



## Workplace Tips

There are many simple ways to prevent and reduce risks of accidents. Below are some examples:

Potential risks	Recommended improvement measures
Wet or dry substance on the floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove the substance immediately with suitable cleaning agents</li> <li>Post a notice and provide a temporary access if the floor is still wet after cleaning</li> </ul>
Disorderly placed electric wire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place equipment properly. Avoid electric wire being laid across the walkway</li> <li>Use wiring duct to affix electric wire to the floor</li> <li>Restrict access to reduce the risk of electric shock or tripping over electric wire</li> </ul>
Garbage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep the workplace clean</li> <li>Clear waste immediately to avoid accumulation</li> </ul>
Carpet or mat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that carpet or mat is properly laid and its edge is not rolled up</li> </ul>
Slippery floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the causes of slippery floor and deal with the problem properly, such as using special cleaning methods</li> </ul>
Mixed dry and wet floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put on suitable footwear</li> <li>Post a warning notice</li> <li>Place mat on floor</li> </ul>
Inadequate lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase lighting</li> <li>Install additional lighting facilities to ensure that all floors have adequate lighting</li> </ul>
Floor with uneven steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase lighting</li> <li>Make the steps easily visible</li> </ul>
Slope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase lighting</li> <li>Provide handrails</li> <li>Put up warning sign on the ground</li> </ul>
Poor visibility due to smoke or steam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extract smoke or steam from the workplace</li> <li>Improve ventilation</li> <li>Post a notice</li> </ul>
Unsuitable footwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that workers have put on suitable footwear</li> </ul>

### Enquiry and Complaint

Telephone: 2559 2297  
 Facsimile: 2915 1410  
 E-mail: enquiry@labour.gov.hk  
 Complaints: 2542 2172

(All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.)

# Beware of Fall at Work



Occupational Safety and Health Branch  
Labour Department



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH COUNCIL

## "A False Step May Cause a Lifelong Regret"

Slip, trip and fall on the same level is a common cause of occupational injuries, accounting for some 20% of work accidents each year. These accidents not only bring pain and suffering to the injured employees, but also result in economic losses to the employers.

In most cases, avoiding the risks of slip, trip and fall requires only simple and inexpensive measures. Employers and employees working together to implement the necessary preventive measures can prevent these accidents.

### Legal Requirement:

Under the "Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance", an employer or occupier of premises shall provide the employees in his workplace with a safe and healthy working environment and adopt appropriate measures to prevent them from slipping and tripping.

### Risk Assessment on Slip and Trip

An employer has the responsibility to assess the risks of accidents to his/her employees and any other persons that may be affected by the work activities. In making the assessment, the risks of slip, trip and fall should be included. A risk assessment comprises five parts as outlined below. Another pamphlet – "Five steps to risk assessment" – published by the Labour Department explains risk assessment in more detail.

1. Look for the hazards:	Identify locations with potential risks, for example, uneven or slippery floors, and electric wires that pose a tripping hazard.
2. Decide who may be harmed, and how:	Assess who will enter the workplace and their risk of fall because of uneven ground surfaces or hidden objects.
3. Take corresponding improvement measures:	Check whether the precautions in place are adequate to eliminate or reduce the existing hazards or potential risks. Also consider if there are any other better ways to further improve the situation.
4. Maintain record:	Take down the assessment conclusions and keep the record properly.
5. Review assessment from time to time and revise it whenever necessary:	Reassess the risks and ensure that the precautions are adequate whenever there is any significant change in the work activities.

**Note:** Do not forget outdoor employees who may be exposed to other dangers. Identify their risks at work and provide appropriate training and sufficient equipment to prevent accidents.

## Provision of Safe Working Method

Some basic and easy ways to prevent slip and trip include the selection of suitable floorboards, provision of adequate lighting, proper demarcation of walking areas and access routes, and avoidance of overcrowding in the workplace.

The following are main points that require attention:

### 1 Lighting

- Good and adequate lighting enables one to see what is obstructing the walkway and which part of the floor is wet and slippery to avoid being endangered.
- Replace, repair and clean fluorescent tubes immediately before the light becomes too dim for safe operation.

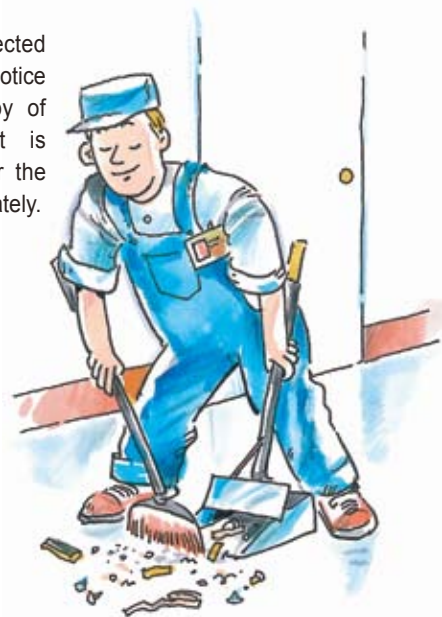


### 2 Floorboards

- Check floorboards regularly for signs of loosening, cracks or holes, and carpets and mats for signs of damage.
- Consider whether dusts or water would be generated in the course of work when selecting suitable floorboards.

### 3 Obstructions

- Disorderly placed objects would create risks.
- Fence off the affected area and post a notice to warn passers-by of the hazard if it is impossible to clear the obstruction immediately.



### 4 Footwear

- Suitable footwear can protect employees from slipping and tripping effectively. Employers should provide these protective equipment.



### 5 Cleaning and Maintenance

- Train employees on the correct use of safety equipment and cleaning facilities.
- Use suitable equipment and working method to clean the surface of different materials.
- Seek advice from manufacturers or suppliers on how to use cleaning equipment properly and the correct ways to clean object.
- Stay alert in performing cleaning and maintenance works to avoid incurring other risks.
- Maintain the equipment properly and, if necessary, contract out to other company.
- Conduct inspections, tests, housekeeping and cleaning on a regular basis.
- Keep all record for future verification.

## Employers and Employees Work Together to Establish a Safety Management System

A good safety and health management system can help you identify problems and decide what kind of precautions are suitable. It can also help check the effectiveness of the measures taken.

A good management system should consist of the following:

### 1 Formulation of Improvement Plan

- Set targets and identify the major risks in the workplace for improvement.
- Select equipment and working methods carefully so as to minimise the risks of slip and trip to employees.

### 2 Organisational Structure

- Secure employees' participation and support.
- Let employees undertake appropriate responsibilities to enhance their awareness of workplace safety.
- Lay down clearly in writing the scope of responsibilities of individual employees.
- Step up promotion to let employees understand clearly their roles and responsibilities.

### 3 Effective Control

- Conduct regular inspections to ensure that employees adopt good working methods.
- Keep record of cleaning and maintenance works for future reference.
- Encourage employees to pay attention to work safety.

### 4 Monitoring and Review

- Reassess management strategies from time to time in the light of past experience.
- Study accident investigation reports and inspection reports to check whether work safety has been improved.
- Encourage workplace safety representatives or other employees to air their views.