

TOOLBOX TALK NO.28

Slips, trips and fall



Most slips occur when floors become wet or contaminated and many trips are due to poor housekeeping.

The solutions are often simple and cost-effective and a basic assessment of the risks should help to identify what you can do to tackle slips and trips risks.

Why is dealing with slips and trips important?

Slips and trips are the most common cause of injury at work. On average, they cause over a third of all major injuries and can lead to other types of accidents, such as falls from height or falls into machinery.

Slips and trips also account for half of all reported injuries to members of the public in workplaces where there is public access, such as hospitals, shops and restaurants.

What do I have to do?

To help prevent these accidents you need to think about what might cause slips or trips in your workplace and decide whether you are doing enough to prevent them. Once you have identified the risks you must control them.

Main causes of slips:

- Wet or dusty floors
- Wet or icy conditions
- Spillages
- Items left lying on floors
- Loose coverings on slippery floors
- Poor lighting
- Unsuitable footwear

Main causes of trips:

- Loose or damaged floor coverings
- Changes in floor levels
- Obstructions on floor
- Cables, trailing leads and hoses across walkways
- Poor housekeeping
- Poor lighting
- Unsuitable footwear
- Bags left in walkways
-

Preventing slips, trips and falls:

- Concentrate when walking – look where you are going
- Regularly check work place for slip trip and fall hazards
- Keep workplace clean, tidy and clear of obstructions
- Demarcate paths and 'no go' areas
- Properly maintain buildings and equipment
- Use handrails when climbing or descending stairs
- Wear sensible footwear
- Do not read books or information on mobile devices (phones or notebooks etc.) while walking.



How can I do it?

- Prevent floors from getting wet or contaminated in the first place
- Have procedures in place for both routine and responsive cleaning
- If a spillage does happen, clean it up quickly
- If floors are left wet after cleaning, stop anyone walking on them until they are dry and use the right cleaning methods and products – erect barriers and put up signage
- Look out for trip hazards, such as uneven floors or trailing cables, and encourage good housekeeping by your workers
- Make sure workers wear footwear that is suitable for the environment they are working in
- Make sure your flooring is suitable, or floors likely to get wet are of a type that does not become unduly slippery

Questions: What can you do in your job to reduce trip hazards?
 What behaviours cause the greatest risk of slip, trip and fall hazards in your workplace?
 What would be an effective way of clearing up a spill?