

Slips and trips

Hazard spotting checklist



This checklist will help you identify slip and trip hazards in your workplace and decide what action to take. It will be of benefit to anyone who assesses and manages slips and trips at work.

The checklist provides examples of hazards that can be found in and around workplaces, and suggests actions that you can take to resolve them. The list tries to cover as many slip and trip hazards as possible. Some may not apply to you, while you may come across others not mentioned here, but which you will need to consider. Room has been left on the checklist for you to add any hazards that are specific to your workplace.

To get the most from the checklist, you will need to walk through your workplace, including the outside grounds as appropriate, speak to union and employee safety representatives, workers and others to get their views of hazards and risks in the workplace, and then together decide what you could practically do to put them right. It is important to take action once a hazard has been identified.

Risk mapping tool

This checklist can be used in conjunction with the risk mapping tool www.hse.gov.uk/slips/mappingtool.pdf. The mapping tool can help you to identify high-risk locations and hazards in your workplace and people who may be at risk.

Assessing risk

You can also use this checklist to feed into your broader health and safety risk assessment process. More guidance on risk assessment can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/risk.

Slips and trips hazard spotting checklist

Potential issue	Tick if 'yes'	Suggested action
Outdoor areas		
Can anything be found on the paths, steps and fire escapes that could cause slips, eg build-up of leaves, wet grass, moss, mud etc?		Set up a regular work schedule for clearing paths, tackle busy routes first. Consider cutting back plants and trees that overlap paths.
Are paths prone to ice build-up during winter months?		Consider alternative, safer routes. Monitor weather conditions and put a winter procedure in place, eg gritting.
Are there any changes in level on the path that are not easy to see, eg small slopes?		Highlight hazard – improve lighting, apply contrasting eye-catching colour to slope (eg non-slip paint, flush-fitting bolt-on material).
Are there holes, potholes, or uneven paving on footpaths?		Barrier off area as a temporary solution, ensure barriers cannot be easily moved. Highlight hazard, eg improve lighting, use eye-catching colour on defective area as a temporary solution. Maintenance required – fill in holes, re-lay paving, replace broken paving stones.
Are fire escapes slippery when wet?		Improve grip – consider applying slip-resistant coating/strips or bolt-on slip-resistant material (caution – do not create a trip hazard).
Doorway		
Is the floor between the building threshold (entrance) and the entrance matting slippery when wet?		Improve grip – consider extending mat or exterior paving, applying slip-resistant coating/strips or changing to more slip-resistant material.
Entrances		
Is there water on the floor from rain etc? Is it making the floor slippery?		Stop water entering building – construct canopies over entrances, improve external drainage, keep doors closed when you can. Prevent water spreading – fit large and absorbent entrance mats to dry shoes. Remove water quickly – review cleaning system, introduce dry mopping, consider introducing heaters/underfloor heating to speed up drying time. Improve grip – consider fitting slip-resistant flooring.

Potential issue	Tick if 'yes'	Suggested action
Entrances (continued)		
Are there any trip hazards in the area, eg trailing cables, deliveries, mats with curled up edges, or other objects?		Housekeeping needed – tidy away cables, provide safe delivery storage area, clear away boxes and equipment, fix down mat edges or replace if necessary.
Corridors and offices		
Are there any subtle changes in floor level, eg slopes, small steps, abrupt changes from one flooring material to another?		Highlight hazard – improve lighting, use eye-catching colour on slope/step, clearly highlight change from one flooring material to another.
Are the floors smooth in areas where contamination can be found on the floor (eg liquids, food and food wrappers, dusts, polythene, condensation etc?)		Stop contamination from getting onto floor – provide bins for litter, fix leaks, fit lids on containers, close doors leading from working areas. Prevent spreading – drip trays beneath plants/machines/water coolers. Remove contamination quickly – review cleaning system, spot clean spills, dry mop large wet areas, vacuum/brush up dry materials.
Are the tiles or flooring becoming unstuck or curling at the edges? Are there holes?		Maintenance required – fix down tiles and carpet edges, replace if necessary, fill in holes, replace cracked tiles.
Is the anti-slip floor coating or grip tape worn smooth or damaged?		Maintenance required – replace damaged and worn coatings. Consider changing flooring.
Are there any trip hazards around workstations or in corridors and walkways, eg trailing cables, boxes, deliveries, equipment or other objects?		Housekeeping needed – keep walkways clear, tidy away or use cable covers, provide additional storage, clear away boxes and equipment.
Are light levels too low to see the floor surface clearly?		Improve lighting – new bulbs, additional lights.
Is light reflecting on the smooth flooring creating glare?		Improve lighting – re-angle lights, install blinds or anti-glare grills or glazing films. Consider removing floor surface shine.
Stairs and ramps		
Are step nosings (edge of step) hard to see, rounded, damaged or slippery?		Check lighting is sufficient to see step edges clearly. Highlight the very edge of the step with a nosing that has a high visibility, square edge and non-slip finish. For difficult to replace round-edged nosing, ensure non-slip edging wraps right around the edge of the nosing.

