Risk assessment template

Risk-rated version - based on HSE's five steps, with a 1-5 likelihood x severity score.

How to use this template

A risk assessment is a careful look at what could cause harm to people at work or at your activity, so you can decide whether you are doing enough to prevent it. It is about sensible, proportionate steps - not a mountain of paperwork. This template is based on HSE's five steps. Check HSE guidance for your workplace.

1. **Identify hazards.** Walk round and look at what could reasonably cause harm: how people work, the equipment and substances used, and the state of the premises. Ask the people who do the job, and look back at any accident or near-miss records.
2. **Assess the risks.** Decide who might be harmed and how, and how likely and serious the harm could be. Think about staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and the public. Some people need extra thought, for example young people, new or expectant mothers and people with disabilities.
3. **Control the risks.** For each hazard, write down what you already do. Then ask whether it is enough. If not, decide what further action is needed, who will do it and by when. The aim is to do what is reasonably practicable: balancing the level of risk against the effort, cost and time of the measures.
4. **Record your findings.** Write down the significant hazards, who might be harmed, and what you do about them. HSE guidance says employers with five or more employees need to record their significant findings. Even if you have fewer, a short written record is useful. Check HSE guidance for your workplace.
5. **Review the controls.** Check your controls are working. Set a review date and update the assessment if necessary. Review sooner if something changes - new equipment, new people, a change to the way you work, or after an accident or near miss.

A signed, dated form on a shelf does not make anyone safer. What matters is that the actions are done and the people affected know about them.

HSE covers Great Britain. In Northern Ireland, see HSENI.

Adding scores

- Fill in the first set of score columns (L, S, Risk) for the hazard as it is now, with what you already do.
- Fill in the second set for what you expect once the further actions are done. If an action brings no change to the score, ask whether it is worth doing.
- Look at the highest scores first. Use your own judgement - the numbers help you compare, they do not replace thinking.

Scoring key

Scoring is one common way to decide which risks to deal with first. It is a tool, not a requirement. Score each hazard for the likelihood of harm (1-5) and for how serious that harm could be (1-5), then multiply the two numbers.

Risk matrix: likelihood x severity

Likelihood	Severity of harm				
	1 Negligible	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Severe
5 Almost certain	5 M	10 H	15 H	20 V	25 V
4 Likely	4 L	8 M	12 H	16 H	20 V
3 Possible	3 L	6 M	9 M	12 H	15 H
2 Unlikely	2 L	4 L	6 M	8 M	10 H
1 Rare	1 L	2 L	3 L	4 L	5 M

Score = likelihood x severity. L = Low, M = Medium, H = High, V = Very high.

What the numbers mean

	Likelihood	How likely is harm?		Severity	How serious could it be?
1	**Rare**	Very unlikely to happen	1	**Negligible**	No injury, or first aid only
2	**Unlikely**	Could happen but not expected	2	**Minor**	Injury needing basic treatment, short recovery
3	**Possible**	Might happen from time to time	3	**Moderate**	Injury or illness needing medical treatment, time off work
4	**Likely**	Will probably happen	4	**Major**	Serious injury or illness, long-term effects
5	**Almost certain**	Expected to happen, possibly often	5	**Severe**	Life-threatening injury or death, or several people seriously hurt

What the bands mean

Band	Score	What it usually means
Low (L)	1-4	Keep an eye on it. Check the controls still work at your next review.
Medium (M)	5-9	Add controls where reasonably practicable and plan the action.
High (H)	10-16	Deal with it soon. Put sensible controls in place and check them.
Very high (V)	20-25	Stop and put controls in place before the activity goes ahead.

Risk assessment record

Organisation		**Assessment by**	
Activity or area assessed		**Date of assessment**	
Review date		**Date of last review**	

L = likelihood (1-5), S = severity (1-5), Risk = L x S. See the scoring key for the bands.

No.	What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Risk now			What further action is needed?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Risk after action			Done
				L	S	Risk				L	S	Risk	
1													☐
2													☐
3													☐
4													☐
5													☐
6													☐

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				L	S	Risk				L	S	Risk	
7													☐
8													☐
9													☐
10													☐
11													☐
12													☐