

## Sun protection in the workplace

Work health and safety legislation in each Australian state requires your employer or PCBU (person conducting a business undertaking) to provide a safe working environment.

This legislation also states that, as a worker, you must cooperate with your workplace's sun protection program, so be sure to follow sun safety requirements. If you work outdoors and your workplace does not offer any sun protection measures, raise the issue with your health and safety representative or manager.

If self-employed, it is in your best interest to look after yourself and any staff or volunteers and use sun protection at work.

If your job requires you to work outside, tax deductions are available for sun protection products. Talk to your tax advisor or contact the Australian Tax Office on 13 28 61 or visit their website at [ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au)

Your state or territory Cancer Council may be able to assist your workplace with a sun protection policy, resources and strategies to create a sun safe working environment.

**If your job requires you to work outside, tax deductions are available for sun protection products.**



## Looking out for skin cancer

Skin cancer can be successfully treated if found early. However, skin cancer can be fatal if left untreated.

It is important that you become familiar with what your skin looks like normally so changes will be noticed early as skin cancer can grow quickly. Check all of your skin regularly, not just sun-exposed areas. If you notice anything unusual including a spot that is itchy or bleeding, or a spot that has changed in shape, colour or size, visit your doctor as soon as possible.

For more information on what to look for visit [cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection](http://cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection)

### How to check your skin

- ✓ Undress completely and make sure you have good light.
- ✓ Check your whole body, including the soles of your feet, between your toes, your armpits, ears, eyelids, under your fingernails and scalp.
- ✓ Use a hand-held mirror, or have someone help you, to check areas you cannot see such as your back, the back of your neck and legs.
- ✓ Look for a new spot or a spot that has changed in size, shape or colour, or one that is different from the others around it.
- ✓ Look for a sore that does not heal.

**See your doctor as soon as possible if you notice anything unusual.**



**For support and information on cancer and cancer-related issues, call Cancer Council 13 11 20. This is a confidential service.**

### National Relay Service

Deaf or hearing impaired	13 3677
Speech impairment	1300 555 727

Cantonese and Mandarin	1300 300 935
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Greek	1300 301 449
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Italian	1300 301 431
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Arabic	1300 301 625
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For further information and details please visit our website [cancer.org.au](http://cancer.org.au)

# Work outdoors? Use UV protection every day



The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer.

**Every year in Australia, it's estimated that over 200 melanomas and 34,000 other skin cancers are caused by UV exposure in the workplace.**

### Are you at risk?

As an outdoor worker, you receive five to ten times more solar ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure than indoor workers, putting you at a high risk of developing skin cancer.

All skin types can be damaged by exposure to UV radiation. Damage is permanent and irreversible and continues to add up with each exposure. When working outdoors it is important to protect your skin and eyes.



### Think UV, not heat!

UV is an invisible source of radiation that cannot be seen or felt.

Unlike visible light which we see and infrared radiation which we feel as heat, UV can damage our skin without us realising. Even on cool or cloudy days, UV radiation can be strong enough to damage unprotected skin and eyes.

Sun protection is generally required when the UV Index reaches 3 and above. However, because UV damage accumulates over time, it is recommended that outdoor workers, or those working near highly reflective surfaces, use sun protection year-round, even when the UV Index is below 3.

UV levels vary according to your location in Australia. You can access daily sun protection times and UV levels for your location:



- in the weather section of the newspaper
- using the **free SunSmart app** for your smart phone or tablet
- downloading the **SunSmart widget** for websites - **[sunsmart.com.au/widget](http://sunsmart.com.au/widget)**
- online at:  
Bureau of Meteorology - **[bom.gov.au/uv](http://bom.gov.au/uv)**  
ARPANSA - **[arpansa.gov.au](http://arpansa.gov.au)**  
MyUV - **[myuv.com.au](http://myuv.com.au)**  
UV Daily - **[uvdaily.com.au](http://uvdaily.com.au)**

### How to protect your skin

Sun protection should be implemented in your workplace according to the hierarchy of control measures. Aim to reduce exposure to UV radiation where you can, before solely relying on personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect your skin.

When working outdoors Cancer Council recommends these five simple steps to protect against UV radiation damage.



#### Slip on sun-protective work clothing

- ✓ Cover as much skin as possible. Long pants and work shirts with a collar and long sleeves are best.
- ✓ Choose darker coloured, lightweight, closely woven material with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) 50+.
- ✓ Choose loose fitting clothing to keep cool in the heat.



#### Slop on SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen

- ✓ Sunscreen does not provide complete protection so never rely on sunscreen alone.
- ✓ Apply sunscreen generously to clean, dry skin 20 minutes before you go outdoors. Apply 1 teaspoon of sunscreen per limb and another teaspoon for the face, ears and neck.
- ✓ Set reminders to reapply every two hours or more often if sweating or working with water.
- ✓ Protect your lips with an SPF 30 or higher lip balm.
- ✓ Always check and follow the use by date on sunscreen.
- ✓ Sunscreen should be stored in a cool dry place (below 30 degrees and not in the car glovebox).



#### Slap on a shady hat

- ✓ A hat should shade your face, ears and neck. Wear a broad brimmed, bucket style or legionnaire hat.
- ✓ If wearing a hard hat or helmet, use a brim attachment or legionnaire style flap attachment.
- ✓ Baseball caps are not recommended as they do not protect the face, head, ears or neck – the most common areas for skin cancer to occur.



#### Seek Shade

- ✓ Work and take breaks in the shade. Where no shade exists, use temporary portable shade.
- ✓ Plan to work indoors or in the shade during the middle of the day when UV radiation levels are strongest.
- ✓ Plan to do outdoor work tasks early in the morning or later in the afternoon when UV radiation levels are lower.
- ✓ Share outdoor tasks and rotate staff so the same person is not always out in the sun.
- ✓ Choose shade that has extensive overhead and side cover and is positioned away from highly reflective surfaces.



#### Slide on close fitting, wraparound sunglasses

- ✓ Protect the eyes at all times when outdoors during daylight hours.
- ✓ When buying new sunglasses, check the swing tag to ensure they meet the Australian Standard (AS/ NZS 1067:2016 – category 2, 3 or 4). Category 4 is not safe for driving.
- ✓ Look for an eye protection factor (EPF) 10.
- ✓ Safety glasses that meet AS/NZS 1337:2012 still provide sun protection.

**Remember to use these five steps together for the best protection.**

**Be SunSmart with the free SunSmart app available at the App Store and Google Play**