Potential issue	Tick if 'yes'	Suggested action
Stairs and ramps (continued)		
<p>Are handrails available?</p> <p>Are they easy to reach and useable?</p>		<p>Provide a handrail on at least one side of the stairs; if flight of stairs is wider than 1 m, provide handrails on both sides and a third, middle handrail if 2 m or wider.</p> <p>Handrail heights should be between 900 mm and 1000 mm and be parallel to the pitch line (slope) of the flight of stairs. On landings where the handrail provides guarding the height should be 1100 mm.</p> <p>Recommendations for handrail shape, diameter and distance from wall can be found in the Building Regulations and British Standards.</p>
<p>Is the height (rise) of the steps or depth of tread (going) inconsistent throughout the flight?</p>		<p>Highlight the problem, eg with warning notice.</p> <p>Correct the rise/going of the stairs so they are all of equal height.</p>
<p>Are the stair treads slippery?</p>		<p>Thoroughly clean on a regular basis to remove contaminants.</p> <p>Replace stair covering with one with better slip resistance.</p>
<p>Are any ramps or slopes in or around the workplace difficult to see?</p>		<p>Highlight ramp with contrasting colour and check lighting levels.</p> <p>Improve grip – consider fitting slip-resistant flooring.</p> <p>As with flights of stairs, consider providing handrails.</p>
Work areas and work platforms (eg kitchens, warehouses, storerooms)		
<p>As part of the work process, is contamination (fluids, solids, dust, debris etc) getting onto the floor?</p> <p>Is the floor slippery?</p> <p>People – spillages, overfilling containers, clearing waste off work surfaces onto the floor, discarding debris onto the floor.</p> <p>Machines – leaks, overspray, spills, by-product.</p> <p>Process – overspills, leaks, by-product.</p>		<p>Stop contamination from getting onto floor – change system of work, improve work area layout, provide bins, dust extraction, lids on containers, reduce quantity of product in containers, fix leaking machinery.</p> <p>Prevent contamination spreading – use drip trays, screens to stop splashes, good floor drainage, high-lipped sinks, bunding around machines.</p> <p>Remove contamination quickly – spot clean spills, dry mop large wet areas, vacuum/brush up dry materials.</p> <p>Improve grip – consider slip-resistant flooring; provide slip-resistant footwear.</p>

