

COLLECTIVE  
RESPONSIBILITY



# SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS



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## The Scale of the Problem

Slips, trips and falls remain the **leading cause of workplace injury**, contributing significantly to the **604,000 non-fatal workplace injuries** in 2023/24, and causing a large share of the **4.1 million working days lost** as a result. They are also the **most commonly reported under RIDDOR**, with **61,663 cases** in that year alone.

Workplace accidents are part of a wider public health challenge. According to the **Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)**, accidental deaths have risen by **42% over the last decade**, with **21,336 people dying from accidents in 2022**—a total roughly equal to the capacity of London's O2 Arena. Falls alone now account for **61% of accidental deaths**, having surged **90% since 2013**.

The economic cost is staggering:

**£21.6 billion**

annually due to workplace injuries and new ill health cases (2022/23)

**£5.9 billion**

annually lost to businesses from accident-related output disruption

**£6 billion+**

annual burden on the NHS from accident-related care

RoSPA in partnership with Speedy Hire calls for a **National Accident Prevention Strategy**, highlighting the urgent need for unified, evidence-led action across the UK. Slips, trips and falls are not only a workplace hazard—they are a national safety and public health priority.



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## Legal Framework – UK Legislation

### 1. Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Employers must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure health and safety. Employees must cooperate, follow procedures, and use provided equipment safely.

### 2. Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Workplaces must have suitable floors—kept in good condition, free from obstructions, and safe for movement.

### 3. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Requires a structured, five-step risk assessment to identify, control, and monitor risks. Employers with 5+ staff must document findings and review assessments regularly.

### 4. Work at Height Regulations 2005

Includes provisions to prevent falls caused by slips or trips near edges or elevated surfaces. Controls must be in place where falls from height are foreseeable.

These laws together demand a **proactive, documented approach** to slip, trip and fall prevention.

## Five-Step Risk Assessment

Based on guidance from HSE, Speedy Hire, and RoSPA:

- 1. Identify hazards** – Wet floors, loose cables, poor lighting, uneven surfaces
- 2. Decide who might be harmed** – Employees, visitors, contractors, public
- 3. Evaluate risk and decide precautions** – Remove hazard or implement controls
- 4. Record findings** – Mandatory if there are 5+ employees
- 5. Review regularly** – After incidents, changes, or at scheduled intervals

Speedy Hire promotes this as a **priority safety tool**, supported by RoSPA's national recommendations.

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## Practical Prevention Strategies

### 1. Housekeeping & Environment Control

- Clear walkways of obstructions, tools, cables, and waste
- Clean spills immediately; place clear “wet floor” signage
- Use anti-slip mats or tapes at high-risk areas
- Repair damaged floors promptly (tiles, steps, carpets)

### 2. Lighting & Design

- Maintain strong, glare-free lighting indoors and outdoors
- Highlight changes in level (e.g. ramps, steps) with signs and rails

### 3. Footwear & Personal Behaviour

- Provide task-appropriate, slip-resistant footwear
- Educate on safe movement—no rushing or phone use while walking
- Encourage safe lifting and carrying practices to keep hands free

### 4. Equipment & Cables

- Use cordless tools or lights when possible
- Secure cables with ramps, clips, or trays—especially in walkways

### 5. Training & Awareness

- Use toolbox talks, “Fall Fighter” sessions, and Speedy’s pocket guides
- Foster a safety culture: reward near-miss reporting and hazard spotting
- Include slips/trips in induction, refresher and task-specific training

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## Be aware of Environmental Conditions

Weather conditions can significantly impact safety at work. In winter, cold snaps increase the risk of slips and falls due to ice, wet leaves, and untreated surfaces. When planning work in cold or sub-zero conditions, consider using signage, grit spreaders, lighting, wet vacs, leaf blowers, and anti-slip road plates—available from Speedy Hire.

In warmer months, heat and dust can cause fatigue and reduced alertness, increasing the risk of accidents. Speedy Hire offers air movers, fans, temporary shelters, and dust suppression or extraction equipment to help manage these risks.

Factoring in environmental conditions as part of your job planning is key to preventing slips, trips, and falls. Speak to your Speedy team for advice and support.

Additionally, keeping the worksite clear and organised is crucial. Where possible, reduce trailing cables by using battery-powered equipment. If cables are necessary, always use cable ramps to minimise trip hazards. Tool vaults and battery banks help maintain a tidy work area and reduce clutter. Manual handling aids such as board trolleys and turntable trucks can ease strain and prevent accidents, while spill kits ensure you're prepared to manage hazards quickly and safely.

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## Monitoring & Continuous Improvement

- Investigate **all incidents and near-misses**—gather evidence, update assessments.
- Record in accident books and share lessons learned.
- Involve workers in safety reviews and updates.
- Use data to drive **policy updates, retraining, and leadership engagement**.



## Summary Checklist

Priority Area	Action Points
Housekeeping	Clear walkways; clean spills; anti-slip mats
Flooring	Repair surfaces; highlight level changes
Lighting	Adequate, glare-free lighting in all areas
Footwear	Provide and monitor task-appropriate, slip-resistant footwear
Equipment & Cables	Use cordless tools; secure all cables
Training & Awareness	Toolbox talks; RoSPA's Fall Fighter; report near-misses
Monitoring	Investigate, review, and adapt procedures using incident data

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## Why This Matters

Slips, trips and falls are not just common—they are **costly, deadly, and increasingly urgent**.

- They're the **leading cause of non-fatal injuries** in UK workplaces
- **4.1 million days** lost in a single year from injuries they help cause
- They contribute to the UK's **rising accidental death rate**—now at **21,336 per year**
- Falls alone now account for **61% of accidental deaths**
- Businesses face **billions in lost productivity and legal exposure**
- The NHS absorbs **5.2 million bed days** annually due to accident-related harm

With strong legislation, updated data, and coordinated safety leadership, these risks are **largely preventable**.

RoSPA's call for a **National Accident Prevention Strategy** underlines the need to treat workplace slips, trips and falls not as routine, but as a **national safety priority**. Aligning your workplace with this vision protects people, preserves productivity, and demonstrates **mature, evidence-led safety leadership**.

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