



UniformNations



AUTOMOTIVE UNIFORMS

WHAT AUTOMOTIVE UNIFORMS
DOES A SUCCESSFUL AUTO
REPAIR SHOP OR DEALERSHIP NEED?

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AUTOMOTIVE UNIFORMS: ANSWERING YOUR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

BY RYAN MCHUGH

Throughout the automotive industry there are dozens of positions and types of work, and to suit the needs of their workers, car dealerships and auto body shops have a similarly wide range of equipment and uniforms they can use to help employees and the business as a whole work more productively.

Stretching from helping to close a car sale to protecting from dangerous work environments, the various [automotive uniforms](#) available serve a number of different functions and uses—all of which can be used to the benefit of automotive businesses.

As you consider your uniform choices, common questions frequently come up such as the different types of automotive uniforms or whether there are [laws regulating them](#)—and that's where this in-depth article can help you.

Here you can learn more about our uniforms and personal protective equipment for auto repair and

maintenance as well as find tips for devising your auto sales uniforms strategies to ensure your dress code will best suit your business's protective and revenue-driving needs.

Like any other industry, automotive repair shops and car dealerships also have dress codes and uniform requirements for their employees. Unlike other industries such as healthcare or food service, however, the automotive industry has specific needs and hazards that demand specific attention.

From front of house salespeople, consultants, and managers, to back-end auto mechanics and technicians working behind the scenes to repair, maintain, and finish vehicles, each type of position requires uniforms to extend beyond just something to wear, and instead help them to do their job more efficiently. The only question though, is what automotive uniforms does your individual business need?

For auto repair and maintenance shops, employees are frequently exposed to unique hazards ranging from burns from molten metal to lung damage from inhaling harmful paint fumes and dusts. As a result, [personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#) in these workplaces should be a crucial component to your decision-making when selecting mechanic uniforms, because without it you risk your employees being injured on the job.

Similarly, when it comes to sales and customer interaction on the front end of a dealership, the auto sales uniforms you provide for employees can also have opportunities to help them do their job more efficiently—in this case helping to sell cars. Most people are familiar with cliches like the image of a sleazy used-car salesman trying to sell them on a bad deal, meaning you must

make it your mission to send a more reassuring message to your potential customers.

Your auto body shop may specialize in one type of auto repair and maintenance, or instead your dealership may be located in a unique area or deal in specific car brands—all factors to include in your [automotive uniform services](#) selections—so how do you decide which uniforms will suit your specific business's needs?

Here we take a look at some of the most common questions employers in the automotive industry ask as they evaluate uniform services, providing insight into your selections for different positions and types of work as well as considerations to keep in mind on the functions and purposes of different uniforms.





WHAT UNIFORMS DO AUTO REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE SHOPS REQUIRE?

Although there are chances for injury in nearly any line of work, the automotive industry presents more hazards than most—ranging from flying sparks to harmful airborne fumes.

With injury risks seemingly around every corner, **personal protective equipment (PPE)** is one of the most critical aspects of your decisions when it comes to selecting uniforms for back of the house auto repair and maintenance shops if you plan to avoid the liabilities and impacts of your employees being hurt on the job.

While there is a wide range of types of PPE, determining which specific protective equipment you need for your auto mechanics and technicians should be based on evaluations of your shop's individual workplace hazards and risks for injury.

Among others, here are some of the main types of our PPE you'll want to include on your checklist as you evaluate your auto body shop's **mechanic uniforms**:

PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR

Auto body shop employees frequently find themselves doing work like cutting or soldering metal—work that's accompanied by hazards like flying particles, sparks, and molten metal.

When you shop for protective eyewear, be sure to match your PPE selections to the specific hazards your workers need protection from. Employees doing work like welding where there is high risk for injury to the entire face will need heavy-duty specialized face shields to prevent burns and to filter out UV and infrared (IR) light radiation.

Besides these however, virtually every power tool used by an auto mechanic has the potential to send flying particles and other hazards at their users, so while mechanics may not always need a full-face visor, they'll still need to have some form of eye protection.

Protective eyeglasses are largely the standard across the automotive industry—many of which are made to be scratch and fog-resistant—however whatever types of eye or face protection your mechanics and technicians need, with Uniform Nations we can help provide it.

RESPIRATORS

Among other risks like sanding and finishing, car paint can pose some of the greatest respiratory hazards to employees in auto body shops. While there are chances for chemical exposure in modern car paints also, a particular hazard employees need protection from stems from older cars originally made using lead-based paints.

Stripping and repainting a car with-lead based paint can lead to lead poisoning—making the proper use of respirators with your uniforms in an auto body and paint shop an essential consideration.

