WORKPLACE SAFETY TIPS
A COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

• Your safety is your personal responsibility.
• Always follow the correct procedures.
• Never take shortcuts.
• Take responsibility and clean up if you made a mess.
• Clean and organize your workspace.
• Ensure a clear and easy route to emergency exits and equipment.
• Be alert and awake on the job.
• Be attentive at all times to your work surroundings.
• When in doubt, contact your supervisor or manager for instruction, guidance, or training.
• Never take risks when it comes to safety.
• Obey safety signs, stickers, and tags.
• Take short breaks when you keep up a repetitive motion for a long period of time, and sit, stand, or walk with good posture.
• Report serious injuries immediately to a supervisor and get emergency assistance.
• Keep things in perspective. Hazards may be limitless, so focus on the most likely risks first.
  o Strained backs and sliced fingers may be more popular in your workspace than would the risk of flooding (as in a basement office) or the risk of wild animals cutting loose (as in a zoo).

SAFETY IS A TEAM EFFORT

• Educate everyone in the workplace about the safety requirements and consider posting a list of workplace safety tips. Workplace safety training will help them reduce or eliminate injuries and illnesses from occurring in the workplace.
• **Always keep the communication lines open** with your co-workers, employers, or employees in order to promote and maintain a safe environment.

• **Immediately notify others** of any (new or old) hazards that you perceive.

• **Be alert to hazards that could affect anyone**—not just yourself; in this respect, maintain a team mentality at all times.

• **Report a hazardous condition immediately** to your manager or supervisor.

• **Be conscious** as to what others are doing around you, and do your best to ensure you don’t pose a hazard to them (and vice versa).

• **If you’re an employer,** invite and involve your employees in safety planning; obtain their insight, give and take suggestions, and ensure that everyone is on the same page.

**AN UPLIFTING THOUGHT: LIFTING AND CLIMBING SAFELY**

• **Always use both hands** when lifting a heavy or cumbersome object.

• **Adopt a proper stance** for lifting: put the strain on your legs, not your back (crouch at your feet, keep your back straight, and don’t bend at the waist).

• **Test the weight** before you lift something up completely; it might be too late if you realize a few seconds later that it’s too heavy or cumbersome for you.
  - An easy way to do this is to nudge it with your foot first.

• **Consider a back brace** if the work is heavy or you have a sensitive back.

• **Move your feet, not your back,** when you want to travel or turn while carrying a heavy load.

• **Lift slowly and smoothly.**

• **Keep your burden close** to your body; this means less strain on you.
• If your load is too heavy for you to handle alone, don’t be shy—ask for help!
• Ensure ladders are secure and steady before climbing aboard.
• Never climb on improvised ladders. Shelves and storage units are poor substitutes. Don’t be lazy, and find a proper solid ladder.
• Don’t let appearances fool you. Railings might appear solid and fixed, but they might be improperly secures; at least, test them first.
• Use safety harnesses if your job includes heights.
• Eliminate distractions when working on a roof, scaffold, or other elevated platform. More than ever, stay focused and alert!
• Keep an eye out on the floor to ensure it’s free of obstacles and spills. If it isn’t, get cleaning!

TOOLS AND MACHINERY: PUTTING SAFETY FIRST

• Use machinery only if you’re authorized, trained, and alert. Feel free to contact us for complete machine safety training.
• Always use the appropriate tool for the respective task.
• Clean your tools and keep them in good working order.
• Organize your tools and don’t be careless; someone could easily slip or get hit due to a misplaced object.
• Always ensure that the operator of a machine sees you; never approach from behind or from a blind side.
• Do not perform a task unless you’ve been trained and you are aware of the hazards as well as how to mitigate/eliminate them.
  o Explore new means of safety training that is flexible with your workplace.
Online interactive safety training offers many benefits to employees, and can train on a variety of topics necessary for any job task.

• **Never leave machinery running unattended.**
• **Never remove safety guards** that are in place to protect you and the surrounding area.
• **Obey all operating instructions.**
• **If something is wrong,** stop the machine immediately and get assistance.
• **Communicate your location and process** to those around you, so they’ll know where you are, what you’re doing, and when they need to be getting out of the way.
• **Never walk in front of a forklift, tractor, or any other heavy machine;** the operator may not have seen you—and, even if he has, there’s always room for error, so make sure that error isn’t you being trampled.
• **Always read labels and instructions** alerting you to potential dangers and hazards.
• **Unless it’s your job,** never tamper with electric controls, cords, switches, or other such hazardous items.
• **Dress properly and compactly:** billowing, loose, or hanging clothes and accessories (ties, earrings, bracelets, loose sleeves, etc.) may easily get caught up in moving parts.
  • At best, the offending objects may be destroyed; at worst, they could ruin the machine or severely hurt you.
• **Never insert fingers or any other objects that don’t belong** into moving machinery.
• **Turn off machines and equipment** before you even consider cleaning, un-jamming, oiling, adjusting, or moving them.

**BEWARE OF FIRE HAZARDS**

• **Come up with a fire emergency plan;** ensure that everyone knows and understands it.
• **Practice fire drills.**
• **Avoid “power strips”** which can ignite a fire if overloaded.
• **Ventilation is critical,** especially if dealing with fumes and chemicals.
  • Good ventilation helps to reduce the toxins in the air, and thus to eliminate highly flammable vapors.
• **In case of fire,** know what has fed the fire.
Never fight a grease fire with water; water will splash the oil and spread the flames.

Be aware of the whereabouts and use of fire extinguishers.

GEARING UP FOR SAFETY

- Always wear appropriate clothing and shoes respective to your job.
- Fire extinguishers must be available and readily attainable.
- First aid kits must be available and readily attainable.
- Never remove or tamper with safety devices.
- Use a back brace if you’re lifting heavy objects or you’ve got a sensitive back.
- A hard hat will protect you if there’s a risk of falling objects.
- Wear gloves if you’re handling sharp objects or toxic substances.
- Wear goggles if your work poses a hazard to your eyes.
- Wear safety harnesses if you’re working from an elevated location and there’s the risk of falling.
- Wear non-skid footgear:
  - If your workspace involves slippery surfaces (kitchens, spas, pools, etc.)
  - If you’re lifting heavy items
- Wear a breathing mask at all times, especially if:
  - You deal with dangerous or toxic chemicals or fumes
  - Your workspace has poor ventilation
  - Your workspace has debris, dust, and other flying particles.
- Wear the protective equipment that is intended and recommended for your particular task.
  - Seat belts
  - Safety glasses or goggles
  - Protective clothing, headgear, and/or footgear
  - Safety harnesses, etc.
• Be trained on the proper way to use each piece of necessary equipment.
  o Get complete safety training on any piece of industrial equipment.

---- Workplace Safety Tips: Sources ----

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• (3) Fatal occupational injuries by major event, 2011, page 4 by BLS.gov
• (4) Addressing the Issue of Compliance with Personal Protective Equipment on Construction Worksites: A Workers’ Perspective, page 1 by ascweb.org
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• (6) Addressing the Issue of Compliance with Personal Protective Equipment on Construction Worksites: A Workers’ Perspective, page 5 by ascweb.org
• (7) Injury and Illness Prevention Programs, page 2 by OSHA.gov
• (8) Fatal injuries involving foreign-born workers, by country or region of birth, 2011, page 12 by BLS.gov
• (9) NATIONAL CENSUS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES IN 2011, page 1 by bls.gov

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