

Personal Protective Equipment

Steps for Donning and Doffing PPE

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Putting on and taking off protective gloves is a task many people do every single day, multiple times a day. When a habit becomes second nature like that, it's easy to just stick to the way you've always done it. But did you know that there's not only a correct way to put on and remove your *personal protective equipment* (PPE), but also correct terminology?

Disposable gloves are invaluable for ensuring safety in a wide range of industries and applications. From food hygiene to laboratory work, or even in hospitals, protective gloves are essential for preventing contamination. The official term for putting on and taking off disposable gloves is 'don' and 'doff'. And if not done correctly, the donning and doffing of disposable gloves can expose the wearer to harmful substances.

There's no doubt that safety is always the most important factor. But one downside of single-use disposable gloves is the waste and environmental impact. SHOWA's revolutionary *Eco Best Technology®* (EBT) enabled us to create the world's first biodegradable nitrile hand protection. Their market-leading selection of biodegradable disposable gloves, such as the *SHOWA 6110PF*, offer the same quality and protection while being better for the planet.

As well as knowing how to correctly don and doff, selecting the right glove for the task is key. For example, in low-light conditions, a fluorescent glove like the *SHOWA 707HVO* allows better visibility of tears and pinholes. Or when working with chemicals, oils, and abrasive materials, you might consider a glove with extended forearm protection and thicker material, such as the *SHOWA NSK24*.

In this guide, SHOWA will walk you through instructions for the proper donning and doffing of your disposable gloves and answer some of your frequently asked questions.

Donning a Disposable Glove

Knowing and following the steps for donning a disposable glove could be the difference between a safe practice and a health and safety risk. Maximum protection is crucial, and following these instructions will help ensure you're protected against injury and illness in the workplace.

Step 1 – Inspect the Glove

The first step for donning gloves is to remove one glove from the package. Ensuring there are no pinholes or tears, inspect the glove to make sure it's safe for use.

Any breaches in the glove, no matter how small, can expose you to harmful substances such as chemicals, viruses, and bacteria.

Step 2 – Align the Glove with your Hand

If your gloves are ambidextrous then they can be worn on either hand. If they are not ambidextrous, align the glove's fingers and thumb with the correct hand before donning.

Not wearing the glove on the appropriate hand may cause friction where excess material bunches up, potentially leading to tears and hazard exposure.

Step 3 – Insert Your Hand

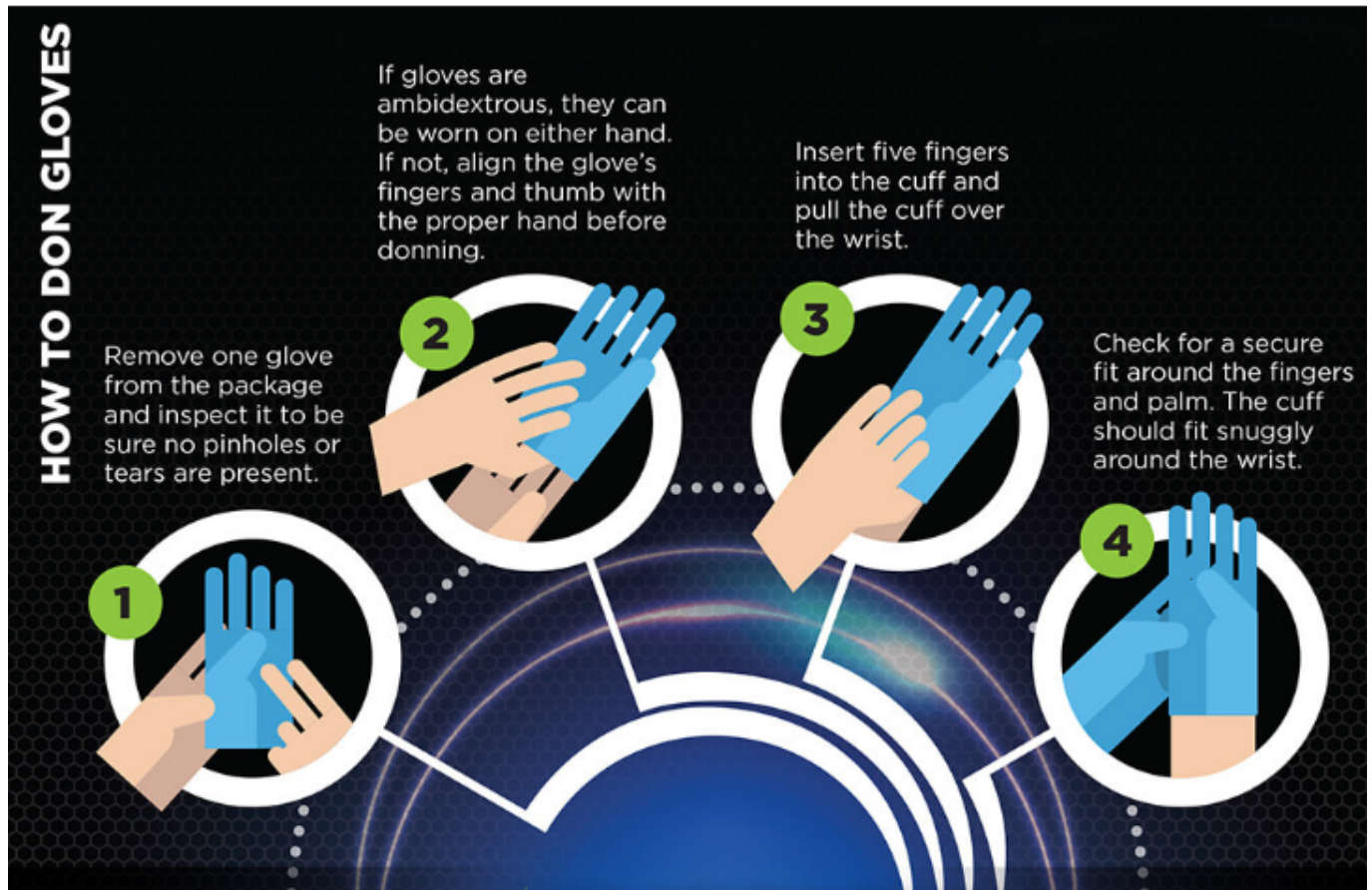
Insert all five fingers into the cuff of the glove, and pull the cuff over your wrist until the glove is properly in place.

