



Health and Safety

Slips and Trips

Minimum Standard

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1 Aims and Principles

The aim of this Government of Jersey (GoJ) Minimum Standard is to provide guidance on the steps which should be taken to ensure the risk of slips and trips in the workplace is being properly controlled.

All departments should develop their own procedures for managing the risk of slips and trips on their premises and during their work activities.

The procedures must include the standards set out in this document or be of an equivalent or higher standard.

2 Legislation and Guidance

a) Applicable Legislation

[Health and Safety at Work \(Jersey\) Law, 1989](#)

b) Guidance

[Slips and Trips – Resources \(UK HSE\)](#)
[Preventing Slips and Trips at Work \(UK HSE\)](#)
[Choosing Slip Resistant Footwear \(UK HSE\)](#)

3 Definitions

Slip

Occurs when a person loses traction beneath their foot, causing them to fall backwards.

Trip

Occurs when a person catches their foot on something, causing them to fall forward.

4 Who this Minimum Standard Applies to

- Government of Jersey (GoJ) and States' employees
- Voluntary staff or those on honorary contracts where there is no implied contract of employment

Where those persons:



- are responsible for ensuring the safety of all persons who access GoJ premises; or
- manage work carried out by GoJ employees where they could be exposed to a risk of a slip or trip; or
- engage contractors to carry out works which could give rise to slip or trip hazards on GoJ premises

5 Links to other GoJ Policies, Minimum Standards and Guidance

a) Policies

Government of Jersey - Health and Safety Policy

b) GoJ Minimum Standards

Risk Assessment

Control of Contractors

Managing Construction Work - Designer

c) Other Internal Guidance

Further guidance may be available from other departments carrying out this type of work.

For assistance with preparing internal procedures, contact should be made with your departmental Health and Safety Manager/Adviser “Professional”.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

The department’s procedures for managing the risk of slips and trips on the premises or during work which is under its control, must clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all those individuals involved with the work.

Reference should be made to the Government of Jersey Health and Safety Policy for general responsibilities.

7 Overview

Slips and trips are responsible for a high proportion of workplace accidents each year. The outcome of such incidents can vary considerably and can cause anything from a bruise to a fracture.



Slips and trips can be caused by a variety of hazards including, but not limited to:

- Trailing cables
- Uneven floors
- Floors in poor condition
- Changes in level
- Wet floors from washing or wet weather
- Inappropriate cleaning methods
- Contaminated floors e.g. from spills, leaks etc.
- Unsuitable type of flooring
- Poor lighting
- Inappropriate footwear

8 Controlling the Risks

There are a number of actions which can be taken to control the risks of slips and trips in the workplace. It should be recognised that some hazards will be present during a specific activity or period of time e.g. trailing vacuum cleaner cable or a wet floor during cleaning, whilst others will be present at all times once they have arisen e.g. damaged flooring, poor lighting due to failure of a bulb etc.

The risk of slips and trips should be considered during any risk assessment process and should be included where such hazards are present. This should ensure that slip and trip hazards which could arise during particular activities are identified and dealt with. Reference should be made to the Minimum Standard - Risk Assessment for further information on assessment and training.

However, relying solely on this approach is unlikely to identify all risks present e.g. those posed by the condition of the premises. Therefore, additional action will need to be taken to ensure that the risks are being properly identified and controlled.

9 Selection of Flooring

One of the first steps in controlling the risks posed by slip and trip hazards is the selection of suitable flooring. The type of flooring chosen should take into account the type of tasks to be undertaken in the area, typical pedestrian traffic and factors which could change the nature of the flooring e.g. contamination and spillage.

This can be a confusing issue as there are many types of flooring available. Some decisions will be straightforward but where there is a high risk of slips occurring, it is recommended that a competent flooring designer is consulted for advice to ensure that the correct decision is made.



10 Premises Inspections

Carrying out regular inspections of premises is an excellent way of identifying any slip and trip hazards which may not come to light otherwise until an accident occurs. The inspection can be designed to specifically look for slip and trips hazards or these can be incorporated into a wider inspection which looks at a variety of hazards.

The inspections should cover the internal and external areas of the premises. When planning the inspections, consideration should be given to changing circumstances e.g. low light levels during the winter months in external areas and it recommended that subsequent repeat inspections are scheduled to take these variations into account so a true picture can be gained.

There is no set frequency of inspection and the department should determine what would be appropriate, based on the usage of the premises and the vulnerability of persons exposed. The frequency of inspections can be amended in response to the findings e.g. if issues continue to be identified during the inspections, then the frequency should be increased.

An example inspection form for checking slip and trip hazards on a premise is in Appendix A. This can be amended to suit the nature of the premises and the type of issues which could arise and therefore need to be checked.

11 Preventing Contamination

Contamination of flooring significantly increases the risk of persons slipping.

