

Reflective Surfaces

Do work surfaces reflect UV?

UV radiation doesn't just come from straight above you. Many common surfaces such as water, sand, tile, concrete, and snow are highly reflective. For example, snow can reflect nearly 90% of the sun's rays back toward you. So, you may be exposed to UV without even knowing it.

How much UV do work surfaces reflect?

The chart below gives some examples of how much UV may be reflected off surfaces you commonly work around. Keep this information in mind when deciding on which type of sun protection you may need for the day.



Ground Reflection of Ultraviolet Radiation

| Surface | Reflectance |
|---|-------------|
| Sidewalk, light concrete | 10-12% |
| Sidewalk, aged concrete | 7.0-8.2% |
| Asphalt roadway, freshly laid (black) | 4.0-5.0% |
| Asphalt roadway, two years old (gray) | 5.0-8.9% |
| Aluminum, dull, weathered | 13% |
| Atlantic beach sand, wet barely submerged | 7.1% |
| Atlantic beach sand, dry, light | 15-18% |
| Lawn grass, summer Maryland, California and Utah | 2.0-3.7% |
| Water, open | 3.3-8.0% |
| Snow, old/new | 50.0-88.0% |
| Source: International Agency for Research on Cancer and Safe Work Australia | |