Make sure the cuff is pulled up fully to avoid any substances or debris entering the glove.

Step 4 – Check the Fit

Check that the glove's fit is secure around the fingers and the palm. Also check the cuff, which should have a snug fit around your wrist.

If the fit feels too tight or too loose, consider changing size to avoid any tears or discomfort.



Doffing a Disposable Glove

It's easy when removing a glove to simply throw it away and forget about it. But, proper doffing is essential for protecting yourself against hazards, arguably even more so than when donning a glove.

When it's time to take the glove off, there's likely to be biological or chemical substances on the external material. Without doffing and disposing of the glove correctly, the risk of contamination is extremely high.

Step 1 – Grasp the Outside Edge of the Glove

Using a gloved hand, grasp the outside edge of your glove near your wrist with two fingers, being careful to not touch your skin.

You should never need to touch the outside of your disposable glove with a bare hand.

Step 2 – Peel and Hold the Glove

Using the outside edge you've gripped onto, peel the glove away from your hand being sure to turn it inside out as you do so. Grasp the removed glove in your hand that is still gloved.

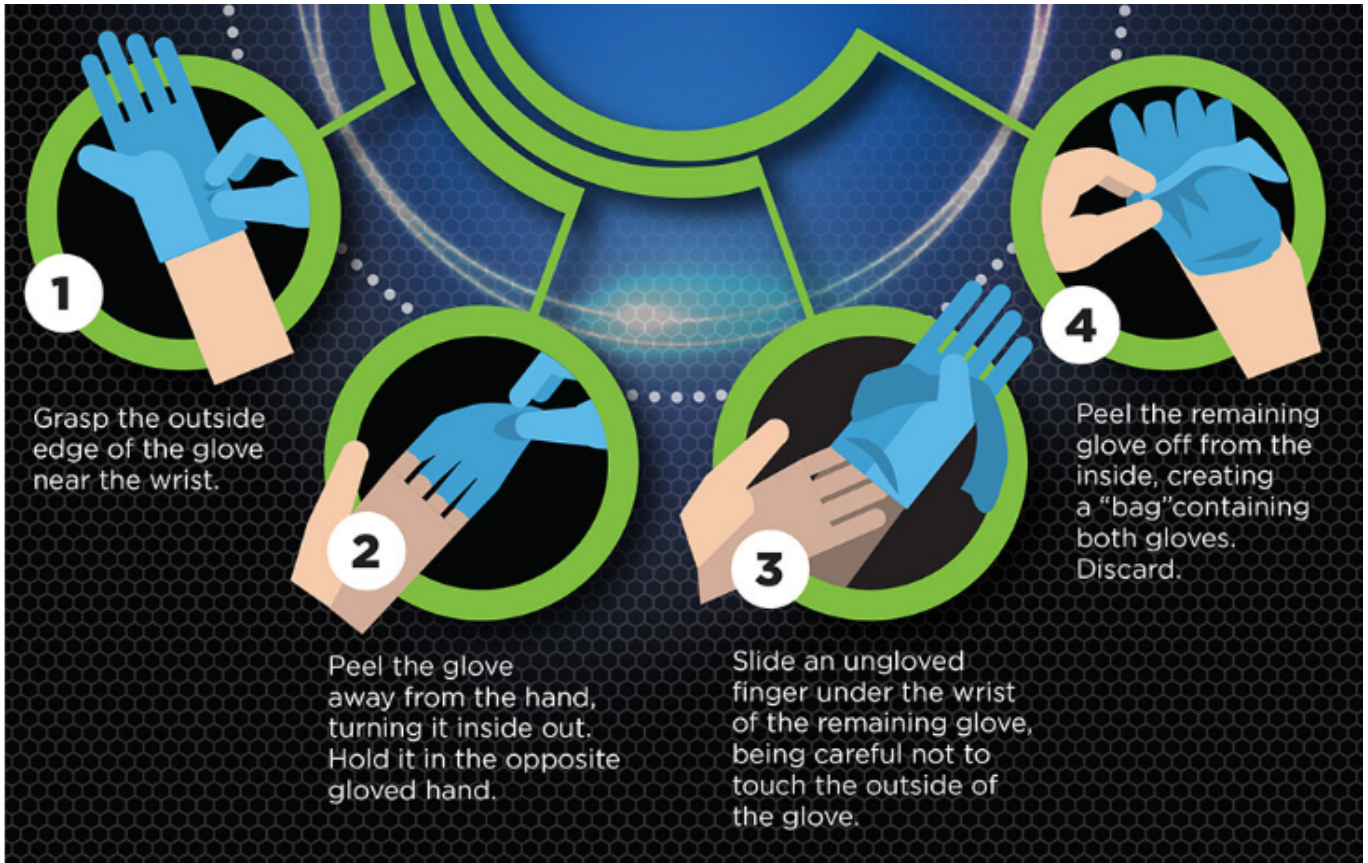
Step 3 – Slide Finger into Glove

While being careful to not touch the outside of the glove, slide your ungloved finger under the wrist of

the remaining glove.

Step 4 – Peel off Second Glove and Throw Away

Using your finger that's inside the glove, peel the remaining glove away, continuing to grasp the removed glove with your gloved hand. As the glove turns inside out, you create a 'bag' containing both gloves, with all hazards safely contained. Discard your 'glove bag' in the trash, and thoroughly wash your hands.



