

Sun Protective Hats

To protect the skin from ultraviolet (UV) radiation, Cancer Council ACT recommends hats that protect the face, back of the neck, eyes and ears.

Broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire-style hats provide the best protection from UV radiation, providing the brim is wide enough. Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not recommended as they leave the ears and the back of the neck exposed.

Always use hats with other sun protection measures: shade, clothing, sunglasses and sunscreen.

Which type of hat?

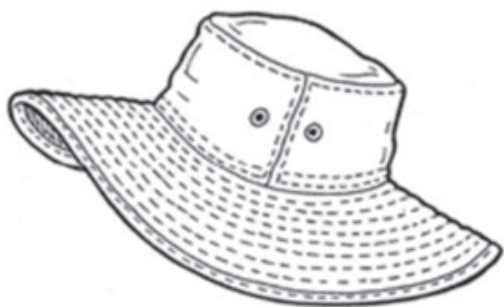
Wear a hat that provides good shade to the face, back of the neck, eyes and ears when in the sun.

Broad-brimmed and bucket hats provide the most UV radiation protection for the face and head.

Legionnaire hats also provide good UV radiation protection. Baseball caps do not protect the head and face and should not be worn as a form of sun protection¹.

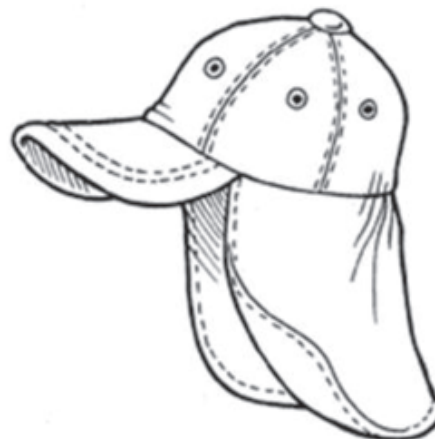
Bucket or “surfie” style hats should have a **deep crown** and sit low on the head. The angled brim should be **at least 6 cm** and provide the face, neck and ears with plenty of shade.

The brim width on bucket hats for pre-school aged children should be suitable for the size of their head and shade their face well (minimum of 5 cm as a guide).



Broad-brimmed hat

Brim width should be **at least 7.5 cm** wide (6cm for children). A broad-brimmed hat that provides good shade can greatly reduce UV radiation exposure to the face. The brim width for children under 10 years of age should be suitable for the size of their head and ensure that their face is well shaded.



Legionnaire hat

Legionnaire-style hats should have a flap that covers the neck. The side flap and front peak should meet to protect the side of the face.

Legionnaire-style hats are more suited to people who are active and doing work involving bending.



Bucket hat

What to consider when choosing a hat

When choosing a hat look at:

- the quality of sun protection it offers
- the type of fabric it is made from (close weave or fabric with UPF 50 is best)
- whether it is practical (i.e. easy to keep on and doesn't interfere with activities)
- fashion trends
- cost
- safety
- ventilation (especially if the hat is to be used during physical activity or warmer weather).

Special considerations for babies and toddlers

Many babies and toddlers do not like to wear hats. Persistence is needed to teach them that a hat is part of their outside routine.

For babies, choose a design such as a soft legionnaire hat that will crumple easily when the baby puts their head down.

Hats that can be adjusted at the crown or can be tied at the front help secure the hat on a child's head. If the hat is secured with a long strap and toggle, it may be best to place the strap at the back of the child's head so it doesn't become a choking hazard.

When trying a new hat design, keep in mind its size and comfort and make sure it allows the child to see and hear clearly.

Hat accessories

Sun protection accessories such as a broad-brim attachments or legionnaire covers are available for workers who are required to use a helmet or hard hat.

There are also attachments for cyclists to help keep them protected while wearing their helmet.

Further information and resources

For further information and advice contact Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 or Cancer Council ACT on 6257 9999.

UV protective clothing and accessories can be purchased at Cancer Council ACT's Fairbairn shop.

This information can be photocopied for distribution.

Reference

1 Gies, P, Javorniczky J, Roy C, Henderson S, Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency. Measurements of the UVR protection provided by hats used at school. *Photochem Photobiol* 2006;82:750-4.

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