Even if the paint contains zero lead, sanding and finishing a car can expose employees to silica—a cause of lung cancer and just one more reason to include respirators with your PPE.

RUBBER-LINED CLOTHING

Besides airborne risks for injury, auto repair and maintenance employees also work with a range of electrical equipment and consequently need protection in case of electrical shock.

To meet this need auto mechanic uniforms services are often able to provide rubber-lined shirts, pants, or gloves

to help prevent static discharge leading to employee injury. To further complement our uniforms' protective purposes, providers can also offer auto mechanic and technician uniforms designed to be scratch-resistant.

Helping to ensure a damaged vehicle they're working on isn't further scratched or potentially scuffed while reaching across to put on the final touches, automotive uniforms services can provide protective benefits not only for employees, but for the cars your business works on as well.

PUNCTURE-RESISTANCE SHOES

Employees in an auto body shop spend most of their time on their feet, making the footwear you provide for them essential if you plan to keep your business running smoothly rather than limping along with a staff filled with injured workers.

With hazards including not just the heavy object and machinery which have the potential to roll or fall onto a mechanic's foot, there are also risks for punctures to the shoe or sole from sharp protruding objects.

As a result, it's important you work from the ground up when evaluating your mechanic uniforms services and are sure you give proper consideration to protecting the feet of your employees with suitable PPE.

PROTECTIVE GLOVES

Mechanics and technicians working on cars spend nearly all of their day working with their hands, and without them they risk their ability to go about their daily work and potentially their livelihood itself.

With this in mind, in nearly any type of work in an auto repair and maintenance shop employees need gloves to protect their hands. As with protective eye and face gear for flying hazards and thick work shoes for physical harm, the hands similarly need protection from injury risks like cuts, abrasions, burns, and electrical shock.

Finishing out your PPE selection checklist with protective gloves is a must, and with the help of Uniform Nations' automotive uniform services, we're able to help provide you not only with options for much-needed protective gloves, but also a range of other protective equipment for auto body shop employees.

WHAT UNIFORMS BEST SUIT A CAR DEALERSHIP'S FRONT OF HOUSE STAFF?

When it comes for an auto dealership's front of house uniforms for employees, factors like the impression your staff's uniforms leave on customers and geographic location should dictate your dress code.

While a car salesperson's uniform doesn't require some of the protective and practical uses as an auto mechanic's, all types of [uniforms can be used to your business's benefit](#).

In the case of those selling your product, cars are often a serious investment for their customers, meaning for employees they need to use every bit of help they can get—including from their uniforms—to establish a rapport between themselves and clients and get one step closer to closing a deal.

When shopping and selecting [auto sales uniforms](#) for your dealership, be sure to keep some of these considerations in mind to ensure the uniforms you eventually decide on will help your salespeople to send the right message to customers:

THE SUBCONSCIOUS IMPACT YOUR UNIFORMS MAKE

No matter the type of cars you're selling or the location of your dealership, the first step is taking a good long look in the mirror before asking yourself: "Based on my appearance, would someone trust me and my dealership with \$30,000?"

The way a business person dresses [creates subconscious influences on people](#)—in some cases positive, in others negative.

If you want to be successful, your staff needs to create a sense of authority and professionalism, as this in turn helps to give a sense of assurance and comfort to customers and, after all, a comfortable customer is a customer more likely to buy.

While looking the part of and being perceived as a professional can be simplified down to factors of professional business clothing—such as pressed shirts, ties, polished shoes, creased pants and a matching belt—you can still take it a step farther with Uniform Nations [auto uniforms services](#) using factors like material and colors.

Choosing one of our high-quality uniform materials can help to further catch the eye of a customer, while color psychology can enhance subconscious impacts with the images it creates for your staff. Black for example is often attributed with perceived senses of authority and formality—the key ingredients for a professional appearance.

TAILORING YOUR DEALERSHIP'S UNIFORMS TO SUIT LOCATIONS

Although by definition uniform means a sense of consistency, when it comes to different states and regions throughout the country, the public's typical dress codes certainly vary.

As you consider uniforms for a specific dealership or a range of locations scattered across different states, think about the individual business's location—how do the people in the area and surrounding community typically dress? More specifically, how do the customers who visit your dealership typically dress?

In terms of location, take somewhere like Southern Texas for example. Here it's not uncommon to see a pair of high-end cowboy boots strutting around town, and while a ten-gallon hat may take it a step too far, car dealerships in these region create relationships with customers in these communities by incorporating regional style into their dress code.

While in some areas a weekend-casual uniform consisting of jeans and boots may be an effective sales strategy, chances are good however that if in a state like

New York someone took a test drive with a salesperson in cowboy boots, a few eyebrows might get raised.