Potential issue	Tick if 'yes'	Suggested action
Work areas and work platforms (eg kitchens, warehouses, storerooms) (continued)		
<p>Is condensation forming on the floor?</p> <p>Is condensation forming on overhead pipework and dripping onto the floor.</p> <p>Is the floor slippery?</p>		<p>Improve ventilation – use extraction.</p> <p>Insulate overhead pipework.</p> <p>Improve grip – consider slip-resistant flooring; provide slip-resistant footwear.</p>
<p>Is poor drainage causing a pooling of fluids on the floor?</p>		<p>Improve floor drainage.</p>
<p>Cold store – is there ice build-up on the floor?</p> <p>Is the floor slippery?</p>		<p>Remove ice.</p> <p>Door maintenance – check door closes and seals properly – replace seals, fix door and frame.</p> <p>Prevent humidity, eg fit automatic doors, curtains, humidity controls.</p> <p>Consider supplying slip-resistant footwear.</p>
<p>Are designated walkways unusable or partially blocked?</p>		<p>Create a clear and even walkway through the workplace.</p> <p>Housekeeping needed – tidy away cables, provide additional storage, clear away clutter, boxes and equipment, safely store pallets.</p>
<p>Are walkways uneven, do they have holes or missing tiles?</p>		<p>Barrier off area as a temporary solution, ensure barriers cannot be easily moved.</p> <p>Highlight hazard, eg improve lighting, use eye-catching colour on defective area as a temporary solution.</p> <p>Maintenance required – fill in holes, relay/replace defective flooring.</p>
<p>Are there any raised carpet edges or holes?</p>		<p>Firmly stick down raised or loose edges.</p> <p>Maintenance required – replace all or damaged section of carpet.</p>
<p>Are the tiles or flooring becoming unstuck or curling at the edges?</p>		<p>Firmly stick down loose tiles and raised edges.</p> <p>Maintenance required – replace all or damaged section of flooring.</p>
<p>Are there any trip hazards around workstations, eg trailing cables, boxes, deliveries or other objects?</p>		<p>Encourage a 'see it, sort it' mentality among staff.</p> <p>Housekeeping needed – keep walkways clear, tidy away or use cable covers, provide additional storage, clear away boxes and equipment.</p>
<p>Are light levels too low to see clearly?</p> <p>Is light bouncing off the flooring creating glare?</p>		<p>Improve lighting – new bulbs, re-angle, additional lights, install antiglare grills.</p> <p>Stop glare – consider removing floor surface shine.</p>

Potential issue	Tick if 'yes'	Suggested action
Toilets, bath and shower rooms		
<p>Is water getting onto the floor?</p> <p>Is the floor slippery when wet?</p>		<p>Stop water getting onto the floor – improve shower curtains/screens, position sufficient hand dryers close to sinks.</p> <p>Remove water quickly – regular monitoring, spot clean, dry mop wet areas.</p> <p>Improve floor drainage where possible.</p> <p>Improve grip – consider fitting slip-resistant flooring.</p>
<p>Are taps or pipes leaking?</p>		<p>Prevent contamination spreading – provide drip trays as a temporary solution.</p> <p>Maintenance required – fix leaks and taps.</p>
Cleaning		
<p>Are spillages left on the floor for some time before they are cleaned up?</p>		<p>Encourage a 'see it, sort it' mentality among staff.</p> <p>Ensure spills cleaning equipment is readily available for use.</p> <p>Review/improve cleaning regime and timings of cleaning schedule.</p> <p>Consider introducing a roving cleaner.</p>
<p>Are small spills wet mopped?</p>		<p>Spot clean small spills using absorbent cloth/paper towel.</p> <p>Provide training and then supervise.</p> <p>Ensure spills cleaning equipment is readily available for use.</p>
<p>Can people walk through areas during wet mopping or when floors are still wet?</p> <p>Is the floor smooth or slippery when wet?</p>		<p>Keep people off smooth wet floors – Barrier off/close off areas, wet mop out of hours when no-one is around.</p> <p>Reduce drying time – dry mop the floors with a clean, proprietary dry mop.</p>
<p>Are warning signs left out long after the spill has gone and floor has dried?</p>		<p>Remove cones and signs as soon as cleaning is completed and floor is dry.</p> <p>Provide training and then supervise.</p>
<p>Does the floor look dirty even though it has just been cleaned?</p>		<p>Check manufacturers'/suppliers' cleaning instructions are being followed.</p> <p>Review floor cleaning method, alter to suit floor type.</p> <p>Provide training on new method and then supervise.</p>

Potential issue	Tick if 'yes'	Suggested action
Cleaning (continued)		
Are people slipping on the floor even though it has been cleaned and is dry?		Thoroughly clean to remove build-up of polish, grease etc. Review and alter floor cleaning method. Provide training on new method and then supervise.
Can cleaning equipment leads be seen crossing or blocking walkways, creating a trip hazard?		Coil up unused equipment cable. Change power source – provide additional power sockets; use socket nearest area being cleaned. Consider change to battery-powered equipment. Provide training on new method and then supervise.
Do bin bags/cleaning equipment in walkways create trip hazards?		Provide training on awareness of trip hazards and how to avoid them and then supervise.
Tasks		
Do tasks stop people seeing slip or trip hazards, eg carrying items that restrict view, upset people's balance, rushing?		Review and improve manual handling and moving procedures. Review work activity.

Further information

HSE's website www.hse.gov.uk/slips

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.

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