Donning and Doffing PPE FAQs

When should you wear a disposable glove?

According to the *World Health Organization*, PPE such as disposable gloves aims to prevent or minimize exposure to certain hazards. These include:

- Biological hazards
- Chemical hazards
- Radiological hazards
- Electrical hazards
- Mechanical hazards

Numerous industries use disposable gloves to protect their workforce from occupational hazards. The industry most associated with disposable gloves is probably healthcare, but they're also regularly used in the pharmaceutical, mining, construction, and chemical industries.

View SHOWA's range of *gloves by industry*.

What does donning and doffing mean?

Donning and doffing refers to the safe and proper removal of personal protective equipment such as gloves, hats, and visors. Incorrect donning and doffing exposes the wearer to hazards that can cause injury or illness.

Where did the term don and doff come from?

The terms don and doff can be traced back to their first usage in Anglo-Saxon times in England, where "do on" and "do off" were the phrasal verbs that meant "put on" and "take off". Over time, these phrases were shortened to form the words don and doff.

Donning and Doffing

The proper donning and doffing of disposable gloves is a simple process but makes all the difference to your workplace safety. Improper glove removal exposes you to all the hazards you were trying to avoid by wearing PPE. Ensuring you follow the correct instructions keeps you safe and reduces the risk of injury and illness.

As mentioned, choosing the right glove for the job is a crucial step for proper hand protection. If you're not sure how to make the right choice, take a look at SHOWA's list of *5 things to look for in a single-use biodegradable glove*.

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