To close the gap between the salesperson and customer, also think about your dealership itself. For mainstream car brands where people shop for a new family car for instance, customers will usually dress more casually—making a business-casual dealership dress code most fitting.

Going the whole nine yards for uniforms with a high-end suit and tie might make a casual car shopper feel uncomfortable, underdressed, or as if they're out of their budget range—encouraging them to pursue other more appealing options.

On the other hand, formal uniforms at a high-end auto dealership tend to suit customers perfectly. The typical customer is going to be a well-dressed professional, and as such, your dealership will want your salespeople's uniforms appropriately match.

No matter how you cut it, selling a car is about creating a connection with your customer—it's critical you create a sense of comfortability about potentially making a major financial investment in your business, and at Uniform Nations we can help to find the different [auto sales uniforms](#) you need to help build customer rapport based on appearance.



ARE THERE APPLICABLE LAWS FOR AUTOMOTIVE UNIFORMS?

For automotive uniforms—particularly for auto body shops and businesses that need PPE for mechanics—safety should always be a top priority, as it not only sends the right message to employees about your concern for their wellbeing, but also because laws like the [Occupational Safety and Health Act \(OSHA\)](#) demand the proper use of PPE.

OSHA is designed to set and enforce standards for a safe and healthy work environment for employees in all industries, including automotive. According to the law, [businesses are required to provide for employees](#) and must match the PPE they select to appropriately respond to each threat your employees run into during their daily work.

Foregoing OSHA's standards or cutting the corners can lead to significant consequences, as noncompliance with OSHA uniform laws brings more than injury—they also bring steep fines. By not providing protective eye and face protection or respirators to protect the lungs as just a few examples, automotive businesses risk fines over

\$12,000 for a single violation, let alone the additional risk of a \$124,000 fine for willful or repeated violations.

Below you can find a list of the primary OSHA laws auto body shops and dealerships must be aware of, including:

- [General Requirements \(29 CFR 1910.132\)](#)
- [Eye and Face Protection \(29 CFR 1910.133\)](#)
- [Respiratory Protection \(29 CFR 1910.134\)](#)
- [Head Protection \(29 CFR 1910.135\)](#)
- [Foot Protection \(29 CFR 1910.136\)](#)
- [Electrical Protective Equipment \(29 CFR 1910.137\)](#)
- [Hand Protection \(29 CFR 1910.138\)](#)

Despite this list of laws however, be aware that these cover Federal OSHA regulations. In many cases we recommend seeking counsel to ensure the PPE and other automotive uniforms you're renting or purchasing are also compliant with your state, county, and city uniform safety requirements.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The automotive industry hosts a wide range of positions and types of work—making it critical you have a full understanding of your needs and necessary considerations.

While here we work to answer the general questions businesses in the automotive industry need answers and solutions to, it's important you evaluate these various considerations against your own business.

As you now consider which automotive uniforms and equipment your auto body shop or dealership specifically needs to ensure your business is a successful one, be sure to keep in mind these few final guidelines:

- Ensure you plan for the worst despite hoping for the best. PPE is essential for your protecting employees' health and your business from steep fines, so to be safe, it's generally recommended to be over prepared, rather than under.
- Emphasize the associated importance of customer service with proper uniforms for a car dealership. A well-dressed and authoritative salesperson makes a good impression as customers initially judge the book by its cover, but be sure to capitalize on this momentum with customer service that continues to build a rapport between customer and employee.
- As you select uniforms, weigh the costs against value. Everything in business costs money—including time—meaning that if your employee is injured on the job because they didn't have proper PPE, you're effectively losing work time. Similarly, if you're running a high-end car dealership, making the one-time investment in high-quality suits and uniforms for your salespeople may just be the difference between closing a \$60,000 sale or walking away with nothing.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Uniform Laws and Regulations: An Industry-By-Industry Guide

Work uniform standards aren't just necessary for keeping your business's image consistent and employees organized—there are also a range of laws and regulations ranging from OSHA to ANSI that set standards for uniforms and can come with steep fines for not complying. Use this in-depth article to learn more about the industry uniform laws our services can help to ensure your compliance with.

Why PPE for Auto Repair and Maintenance Shops Is a Must

The automotive industry presents a wide range of injury risks that are unique to the line of work, and to keep these hazards at bay auto repair and maintenance shops need protections in place to keep workers safe from harm. Find information on what types of PPE to consider as you select uniforms for an auto body shop as well as the need and applications for PPE using this helpful video blog.

Workplace PPE: Who Is Legally Responsible?

Keeping workers protected and able to do their job is an undisputed point of emphasis for employees as well as employers, however who is responsible for supplying the PPE to keep them safe? Use this article to find more information on the specifics of where the PPE responsibility lies and determine whether or not your employee's PPE should be on your checklist for automotive uniforms services.