



2024

Retail & Wholesale Injury Report

Workers in their first year on the job account
for over one-third of injuries



New hires face high injury risk in retail and warehouse operations

As U.S. retailers and warehouses ramp up operations to meet demand this holiday season, they face a growing challenge: ensuring the safety of their frontline workforce.

A rapidly changing labor market—characterized by high turnover and seasonal hiring—makes it difficult to maintain a consistently trained team. As a result, newer workers face an increased risk of accidents, while businesses confront productivity losses.

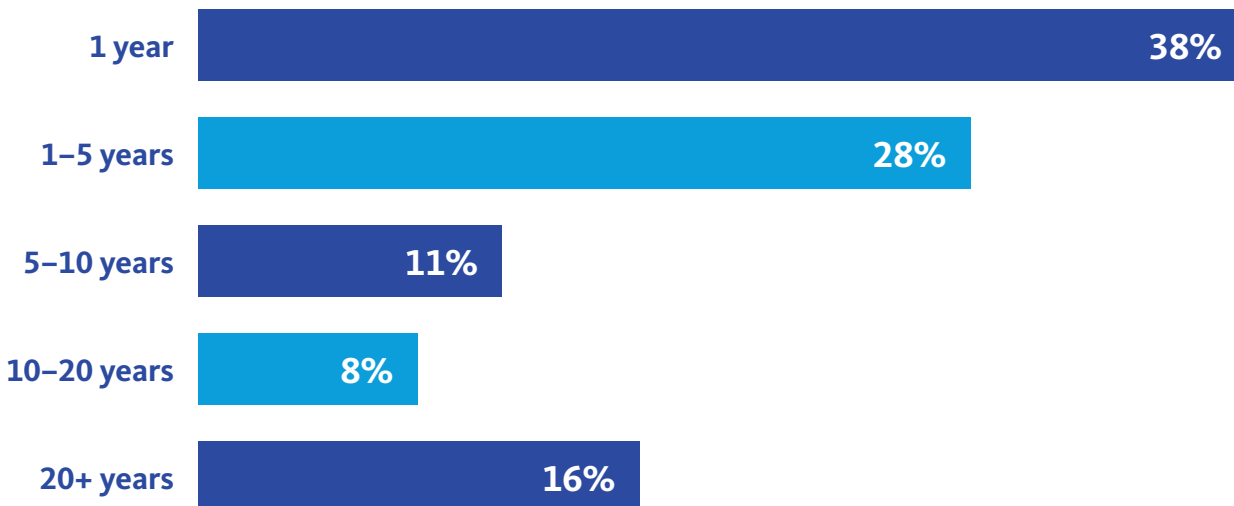
To help address these challenges, Sentry analyzed over 22,000 of its injury claims to bring to light underlying risks within this industry. By understanding these risks, businesses can implement targeted safety measures to help protect their workers as hiring ramps up for the holiday season.

Key findings

1. Over one-third of injuries occurred in workers in their first year on the job.
2. On average, employees missed 70 days of work due to injury.
3. Over 60% of industry injuries involved workers under 30 and over 50.
4. Workplace hazards like falling objects, slippery surfaces, and strains from lifting inventory contributed to a significant portion of injuries.

Years of service at company

Our analysis¹ found that 38% of on-the-job injuries occurred within a worker's first year at a retail or wholesale company, regardless of age. The second highest percent of injuries—28%—occurred among workers with a tenure of between 1–5 years.

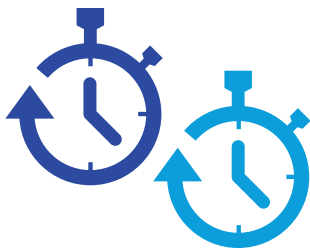
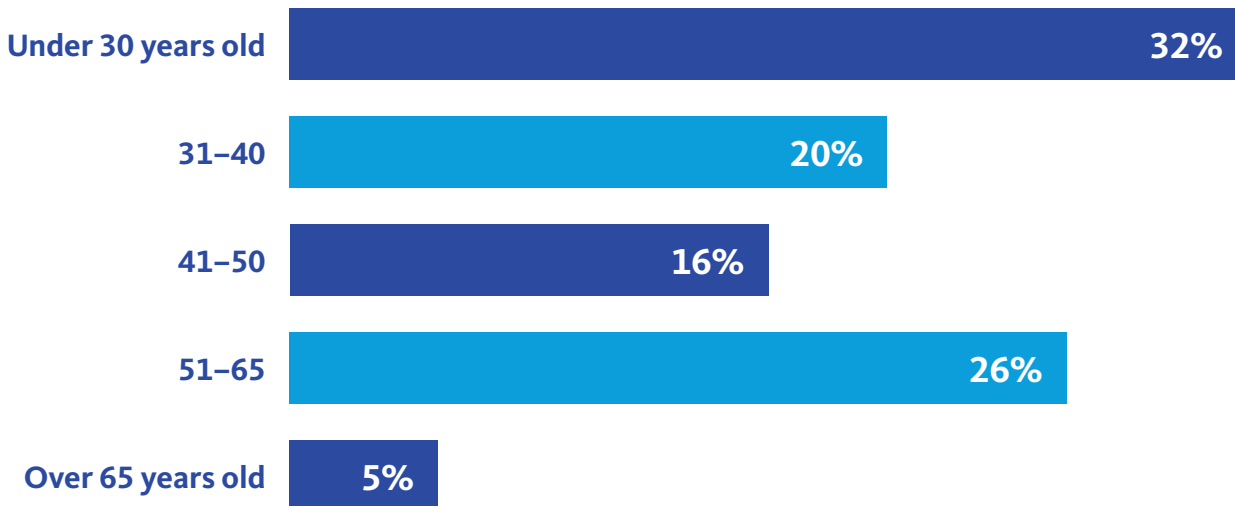


