

Selection Guide

Helping you choose the right Respiratory Protection Equipment (RPE)

The statistics around work-related respiratory disease can take your breath away. It's your responsibility to ensure that your workers are fully protected. Which means choosing RPE that's adequate and suitable for each individual wearer, risk, task and environment.

This guide is designed to help you make the right choices for the most common airborne workplace hazards. However, this selector tool should never be used in isolation. We recommend that you select your RPE in conjunction with the necessary COSSH or risk assessment.



Respiratory Protective Equipment Guidance

RPE Product	Filter Efficiency / Assigned Protection Factor (APF)	Dusts, Fibres & Fumes						Mists & Sprays		Micro-Organisms		Gases & Vapours	
		Construction dust	Wood dust	Silica dust	Metal dust	Welding fume	Flour dust	Water-based paint spray	Aerosols	Bacteria	Viruses		
FFP1 Disposable Mask Non-valved	80%	May be suitable on completion of risk assessment											
FFP1 Disposable Mask Valved	80%	May be suitable on completion of risk assessment											
FFP2 Disposable Mask Non-valved	95%		●				●	●	●	●	●	●	
FFP2 Disposable Mask Valved	95%		●				●	●	●	●	●	●	
FFP3 Disposable Mask Non-Valved	99%	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
FFP3 Disposable Mask Valved	99%	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
FFP3 Disposable Mask with Nuisance Protection	99%	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Reusable Half-Mask	APF 20	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Reusable Full-face Mask	APF 40	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR)	APF 40	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Note: the above APF's on reusable and powered respirators are halved when combined with a gas or combination filter.

protects from hazard

preferred protection from hazard

protects with P3 filter only

consider PPE compatibility for protection

Filter Guidance (for gases & vapours)

Filter markings explained for combination filters

For particulate filters, P2 & P3 indicate the level of filter protection, whereby the higher the number, the higher level of protection, but for gas filters, 1 & 2 refers to the duration the filter will last: 1 = standard and 2 = extended duration.

Depending on the area of application and the length of time workers are required to wear RPE will determine the most appropriate filter.

Did you know that a gas filter continues to absorb the hazardous substances from the air even if it is not in use? Correctly storing your RPE and filters in a sealed container is important to ensure the maximum usage from your filters.

Below are just some examples of combination filters available:

Combination Filters	Particulates	Organic Substances	In-organic Substances	Acid Gases	Ammonia & Amines	Low Boiling Organic Substances	Mercury
	P3	A	B	E	K	AX	Hg
A2P3	•	•					
A2AX		•				•	
ABE1P3	•	•	•	•			
AE1HgP3	•	•		•			•
A1BE2K1P3	•	•	•	•	•		
A1BE2K1HgP3	•	•	•	•	•		•



Face Fit Testing

To ensure that RPE is fitted correctly it's essential to carry out face fit testing. In particular, anyone wearing a tight-fitting facepiece should be clean shaven to ensure a tight seal. Workers who are not clean shaven, or can't shave for medical or religious reasons, must use powered respirators when RPE is required. For further details on face fit testing visit:

www.arcoservices.co.uk/services/respiratory-protection-services/face-fit-testing



RPE Maintenance

You have a legal requirement to carry out monthly COSHH inspections and annual servicing on your reusable and powered RPE. This will help you to ensure the equipment is well-maintained and will continue to offer the correct levels of protection. For more information on how we can support your RPE maintenance programme visit:

www.arcoservices.co.uk/services/respiratory-protection-services/rpe-maintenance