A9
CUT FORCE (GRAMS)		200-499	500-999	1,000-1,499	1,500-2,199	2,200-2,999	3,000-3,999	4,000-4,999	5,000-5,999	6,000+
HAZARD		Nuisance/Minimal Cut Hazards	Low Cut Hazards		Moderate Cut Hazards	High Cut Hazards		Extreme Cut Hazards		
TASKS:	Material Handling	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Metal Fabrication				●	●	●	●	●	●
	Automotive					●	●	●	●	●
	HVAC					●	●	●	●	●
	Appliance Manufacturing					●	●	●	●	●
	Construction Work						●	●	●	●
	Stamping						●	●	●	●
	Knives/Scissors/Blades	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Glass			●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Cardboard	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Raw Materials					●	●	●	●	●



Follow manufacturer's care instructions

Inspect gloves regularly

Replace worn gloves

CAN I WASH CUT-RESISTANT GLOVES?

Employers might not realize that the effectiveness of cut-resistant gloves can diminish after repeated washing or exposure to harsh conditions.

Over time, gloves made from synthetic materials such as Kevlar or high-performance polyethylene can lose their cut resistance. This is why **gloves need regular inspection and replacement** to keep their protective qualities.

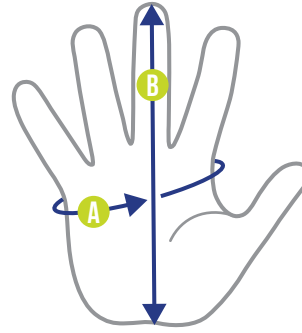
Following manufacturer's care instructions and establishing a proper glove maintenance protocol is essential. Workers should be educated on how to inspect gloves for wear and tear, and employers should create a schedule for replacing worn-out gloves to ensure that workers continue to receive adequate protection.

ONE SIZE FITS ALL, RIGHT?

A common misconception is that cut-resistant gloves are one standard size that fits all workers.

Gloves must be sized to fit each individual for maximum comfort and safety. **Ill-fitting gloves – either too tight or loose – can hinder performance and may even contribute to accidents.** Tight gloves can restrict movement, while loose gloves may cause workers to lose grip or create a safety hazard.

Employers should provide gloves in various sizes and encourage workers to select the size that fits them best. Additionally, employees should be trained to adjust gloves to ensure a secure and comfortable fit throughout the day.



A Measure the width by wrapping a measuring tape around the widest part of your dominant hand, just below the knuckles (excluding the thumb).

B Measure the length from the tip of your middle finger to the base of your hand. Compare the measurements to a glove sizing chart.



DO YOUR WORKERS THINK THAT CUT-RESISTANT GLOVES ARE UNCOMFORTABLE?

Some workers may believe cut-resistant gloves are uncomfortable, especially for extended periods.

While certain gloves may be bulky or stiff, advancements in glove technology have made it possible to design cut-resistant gloves that are both protective and comfortable. **Modern gloves are lightweight, breathable, and ergonomically designed to ensure a good fit.**

Employers should ensure that the gloves they provide are both protective and comfortable. By selecting gloves made from flexible, breathable materials and ensuring proper sizing, employers can improve worker comfort, encourage them to wear gloves consistently, and prevent injuries that result from discomfort.

AREN'T ALL CUT-RESISTANT GLOVES MADE EQUALLY?

Not all cut-resistant gloves are created equal. Gloves vary greatly in terms of the materials and coatings used, construction, and intended use.

For example, **gloves made from Bladestop™, spandex and HPPE/fiberglass combined with various coatings like sandy latex, TPR, or micro-foam nitrile, provide varying cut protection and flexibility.** Employers need to understand the unique properties of these materials and coatings and select the combination best suited to the specific risks and tasks involved in their workplace.

Understanding the strengths and limitations of different gloves will help employers choose the most appropriate protection for their workers.





WHAT INDUSTRIES CAN CUT-RESISTANT GLOVES BE USED IN?