¹ Sentry analyzed 22,637 injury claims from within its retail and wholesale customer database that occurred from 2021 to 2022. Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number. Percentages shown are for the most common injury categories and may not total 100%.

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Worker age

Over 60% of injuries occurred in workers under the age of 30 and over the age of 50.

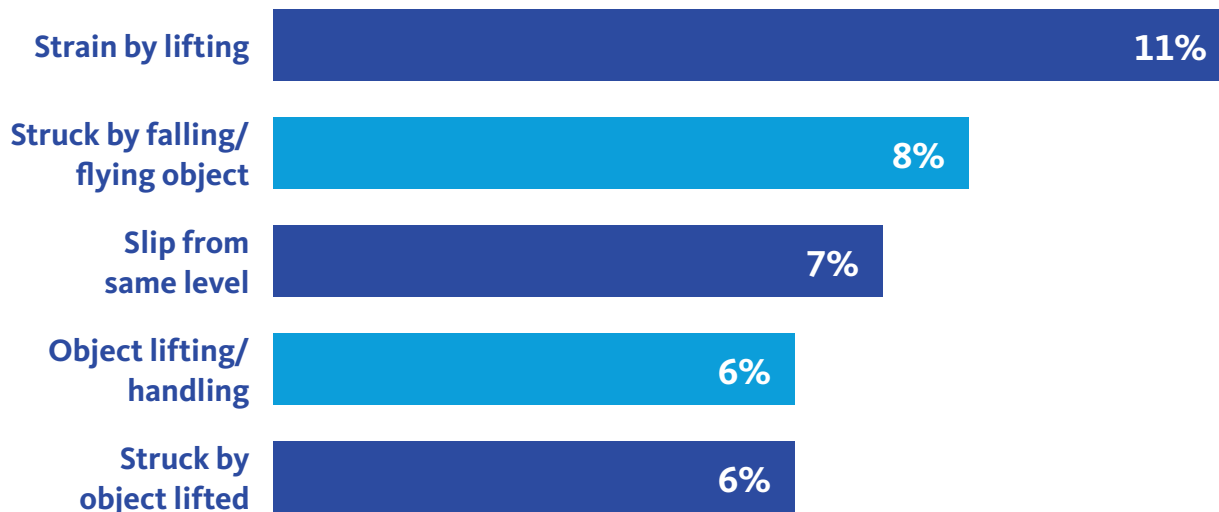


70

Average days missed due to injury in retail and wholesale*

Top causes of injury

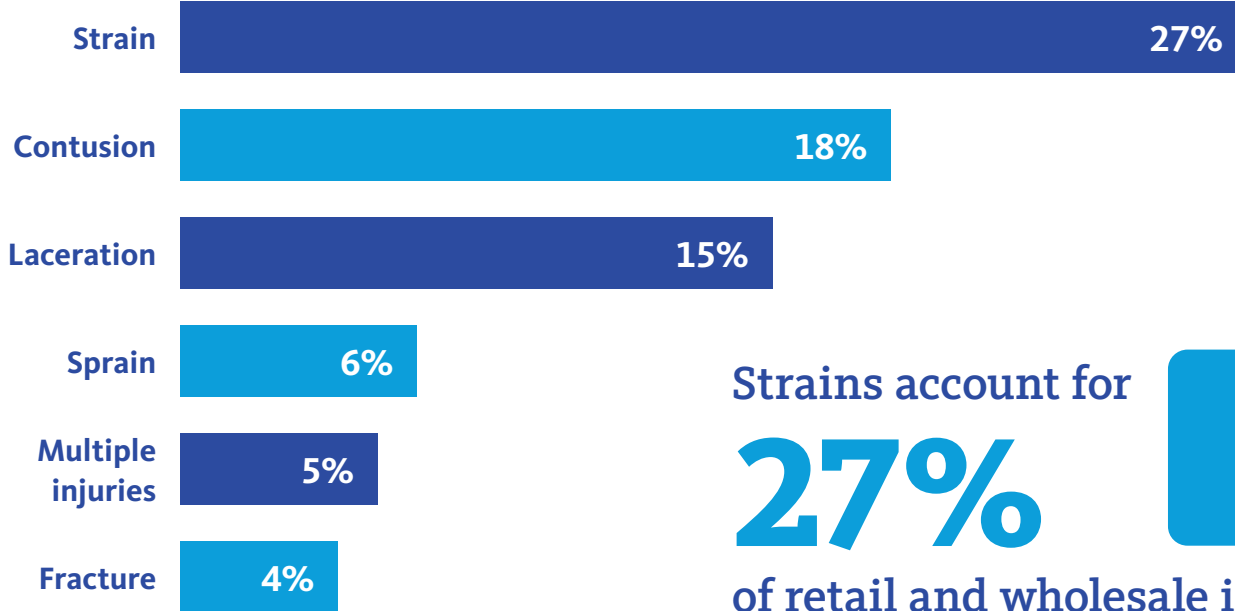
Lifting injuries—inherent to many inventory tasks due to the frequent handling of heavy, awkward items—were the leading cause of injury. Additionally, injuries from falling objects further highlight the safety challenges of vertical shelving and unsecured materials.



