

Respirators At-A-Glance

Selecting the Right Respirator for Your Job

Questions to consider: do you need entire face protection? Do you need protection with the most efficient prevention of leaks? How important is it to combat heat fatigue?

Product	Snapshot	Good To Know	Visual Key
Surgical Mask 	Loose-fitting disposable protection covering the nose and mouth ; fluid resistant and can prevent or slow down dispersant of large aerosol droplets.	Does not provide respiratory protection. Works with facial hair.	Least Protection    
Filtering Facepiece Respirator 	Tight-fitting disposable respirator covering the nose and mouth , reducing wearer's exposure to particulates including small particle aerosols; assigned protection factor of 10 . Three options of filtration from filtering 95% to 99.97% of particulates.	Breathing resistance is restrictive. Fit test is required. Not effective with facial hair.	   
Elastomeric Half Facepiece Respirator 	Tight-fitting reusable respirator covering nose and mouth ; assigned protection factor of 10 . Protects against gases, vapors or particulates with applicable filter or cartridge.	Breathing resistance is restrictive. Fit test required. Not effective with facial hair.	   
Elastomeric Full Facepiece Respirator 	Tight-fitting reusable respirator covering nose, mouth and eyes ; assigned protection factor of 50 . Protection against gases, vapors or particulates with applicable filter or cartridge.	Breathing resistance is restrictive. Fit test required. Not effective with facial hair.	   
Powered Air-Purifying Respirator 	Comfort-fitting reusable hood (with replaceable filter/cartridge) respiratory protection covering entire face including nose, mouth and eyes ; assigned protection factor of 25-1,000 .* Protection against gases, vapors or particulates with applicable filter or cartridge.	Supplies filtered air providing a cooling effect. No breathing resistance. No fit test; users can have facial hair.	   

4 Need-to-Know FAQs

Q: Why might I need a respirator?

A: In healthcare, respirators protect us from exposure to biological aerosols including viruses and bacteria.

Q: Are PAPR respirators cost effective over time?

A: Yes, PAPRs come with reusable hoods, filters or cartridges. Filters protect against particulate. Cartridges protect against gases and vapors.

Q: How long can I wear my respirator?

A: According to OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134, a respirator change schedule needs to be established based on the type of respirator, filter / cartridge and exposure limit to maintain a safe work environment.

Q: Does facial hair impact my respirator choice?

A: Facial hair that comes between your face and the respirator's seal or obstructs the exhalation valve can allow contaminated air to leak into the respirator.



*Assigned protection factor (APF) means the workplace level of respiratory protection that a respirator or class of respirators is expected to provide to employee when the employer implements a continuing, effective respiratory protection program. APFs are used specifically in selecting proper equipment for nonIDLH atmospheres.