

JOB AID

**Preventing Slips,
Trips and Falls**

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Slips, trips and falls can cause everything from painful bumps or bruises to broken bones, concussions or even death! Everyone in your workplace must take responsibility for slip, trip and fall safety. Before using a ladder at work for the first time, you must receive ladder safety training.

Definitions

- Slip: a loss of balance caused by too little friction between a person's foot/feet and his/her walking surface
- Trip: a loss of balance caused by the interruption of the movement of a person's foot by an obstacle
- Same-level fall: a slip and fall, trip and fall, or a step and fall
- Elevated fall: a fall from any distance, such as from a ladder, down stairs, off equipment, or from docks, trees, roofs or other height

Causes

Slip and fall injuries can be caused by a combination of slippery surfaces and the wrong footwear. Other causes include:

- Poor housekeeping
 - Items in aisles or on steps
 - Spilled liquids, puddles or water tracked in from outside
 - Poorly secured or anchored floor mats
- Inadequate lighting
 - Too dark
 - Glare
- Improper use of equipment
 - Ladders, scaffolds, vehicles, etc.
 - Makeshift ladders (climbing shelves, boxes or chairs)
- Bad habits
- Taking shortcuts

Solutions

There are simple steps you can take to make your work area a safer, more productive place:

- Keep work areas neat
- Keep work areas well-lit
- Use equipment correctly
- Develop good habits

Keep Work Areas Neat

- Eliminate clutter from aisles
- Keep floors clean, dry and uncluttered
- Use caution signs on wet floors
- Keep outdoor areas safe too
- Use secure, non-slip mats
- Eliminate protruding nails, splinters or loose boards
- Take care when using cords
- Block off or mark hazardous areas

Keep Work Areas Well-Lit

- Keep work areas, stairs and aisles well-lit
- Avoid wearing sunglasses indoors

Use Equipment Correctly

The improper use of equipment is a significant cause of slips, trips and falls. Inspect ladders and stairs regularly and before each use. Care is needed when using:

- Ladders
 - Use the proper ladder for the job
 - Do not use makeshift ladders such as shelves, boxes or chairs
 - If a ladder is required as part of your job, you must have ladder safety training
- Stairs
 - Look where you are going
 - Take one step at a time
 - Hold handrails
 - Keep steps clean, dry and uncluttered
 - Inspect stairs and stairwells for slip, trip and fall hazards
- Loading docks
 - Use portable railings
 - Be aware of traffic patterns
 - Keep area as clear as possible
 - Stay alert
 - Wear high visibility/reflective clothing
 - Make contact with equipment operators before entering loading dock areas
- Mobile equipment
 - Mount and dismount properly
 - Use handholds and steps provided
 - Keep three points of contact
 - Do not jump off any machine
 - Be aware of slippery conditions

Shoes

- Slip and fall injuries are often caused by a combination of a slippery surface and the wrong footwear
- Check with your employer about the most suitable shoes to wear in your workplace
- Maintain the proper footwear in good working order at all times

Fall Response

- Keep your wrists, elbows and knees bent
- Do not tense up but roll with the fall instead
- Do not try to break the fall with your hands or elbows
- It is better to land on your arm than on your head
- It is better to land on your buttocks than on your back