



TAKE 5 SAFETY STEPS

Under WH&S Legislation it is each worker's duty to identify hazards, assess the risks that may be present, and put effective risk controls in place. This important requirement can be fulfilled by applying the 'Take 5 Safety Steps'.

The intention is that 5 minutes is taken before each new task is undertaken to consider the risks and the best ways to mitigate them.

Below are points to consider as you 'Take 5' -

1. STOP - and think through the task

- Have you been asked to do this task by your supervisor or oversight?
- Do you know how to perform the task?
- Is where you are performing the task the best and safest place?

2. LOOK - at what are the hazards

- What hazards are present, e.g. manual handling?
- Are the identified hazards close, afar, above or below where you are?
- Have you considered the 'what ifs', e.g. someone doesn't follow instructions?

3. ASSESS - threats of damage or injury

- What is the possibility of the event occurring?
- What are the consequences of the event occurring?
- Have you calculated the risk?

4. CONTROL - through suitable control measures

Apply the 'hierarchy of controls'. It has six levels. The most effective control is at the top of the hierarchy and the least effective is at the bottom. Therefore, when selecting a suitable control measure, you must start from the top of the hierarchy and work your way down.

The hierarchy of control is as follows:

- Elimination – removes the cause of danger completely.
- Substitution - controls the hazard by replacing it with a less risky way to achieve the same outcome.
- Isolation – separates the hazard from the people at risk by isolating it.
- Engineering – using engineering controls, i.e. making physical changes, to lessen any remaining risk, e.g. adding safeguards to equipment.
- Administration – use administrative controls to lessen the risk, e.g. install signs, rotate jobs.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – requires you to wear PPE, e.g. provide gloves, earplugs, goggles, iridescent vests.

Note: The use of PPE to control hazards should always be the last resort. Also, when planning for hazard controls, remember that the control selected must not mitigate one hazard while creating another.

5. MONITOR - has the hazard been successfully mitigated

If 'yes', proceed as planned to while utilising the controls and monitor their effectiveness. If 'no', adjust the controls until the risk has been sufficiently managed.