Careful consideration should be given to the types of contamination which could occur and how they can be prevented.

Typical contaminants include, but are not limited to:

- Water brought into a building on footwear and umbrellas during wet weather
- Leaking plant or machinery
- Spillage when handling liquids
- Spilt food and drinks
- Depositing of aerosol materials being used nearby e.g. silicone polish
- Weather hazards e.g. rain, leaves, algae growth, ice
- Biological contaminants e.g. body fluids and waste
- Environmental hazards e.g. condensation, dust

Where it is recognised that contamination can occur, suitable materials must be supplied to enable employees to deal with the spillage promptly and effectively. This could be anything from paper towels to full spill kits.

The type of materials required for dealing with spillages will depend on the nature and extent of spillage and should be identified during the risk assessment process, whether



that be specifically for slips and trips or task/premises related.

12 Cleaning of Floors

The cleaning of floors can create slip hazards both during the cleaning process and as a result of the wrong cleaning agent/method being used. Temporary trip hazards can also be created such as trailing vacuum cleaner cables, placement of buckets and warning signs in walkways etc.

Cleaning agent/method used

For some floors, the supplier will provide details of the cleaning agents and methods which should be used to ensure that the surface of the floor retains its slip-resistance.

The use of inappropriate or too much cleaning agent can cause residue to accumulate on the surface of the flooring which can reduce its slip-resistance, causing the surface to become more slippery.

Where greasy contamination has occurred, cleaning agents must be given sufficient time to work.

The use of an incorrect method could also result in dirt and debris remaining on the floor which could affect the slip-resistance of the floor surface over time.

Cleaning process

During the cleaning process, the risk of slipping will be increased if persons are permitted to access the area before it is dry. Ways to control this include:

- Use a wet/dry two mop system to reduce drying time
- Physically close off areas to pedestrians during cleaning
- Conduct cleaning of floor out of hours

Where electric powered equipment is used to clean the floors, the power cables often result in a trip hazard being created. Measures to address this include cleaning when the area is unoccupied, using battery operated equipment, plugging the item in close to the working area etc. These risks should be considered as part of the risk assessment prepared for cleaning activities.

Where cleaning is carried out by an external contractor, checks should be made that appropriate cleaning agents and methods are being used.



13 Footwear

Whilst every effort should be made to prevent slip hazards from arising, there will always be circumstances where slip-resistant footwear will be required. This is effectively a form of personal protective equipment which is the last control to be used when there are no other reasonably practicable options available.

The UK HSE advises that footwear should **not** be selected on the basis of brochure descriptions or laboratory results alone. Further information on the selection of footwear is available in the UK HSE guidance [Choosing Slip Resistant Footwear \(UK HSE\)](#).

When choosing footwear, it is important to take into account the views of the employees as if it is uncomfortable or impractical, then they will not wear it, no matter how effective it is.

14 Reporting of Issues

Arrangements should be put in place for employees to be able to report any issues or concerns they have regarding slip or trip hazards either on the premises or present during their work activities. Examples of these include:

- Flooring in poor condition
- Frequent spillage occurring/not being cleaned up
- Contamination occurring during wet weather from footwear and umbrellas
- Trailing cables
- Unmarked changes in level
- Inadequate lighting/bulbs broken
- Weather hazards e.g. ice, wet leaves

Concerns and near misses can be reported on the online incident reporting form [Reporting an incident, accident or near-miss](#)

Slip and Trip Hazards – Inspection Form

Building:		Location Inspected:	
Inspected by:		Date of Inspection:	

Floor Condition		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
1.	Floors are in a clean condition				
2.	Floors are in good condition				
3.	Walkways are free from trip hazards				
4.	Carpet are in good condition and are properly secured				
5.	Floor mats are in good condition and do not pose a trip hazard by design or placement				
6.	All stairs are in good condition				
7.	Floors are properly designed to allow for good drainage.				
8.	Floors drains are not plugged/ allow adequate drainage.				

Environmental Factors - Internal		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
1.	Mats are present at pedestrian entrances				
2.	Umbrella stands are available at pedestrian entrances				
3.	Flooring condition checked during wet weather				

Spillage and Cleaning		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
1.	Suitable equipment is available for spills				
2.	Floors are cleaned regularly				
3.	Warning signs are readily available				

Building perimeter / External Stairways		YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
1.	Pavements and ramps are in good condition				
2.	Stairs are in good condition				
3.	Handrail is present and secured at all stairways and ramps				
4.	Guardrails are present and in good condition where required				
5.	Lighting is adequate				

Appendix A

6.	Drains are clear				
7.	No accumulations of wet leaves				
8.	Decking and other external surfaces are free from algae growth etc.				
9.	Icy surfaces have been gritted or closed off				
Other Comments/ Notes					