

Assess the risk

You need to determine whether you have taken enough precautions, or should do more to prevent harm or damage. The aim is to ensure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill and that no property gets damaged or lost.

It is important to decide whether a hazard is significant, for instance, electricity can kill, but the likelihood of it doing so at an event is remote, provide that 'live' components are insulated and there is no damage or defects present.

5 essential steps

- Identify the **significant hazards** to persons or property. Such as untidy or damaged power cables, wet floors, fire escape routes.
- Determine **who or what might be harmed** and how.
Could be new / expectant mothers, visitors, children, the elderly, equipment, property and parked cars.
- **Evaluate the risks** and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate, or whether more should be done.
Consider how likely it is that the hazard could cause harm and think about the severity and consequence of the harm.
- **Record your findings.**
A set of letters and a set of numbers are generally used, i.e. A to C for the severity and consequence of the harm, and 1 to 3 for the likelihood that the hazard will occur.

A = death, major injury, major damage or loss to property,
B = injury lasting over 3 days, damage to property/equipment,
C = minor injury, minor damage to property/equipment.

1 = extremely likely to occur,
2 = likely to occur,
3 = slight chance of occurring.

A1 = being the most severe and in need of immediate attention, E5 = being the least severe and a last priority to reduce the risk of.

e.g. A bare electricity cable running along a window sill is extremely likely to cause death, having a rating of A1, and a plant pot on a window sill is less likely to fall off and hit someone, but if it did it would only be minor injuries, so would have a rating on C3.
- **Review your assessment** and revisit if necessary. The assessment will have to be reviewed and revised whenever something major in the event changes, i.e. location or weather.