

## Identify hazards in risk assessment

The first thing to do when carrying out a risk assessment is identify potential hazards in your workplace. Think of what could go wrong and how people could get hurt or made ill.

### You should

- speak to your employees - they may be aware of hazards that aren't so obvious to you
- observe the tasks carried out by your employees
- check your accident, near miss and ill-health records
- read instructions for tools and equipment - they will inform you of hazards
- check the information contained within safety data sheets for hazardous substances
- consider other situations - such as problems with equipment, machinery, maintenance or cleaning.

### Common hazards

Some common hazards that could be found in your organisation include

- adverse weather
- biological agents
- electricity
- hazardous substances
- lone working
- machinery
- manual handling
- slips, trips and falls
- stress
- vehicles and workplace transport
- violence and aggression
- working at height
- working in confined spaces

### Specific risk assessments

The risk assessment process should be used to identify hazards in your work activity and to evaluate the control measures that you have in place to manage these risks.

The aim is to ensure that your activities are carried out without risks to the health and safety of your employees and others.

You may identify some risks that require you to take a slightly different approach when evaluating the risk they pose to health and safety.

These risks need a different approach because of their complexity or specific legal requirements.

For example, if you identify noise as a hazard during a risk assessment, then you should read the specific guidance about noise and carry out a noise risk assessment.

<https://www.healthyworkinglives.scot/workplace-guidance/risk-assessment/how-to/Pages/identify-hazards.aspx>