

5 steps to risk assessment

Step 1: Identify hazards



Identifying hazards means taking some time to think about what might harm people at work. You can identify hazards by:

- 1 Thinking about the tasks employees carry out** such as using computers, working at height, driving, manual handling, cleaning, travelling, maintenance, repetitive tasks, or working at other locations.
- 2 Inspecting your workplace to look for hazards** such as lack of space or unsuitable layout, damaged flooring, inadequate lighting, lack of ventilation, inadequate welfare facilities, areas or equipment that is in a poor state of repair
- 3 Looking at the items that people use** like machinery, materials, office furniture, display screens and computers, ladders and steps, hand tools, lifts, cooking facilities and chemicals.
- 4 Considering hazards you cannot typically see** such as poor working practices or operations which might cause stress or other wellbeing issues such as shift, night or lone working, biological hazards such as legionella as well as gas, electricity, and noise.
- 5 Speaking with people who do the work**, they can tell you about the hazards they may face or problems they have.

Points to Remember:

- 1 Reviewing sources of information** such as legislation, industry guidance, your workplace accident and ill health data, equipment manufacturer information, and chemical data sheets.
- 2 Use a competent person to carry out your risk assessments** to ensure they cover all the risks in your business.
- 3 You only need to identify hazards which are significant**, which you can reasonably be expected to know about, and which are relevant. Hazards which are part of everyday life, are not associated with your work, or are insignificant, like paper cuts, shouldn't form part of a good risk assessment