*Category only includes injuries that resulted in missed workdays

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Top types of injury



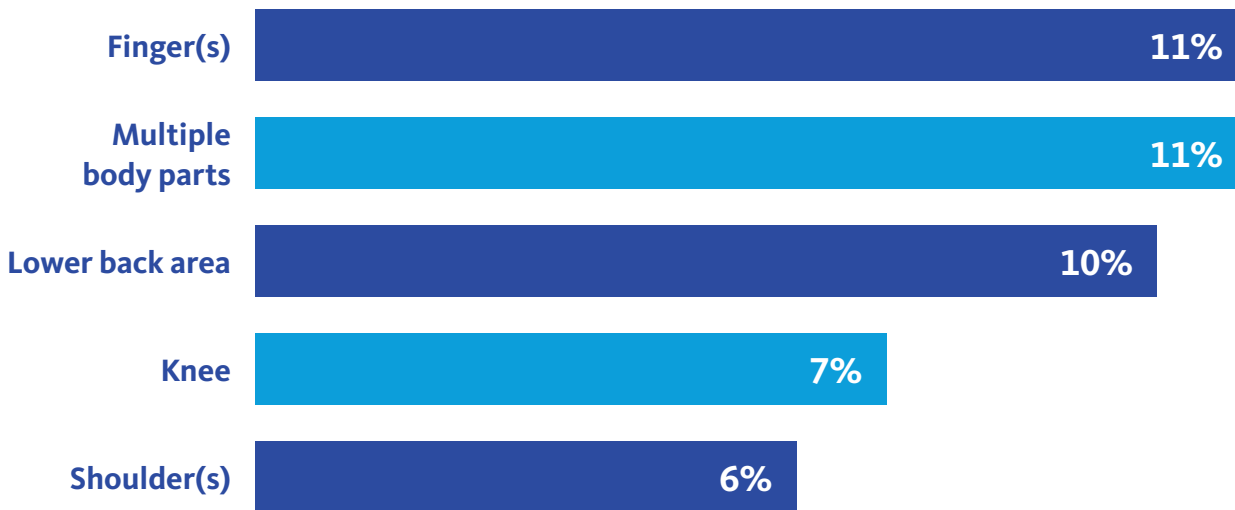
Strains account for

27%

of retail and wholesale injuries



Body part injured



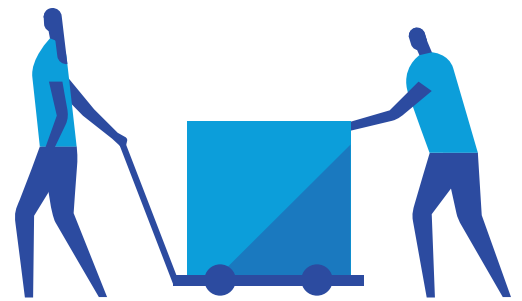
The impact of worker well-being

Millions of workers are injured each year. But what makes some injuries more disruptive than others? Beyond the physical injury, injured employees may struggle with:

1. Mental, social, and emotional challenges
2. Chronic pain
3. Dependence on pain medication

Each of these factors can complicate—and delay—the recovery process.

Our [Injured Employee Complexity Factor \(IECF\) Models™](#) help identify, and address, these high-risk claims earlier. Using our models, we evaluated injury claims in all industries from 2021 to 2024 to identify workers most at risk for extended absences and higher injury costs. Workers flagged under our IECF standards account for nearly 35% of all workers' compensation costs and take 2.6 times longer to return to work, based on a [prior analysis](#).



1 in 5
high-risk claims
originated from
the retail and
wholesale industry.



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