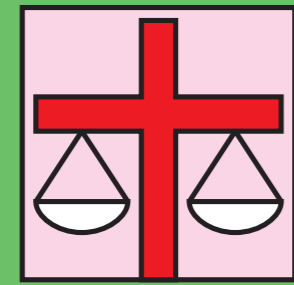
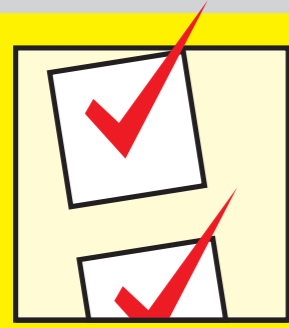


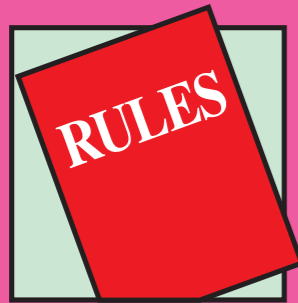
Five steps to risk assessment



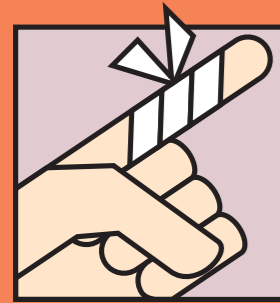
5. Review your assessment



4. Record your findings



3. Evaluate the risks



2. Decide who might be harmed



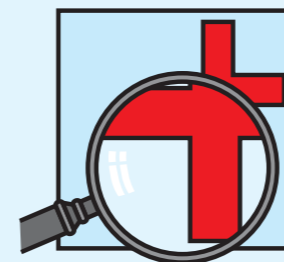
1. Look for the hazards

FIVE STEPS TO RISK ASSESSMENT

1. This leaflet is intended to help employers assess risks at work. It is aimed at firms in the commercial, service and light industrial sectors.
2. An assessment of risk is a careful examination of what, in your workplace, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. Accidents and ill health can ruin lives and affect your business too if output is lost, machinery is damaged, or insurance costs increase.
3. 'Hazard' means anything that can cause harm (for example, chemicals, electricity, working at height, and so on); and 'Risk' is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard.
4. The important things you need to decide are whether a hazard is significant, and whether you have it covered by satisfactory precautions so that the risk is small. You need to check this when you assess the risks.

How to assess risks in the workplace

5. Don't be overcomplicated. You may have already assessed some of the risks. You probably already know whether you have machinery that could cause harm, or if there is an awkward entrance or stair where someone could be hurt. If so, check that you have taken what reasonable precautions you can to avoid injury.
6. If you are a small firm and you are confident you understand the work, you can do the assessment yourself. If you are a larger firm, you could ask a responsible employee, safety representative or safety officer to help you. But remember - you are responsible for seeing it is adequately done.



LOOK FOR THE HAZARDS

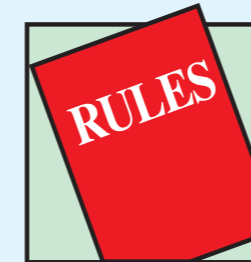
If you are doing the assessment yourself, walk around your workplace and look afresh at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ignore the trivial and concentrate only on significant hazards that could result in serious harm or affect several people. Ask your employees or their representatives what they think. They may have noticed things that are not immediately

obvious. Manufacturers' instructions or datasheets as well as accidents and ill-health records can also help you spot hazards and put risks in their true perspective.



