



# Health and safety in the workplace

## An introduction for employees

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# Introduction

**No-one should be injured or made ill at work.**

What are some of the key things to know when you want to keep people safe at work?

This short booklet gives an introduction to some basic principles you can use in your workplace.

Find out more details specific to your workplace.

# Why is health and safety important?

## Cost

Workplace injury and ill health is estimated to cost society £14.2bn (2013/14).



## Days lost

Workplace injury and work-related ill health account for 28.2 million working days lost annually.



Source: HSE 2013/14

**We are all responsible for our own health and safety and for the health and safety of others.**

What can you do?

- Follow health and safety rules and instructions
- Be aware of your actions and the impact they could have on your safety or the safety of others
- Report any health and safety hazards to your manager
- Think about a safer way to do a task to avoid risks
- Keep work areas clean and tidy
- Look out for other people
- Raise any concerns.

# Slips and trips

**Slips and trips can be caused by hazards (anything with potential to cause harm).**

Risk assessments:

- Think about what might cause harm to people
- Take reasonable steps to prevent that harm
- A risk assessment matrix can be a useful measure to look at how often risks can occur and what could happen if it went wrong.



# 28% of non-fatal injuries were caused as a result of slips and trips

Source: HSE 2013/14

What can you do?

- Keep your workspace tidy
- Dispose of waste materials safely
- Remove any obstructions that may cause trips
- Make sure there are no trailing cables
- Be aware of potentially wet surfaces
- Clear up spillages immediately
- Be careful when using stairs or areas where the floor surface is uneven
- Inform your manager of any potential hazards
- Be prepared, know where the first aid kit is kept and who the workplace first aider is. Prompt, effective treatment can reduce the impact of an injury.

# Manual handling

**Think before lifting. Equipment should be readily available to aid manual handling.**

If manual handling must be carried out, it is important that the correct lifting technique is used:

- Feet hip-width apart with one foot slightly in front of the other
- Bend the knees keeping the back naturally straight
- Grasp the load firmly
- Stand up using the leg muscles.





# There were 77,593 non-fatal injuries reported in 2013/14. Of these 24% were due to handling, carrying and lifting

Source: HSE 2013/14

What can you do?

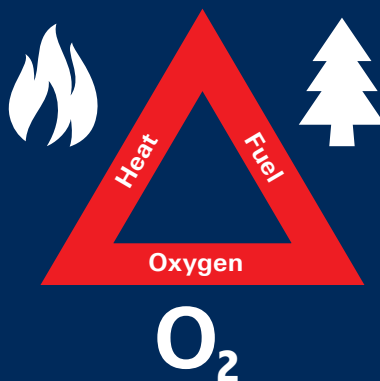
- Only lift what you can safely manage
- Learn the proper lifting techniques
- If in doubt, use a trolley or other lifting equipment
- Ask for training on how to use lifting equipment safely
- Speak up - you can always ask a colleague for help
- If you feel uncomfortable with the thought of lifting something, consider your options
- Raise awareness of manual handling safety and encourage safe practice.

# Fire

**Fires start when three things come together in the right amount at the same time.**

These three things are:

- A source of **fuel** (something that will burn)
- A source of **heat** (or ignition)
- **Oxygen** (present in the air around us)
- These three things are known as the '**fire triangle**'.



# 22,200 fires occurred in buildings that were not dwellings in GB in 2013/2014

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government 2013/14

What can you do?

- Make sure you are aware of the fire evacuation procedure
- Make sure you are aware of fire exits and the assembly point location
- Explain the fire evacuation procedure to visitors
- Use the nearest safe exit when the alarm sounds
- Follow instructions from fire wardens.

# Stress



# Stress, depression and anxiety accounted for 11.3 million working days lost

Source: HSE 2013/14

What can you do?

- If you feel stressed, speak to your manager
- Talk to a partner, friend, colleague or your HR department
- Ask if a free confidential helpline is available at your workplace
- Make sure you take breaks throughout the day
- Avoid regularly working late
- Try to take some exercise
- Try to maintain a work/life balance.

# Display screen equipment

**Did you know there are around 15 things that can cause harm when working with display screen equipment?**

Working at a monitor is often seen as a low risk activity but care needs to be taken to protect from long-term health issues.



# An estimated 2 million people were suffering from an illness they believed was caused or made worse by work

Source: HSE 2013/14

What can you do?

- Make sure your monitor, keyboard and mouse are correctly positioned
- Position items on your desk within easy reach
- Make sure that you keep the area under your desk unrestricted
- Report any faulty equipment
- Use blinds to help reduce glare on your screen
- Take regular breaks away from your screen.

# What next?

- Talk to your manager and stay up to date with the latest guidance
- Report any concerns
- Raise suggestions for improvements
- Be aware of your surroundings.

Contact us if you would like more information on health, safety and environmental management.





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be injured or  
made ill at work.**

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