

Rubber Boots for Concrete Work

Problem:

The most commonly used boots among Laborers are simple rubber boots that have some of the following problems:

- have very flexible soles,
- don't often have a snug fit
- have little or no arch support
- are not snug around the calf of the leg
- allow moisture to build up from foot perspiration and blisters and general discomfort can result
- contribute to less stable footing because of the sloppy fit.

Additionally, walking/standing on rebar and hard surfaces to place and finish concrete digs into the bottom of the feet and can risk chronic contact stress.

Some Solution Ideas:

Use boots that have:

- a durable, yet flexible material in the soles
- soles that are stiff enough to protect against rebar "digging" into the bottoms of the feet, yet flexible enough for comfortable walking. (either steel or fiberglass shanks will provide added support)
- a snug fit around the calf of the leg to ensure additional comfort.
- insoles that have impact absorbing material in the heel and ball of the foot to add to overall comfort. Adding insoles that absorb perspiration or wearing socks with "wicking" capabilities will reduce moisture inside the boots.
- semi-rigid arch support which will help create a better fit and allow for a more stable stance, and
- taping the tops of boots to pant legs to help prevent "mud" from getting inside their boots.



Typical concrete work boots



These boots are BF Goodrich Xtra-Tough and have a snug fit

Rubber Boots



Even good boots can be too flexible and not offer good support



Semi-rigid soles can be inserted into your boots to stop rebar from “digging into” the bottoms of your feet



These boots have a steel shank and give more support

How Much Will it Cost?

Top of the line boots will cost \$50 - \$60 per pair. This should include a steel or fiberglass shank, nylon inners for easy removal, snug fit and moisture absorption.

The steel, semi-rigid sole pictured above is available from Red Head Brass Inc., P.O. Box 566, Shreve, Ohio 44676. The cost less than \$20.

How do Good Boots Affect Productivity?

Workers report feeling less tired at the end of the day. Reducing fatigue may increase productivity over the course of the day.

<p>Inexpensive boots with none of the above features cost between \$15 and \$20 per pair.</p>	
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