Although cut-resistant gloves are often associated with industrial environments, they are not limited to manufacturing or construction industries.

Workers in various sectors, including food processing, healthcare, agriculture, and retail, also face the risk of cuts from knives, sharp tools, or glass.

Employers in these industries should recognize that their workers may also benefit from cut-resistant gloves. For example, workers in food processing are often exposed to sharp knives, while those in healthcare may deal with needles or surgical instruments. By extending cut-resistant gloves to a broader range of industries, employers can protect workers from hand injuries and improve workplace safety.

Job-Specific Glove Coatings Comparison

COMMON USE	NITRILE				LATEX			TPR	POLY
	Flat/Smooth	Micro Foam	Sandy	Nitrile Dots	Foam	Crinkle	Sandy	Molded	Flat
Automotive	●	●		●				●	●
Commercial Fishing/Fisheries		●	●	●		●	●		
Construction/Demolition	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Janitorial	●	●	●	●					●
Landscaping and Yard Work					●	●			●
Machining Operations			●				●	●	
Maintenance	●			●					●
Manufacturing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Masonry			●				●	●	
Material Handling	●	●	●		●		●		●
Mining								●	
Oil and Gas Industry		●	●				●	●	
Offshoring		●	●				●	●	
Parts Handling	●				●	●			●
Plumbing		●	●				●	●	●
Refrigerated Areas	●				●		●		
Transport		●	●	●		●	●	●	
Utilities		●						●	
Warehousing		●			●	●			

WILL CUT-RESISTANT GLOVES ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR OTHER SAFETY CONTROLS?

A dangerous misconception is that providing cut-resistant gloves eliminates the need for other safety protocols.

Gloves are just one part of a comprehensive workplace safety program. Other safety measures, such as proper training, machine guards, safety eyewear, and first-aid procedures are still necessary to protect workers from various hazards.

Employers should emphasize that gloves are only part of a larger safety strategy. Workers should receive regular training on how to use gloves properly and understand their limitations. Other safety measures should also be implemented to minimize risk and create a holistic safety culture in the workplace.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Cut-resistant gloves are vital for protecting workers from hand injuries, but it is essential to address the common misconceptions surrounding their use.

Employers should understand that **no glove is completely cut-proof**, that **higher resistance levels do not always equate to better protection**, and that **gloves require proper care and maintenance to remain effective**.

By selecting the right gloves for specific tasks, ensuring a proper fit, and fostering a safety culture, employers can ensure that their workers are well-protected and comfortable, minimizing the risk of injuries in the workplace. **Through informed decisions and proper implementation, employers can maximize the safety benefits of cut-resistant gloves and improve overall workplace well-being.**



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Ray Chishti joined J. J. Keller in 2017 as a Workplace Safety Editor. He has 15 years of EH&S experience in a variety of industries, including EPC projects, construction, railway, fossil fuel power plants, gas distribution and transmission, electrical transmission, and retail. His experience includes working knowledge in OSHA safety, environmental, HR, workers' compensation, and DOT topics. As a safety professional, his previous roles included auditing and leadership positions with new construction, existing facilities, and large EPC projects valued between one million and two billion dollars. His experience includes positions within law enforcement as a police officer and fraud specialist.

His degrees include a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Law Enforcement, a Master of Business Administration (MBA), and a Juris Doctor (JD) – with a certificate in Occupational Safety and Health. Ray also participated as an intern in his law school's Innocence Project – part of the Innocence Network, which has been credited with the release of over 350 wrongfully convicted prisoners, mainly through the use of DNA testing. His training in environmental, health, safety, and DOT topics includes certifications as a construction and general industry OSHA Outreach Instructor, in root cause analysis (Sologic), basic first aid, CPR, and AED use.

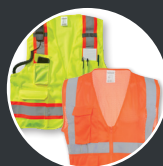
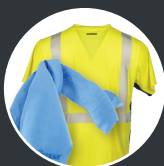


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