

Safety

COMPLIANCE ALERT™

Training
Shop



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Slips and falls: Dangerous at any height

Even sure-footed workers are at risk of suffering serious injuries from trips and falls. Here's what you need to know, from fall-prevention to cleaning up spills.

What to know

When people think of fall hazards on the job, their minds usually go to the high-risk work that's conducted well above ground level.

But almost 65% of fall injuries are the result of falling from the same level on walking surfaces.

These may seem less dangerous than falls from heights, but they can result in sprains, contusions or fractures.

But falls are the cause of 14% of workplace fatalities, second only to motor vehicle accidents.

Definitions

It helps to know what a slip, trip and fall is before working to prevent them.

- **Slip:** The result of your feet losing traction with the ground.
- **Trip:** When one's foot or lower body strikes an object, causing a

change in balance.

- **Fall:** A complete loss of balance.

What to look out for

Certain conditions make a slip, trip or fall more likely. They include:

- wet, oily or contaminated surfaces
- floors in disrepair
- loose or unanchored rugs, and
- weather hazards, such as ice or snow.

If you observe any of these warning signs in your workplace, report them to a supervisor immediately.

Preventing injury

One of the best ways to be safe from slips and falls on the job is to have proper footwear.

The best footwear will depend on your job, industry or

duties.

However, workplace footwear should be:

- **Comfortable.** Make sure it fits properly without pain.
- **In good condition.** Footwear should have treading to give traction. Replace pairs before yours are worn out.



DON'T TAKE A TRIP

Keeping aisles, hallways and walkways clear of dangers and debris is a must for avoiding trips and falls.

Here are some quick dos and don'ts for avoiding tripping hazards.

- **Do: Keep it clean.** Make sure aisles and walkways are clear of objects and kept in good order.
- **Don't: Make exceptions.** If you need to store an object temporarily, keep it away from areas with heavy foot traffic.
- **Do: Plan your route.** If you'll be carrying an object through the building, plan which way you'll go ahead of time. Look for possible hazards along the path before you start moving.
- **Don't: Rush.** Take your time when walking through the building. Make sure you're scanning as you go for unexpected hazards.
- **Do: Use floor outlets.** If you need to plug equipment in a well traveled area, use outlets on the floor instead of the wall.
- **Don't: Run cords across walkways.** Tape down cords when possible to minimize risk of tripping.

Training Shop Quiz

NAME _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

1 On-the-job slips, trips and falls result in relatively few workplace fatalities.

true false

2 A slip occurs when you lose your balance after your foot or lower body strikes an object.

true false

3 Slips, trips and falls can result in pain, contusions, fractures and other injuries.

true false

4 Planning your route before you begin carrying an object is a good method for avoiding slip, trip or fall injuries.

true false

5 In the event of a chemical spill, the most important thing is to get the situation under control. That means you should get right to work cleaning the area.

true false

6 The more worn-in a pair of shoes is, the better.

true false

7 If you need to run an electrical cord across a walkway or area people will be crossing, make sure it's taped down.

true false

8 Most workplace falls are from heights (the roof of a building, high scaffolds and ladders, etc).

true false

9 In the event of a non-chemical spill in the workplace, first block off the area of the spill. Then alert co-workers and clean it up.

true false

10 Potential dangers that could lead to a slip, trip or fall include: uneven carpeting or floor surfaces, weather conditions and wet, oily or contaminated floor surfaces.

true false

ANSWERS

1. *False.* Almost 14% of workplace fatalities are the result of falls. That's second only to motor vehicle accidents.
2. *False.* Trips occur when you become entangled with an object or drop to a lower level unexpectedly. Slips occur when there's a loss of traction between the feet and the ground.
3. *True.* They can also be fatal, which is why workers need to be aware of the dangers.
4. *True.* By visualizing the route you'll take before you begin moving, you can spot potential hazards along the way and avoid them.
5. *False.* When chemicals spill, you should tell a supervisor immediately. Material Safety Data Sheets should be consulted to see if and how you can clean it up.
6. *False.* Your footwear should have good traction. Buy replacement pairs before you think they're needed.
7. *True.* It's best not to have electrical cords in these areas, but if they must be used, tape them down to prevent trips.
8. *False.* Almost 65% of falls are from the same level on a walking surface.
9. *True.* This is for spills such as water or other non-chemical material.
10. *True.* If you observe these conditions, report them to a supervisor.

CLEANING UP SPILLS



Spills are a leading cause of slip-and-fall injuries in the workplace.

But depending on the spill type, different actions are required.

- **Non-chemicals spills:** Block off the area, alert co-workers and clean it up.
- **Chemical spills.** Alert a supervisor immediately. Read the material safety data sheet for the material before determining whether you can clean it. If you can clean it yourself, put on PPE before attempting to do so.