My hands, are you well protected?

Either during professional or private life, everyone knows how important it is to protect hands against external exposures. They are in first line of the body areas towards thermal constrain (hot or cold), perforation (cut and puncture) and chemical hazards. While it is easy to select a glove protecting against thermal and perforation risks, the choice becomes much trickier when it comes to protect hands against chemicals. Which material resists to corrosive compounds? Besides, can a same glove be effective for both acids and bases? Which glove is recommended for solvent protection? Is it adequate for every compound and preparation?

Common answers say that there exists no universal glove and it is the user’s responsibility to select a glove adapted for the planned work. Behind these frustrating answers, there is often hidden but thorough information given by serious suppliers regarding protection limits. However, search methods change from one supplier to another and of course, their respective offers do not correspond to those available in our chemical stores.

Recognizing the importance and difficulties to find the good protection, SB-SST offers now an internet decision support tool (http://sb-sst.epfl.ch/gloves-guide) for protective glove selection. At this link, you will find a very simple search tool allowing to know and compare gloves available at our chemical stores upon your substance’s choice.

The list of compounds and the permeation rates are extracted from our supplier’s data. Results are given by performance index from 1 (resistance above 10 min.) to 6 (resistance above 480 min.). It is also possible to refine your search by indicating a choice of protection limited to splash or for an extensive exposure. If your specific compound does not appear in the list, results can be presented by classes of chemical divided in 12 categories depending on the functional group.

Your chemical preparations in laboratory

You are by law considered as chemical manufacturer when you decant or synthesize a substance or prepare a mixture. As manufacturer of your own preparations you must correctly label them in particular when stored for longer than the ongoing experimental tests.

The chemical stores propose labellings in 4 different sizes. The product composition, the date of the preparation and the person responsible for it must be written on the label.

For PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS preparations you must also indicate the hazard symbol on the label (also available at the chemical stores). Don’t put any pictogram if the molecule has unknown hazardous properties (non commercial substance), otherwise you could link it to substances classes with known hazards.

If you have a collection of small containers, you can gather them in a retention tray and stick a general labeling for the whole collection.