



# Slips, Trips, and Falls

## Introduction

Slips, trips and falls can happen in any workplace and result in injuries, disability or death. It is the single most common cause of injuries at work in most countries.

All stakeholders in the workplace can help to reduce slip and trip hazards with easy to implement loss preventive measures.



## Key Facts

### Slip



Slips occurred when there is too little friction between the feet and the walking surface, leading to a loss of balance.

Common slips hazards are:

- » Slippery walking surfaces from spills such as oil or powder, or metallic surfaces
- » Incline of the walking surface
- » Wet or greasy footwear

### Trip



A trip occurred when the upper body continues moving when the lower limb hits an object, leading to a loss of balance.

Common causes of trips are:

- » Obstacles posed by trailing cables, curled edges of carpets, debris on the floor
- » A drop in the floor level
- » Poor lighting condition

### Fall



A fall occurred when one comes to rest accidentally on the floor or another lower level after experiencing a slip or trip occurrence.

Slips and trips can also occur due to human elements such as:

- » Failing eyesight
- » Taking unapproved shortcuts
- » Loss of concentration or distraction

## Duty of The Employer

All employers shall conduct a risk assessment in relation to the safety and health risks posed to any person who may be affected by his undertaking in the workplace.

This involves a systematic approach to:

- » Identify any slip and trip hazards in the workplace, such as trailing cables, uneven floors, areas that are slippery due to spillages
- » Assess the risks associated with the identified hazards by determining the likelihood and severity
- » Implement and maintain risk control measures to manage the identified slip and trip hazards
- » Record the findings and regularly review the assessment

Risk control measures come in various ways and effectiveness.

These include:

- » Elimination of hazards during the design stage of the workplace, such as ensuring adequate lighting, and no uneven floor levels
- » Substitution to reduce hazards such as replacing the existing smooth flooring with a more slip-resistant flooring
- » Use of engineering controls such as the use of cable covers over trailing cables
- » Administration controls such as the use of instructional signs to inform employees to use the handrails when using the stairs, or warning signs to inform employees on slippery floor
- » Use of Personnel Protective Equipment such as suitable footwear with the correct type of sole for the floor condition

## Actions:

### Easy to Implement Loss Prevention Measures

Slips, Trips and Falls can be prevented with simple and cost-effective measures.

Physical:

- » Ensure work areas are well-lit and clean
- » Highlight areas with drop in floor level with bright adhesive tape
- » Maintain clear aisles and walkways in the workplace

Organisation:

- » Schedule maintenance of floor surfaces during period of low human traffic
- » Create a procedure to clean up spills immediately
- » Conduct regularly walkthrough of the workplace to check on unsafe conditions

## Human Factors

- » Encourage the use of handrails when using the stairs
- » Do not stand on top of chairs, or other surface on wheels
- » Strict use of company provided safety footwear in the workplace

## Other Best Practices to Consider

- » Choose suitable floor surfaces
- » Ensure lighting levels are sufficient
- » Plan pedestrian and traffic routes properly, avoiding overcrowding
- » Train workers in the correct use of any safety and cleaning equipment provided
- » Always place appropriate signs to tell people the floor is still wet from cleaning
- » Clean spillage of wet and dry substances immediately
- » Position equipment to avoid trailing cables crossing pedestrian routes, otherwise use cable cover
- » Keep the area clear of debris and rubbish
- » Ensure mats and rugs are securely fixed without curling edges
- » Place doormats at areas with change from wet to dry floor surfaces
- » Install tread nosing or anti-slip stripes at any changes of floor level
- » Check footwear for wear and tear, and replace accordingly