

Slips and Trips

Slips and trips are among the top incidents and causes of injury in workplaces. Everyone is at risk for slipping or tripping no matter what department, gender, age, or job task. Factors causing these injuries are both physical and human factors.

Physical Factors

- Housekeeping issues
- Poor lighting
- Wet or slippery surfaces
- Uneven stairs
- Lack of maintenance
- Winter weather
- Cluttered walkways

Human Factors

- Distracted
- Rushing
- Fatigue
- Complacency
- Frustration
- Improper footwear
- Lack of hazard recognition

Physical Factors

The physical factors contributing to slips and trips can be much easier to eliminate and are easily identifiable, however they are only part of the problem. Below are some of the ways to reduce or eliminate the physical concerns around slips and trips.

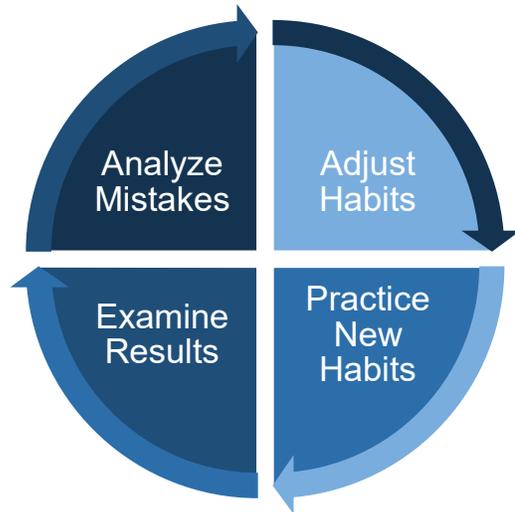
- Use high traction mats or slip resistant treads wherever possible
- Have employees at high risk wear non-slip footwear
- Clean up spills or leaks as quickly as possible
- Reduce ice build-up and snow accumulation on main walkways
- Replace cracked, worn, or uneven surfaces as soon as possible
- Remove hazards and debris from walkways

Good Housekeeping

1. Make sure housekeeping standards are set and there is a routine in place.
2. Plan ahead. Know what needs to be done, who is going to do it, and what the area should look like when it is done.
3. Identify areas of concern and implement a plan to reduce the hazards. Some particular areas that are usually wet or slippery include:
 - a. Food prep areas
 - b. Shower and bathroom stalls
 - c. Parking lots
 - d. Roof tops
 - e. Stairwells
4. Avoid creating obstacles in walkways and remove any debris, clutter, and equipment out of the way.
5. Conduct periodic audits and inspections of work areas to identify slip and trip hazards.

Human Factors

Human factors can be hard to address and hard to enforce. It requires frequent training and continuous reinforcement of good habits. Day to day issues and emotions can affect the probability of injury so it is important to remind employees to slow down and remain aware of their surroundings no matter what else may be going on in their life. When employees are not distracted, take their time, and follow certain pre-cautions, the likeliness of injury drastically decreases.



Some ways to reduce the human factors are:

- Provide reminders for safe habits
- Develop workplace procedures
- Provide frequent and quality training
- Provide employees with risk analysis tools

Building Safety Habits

Correcting the physical hazards can only be impactful if the human factors are addressed as well. See below for examples.

Physical Factors

- Ensure all stairs have the proper handrails
- Clearly mark all walkways when wet or slippery
- Ensure all areas are well lit
- Provide employees with the proper footwear

Human Factors

- Ensure employees are using the handrail while walking up or down stairs.
- Ensure employees are not distracted and aware of these signs and follow them appropriately.
- Ensure employees are turning on the lights when entering a room.
- Employees must wear the proper footwear.

Winter Weather

Winter weather including snow and ice are among the main causes of slips on campus. This weather is unavoidable in Colorado, but actions are taken on campus to reduce the impact to the public. Facilities works hard to perform snow removal and lay down salt to reduce ice build-up, but there is not always enough time to eliminate the risk before others arrive on campus. Employees need to pay attention to where they are walking and that there is always the potential for a walkway to be slippery in the snow. Proper footwear is essential to reducing your risk of slipping on ice. Remember, it is acceptable to change your shoes once in the office.