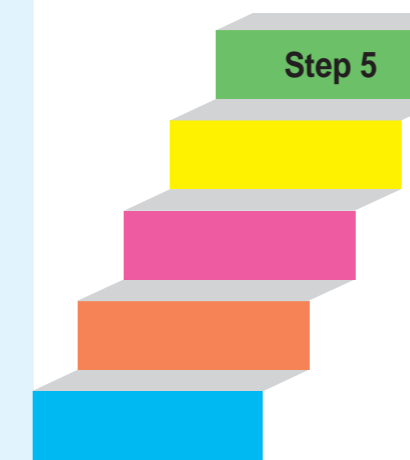
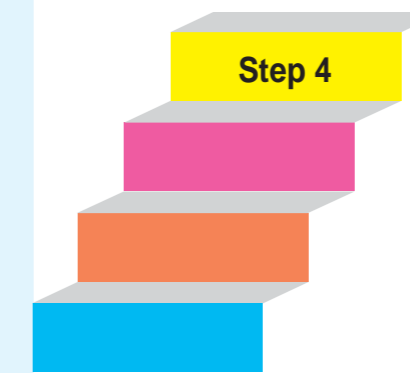
DECIDE WHO MIGHT BE HARMED, AND HOW

You have to assess risks to the safety and health of anyone that may be affected by your activities - yourself, workers and even people who may not be in the workplace all the time, for example cleaners, visitors, maintenance workers, and so on.



EVALUATE THE RISKS ARISING FROM THE HAZARDS AND DECIDE WHETHER EXISTING PRECAUTIONS ARE ADEQUATE OR MORE SHOULD BE DONE

Even after all precautions have been taken, usually some risks remain. What you have to decide for EACH SIGNIFICANT HAZARD is whether or not this remaining risk is high, medium or low.



FIRST, ask yourself whether you have done all the things that the law says you have got to do.

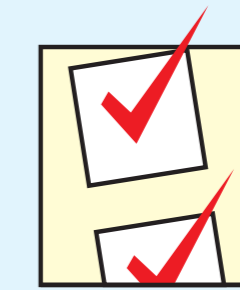
THEN ask yourself whether generally accepted trade standards are in place.

Your real aim is to eliminate or minimise all risks by taking appropriate precautions.

If you find that something needs to be done, ask yourself:

- Can I GET RID OF THE HAZARD altogether?
- If not, how can I CONTROL THE RISKS so that harm is unlikely?

IF THE WORK YOU DO TENDS TO VARY A LOT, OR IF YOU OR YOUR EMPLOYEES MOVE FROM ONE WORKPLACE TO ANOTHER, select those hazards that you CAN REASONABLY FORESEE and assess the risks from them. After that, if you spot any unusual hazard when you get to a workplace, get information from responsible people on-site, and take what action seems necessary.



RECORD YOUR FINDINGS

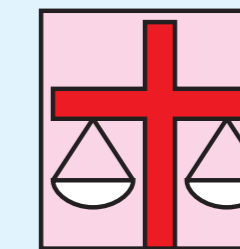
This means (1) writing down the more significant hazards and (2) recording your most important conclusions - for example, "Electrical installations: insulation and earthing checked and found sound", or "Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation provided and regularly checked". You must also inform your employees about your findings.

THERE IS NO NEED TO SHOW HOW YOU DID YOUR ASSESSMENT, provided you can show that:

- a proper check of the workplace was made;
- you asked WHO might be affected;
- you dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the NUMBER of people who could be involved;
- the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low.

Keep the written document for future reference or use. It can remind you to keep an eye on particular matters and it helps to show that you have done what the law requires.

To make things simpler, you can refer to other documents, such as manuals, the arrangements in your safety and health policy statement, company rules, manufacturers' instructions, and your safety and health procedures. These may already list hazards and precautions. You don't need to repeat all that, and it is up to you whether you combine all the documents, or keep them separately.



REVIEW YOUR ASSESSMENT FROM TIME TO TIME AND REVISE IT IF NECESSARY

Sooner or later you will bring in new machines, substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. If there is any significant change, you should add to the assessment to take account of the new hazard. But it is good practice to review your assessment from time to time. Don't amend your assessment for every trivial change or even for each new job, but if a new job introduces significant new hazards of its own, you will want to consider them in their own right and do whatever you need to keep the risks down.

Enquiry Services

Telephone : 2559 2297 (auto-recording after office hours)
Fax : 2915 1410
E-mail : enquiry@labour.gov.hk

Information on the services offered by the Occupational Safety and Health Council can be obtained through hotline 2739 9000.