

8 Safety in the workplace



Some useful phrases.

Listen to the recording and repeat.

You should put your ear plugs in.

You mustn't smoke here.

You must wear goggles in that area.

Mind out! Don't get too close.

Please be careful when you walk across the floor.

It might be slippery.

Make sure you know how to stop the machine.

Check that all the safety guards are fitted correctly.

Some of the materials we use are highly-flammable.

Could you just run through the evacuation procedure?

When you hear the fire alarm, go to the nearest fire exit.

Always shut the fire doors to prevent the fire spreading.

I think he's hurt his back.

What shall we do?

I'll get the first-aider.

We'd better not move him.



Dialogues 1

1

"OK, so let's look round the factory now. **It's quite a hazardous environment** so you need to take care. By the way, **you should put your ear plugs in** when we go down to the factory. It's not compulsory but some of the machines are a bit noisy."

2

"This is the machine hall. Do you notice that sign over there – the red circle with a diagonal line through it? It means **you mustn't smoke here**. A blue circle shows something is compulsory – so that sign over there means **you must wear goggles in that area** to protect your eyes. The yellow triangle with a black border over there is a warning sign. It means the floor might be wet."

3

"Mind out. Don't get too close. It's very hot. We don't want you to burn yourself. And **please be careful when you walk across the floor. It might be slippery."**

"So, if you follow me into the Finished Goods Area now ... Mind you don't trip when you go past the packing area. Someone has left some wooden pallets on the floor. And be careful when you walk across the warehouse. **There might be a fork-lift truck reversing into the storage area."**

4

"I realise **some of you are already familiar with the safety procedures** for this type of machine but I'll just explain some of the basics again. First of all, **make sure you know how to stop the machine** before you start it. That seems obvious but it's important."

"Now on this machine **always check that all the safety guards are fitted correctly** before you operate the machine because **if you don't, someone might have a bad accident**. What else? Oh yes, never try to clean a machine that's in motion. Switch it off and unplug it."

"And finally, tell your supervisor immediately if you think the machine is not working properly or if you think there are any problems. Okay, so has anyone got **any questions?**"

Notes

It's quite a hazardous environment ...

Something that is *hazardous* is dangerous to people's health or safety.

Note also *hazard*:

The workshop is full of hazards.

... you should put your ear plugs in ...

Should is used to show that something is recommended (but not compulsory).

Some other ways of doing this:

I recommend you put your ear plugs in.

I suggest you wear goggles in this area.

... you mustn't smoke here.

Some other ways of saying this:

You can't smoke here.

You're not allowed to smoke here.

Smoking is prohibited here.

Smoking isn't allowed here.

... you must wear goggles in that area ...

We can also say:

Goggles must be worn.

Goggles are compulsory / obligatory.

Mind out! Don't get too close.

Some other expressions with *mind* to warn someone of a possible danger:

Mind you don't trip!

Mind your head!

... please be careful when you walk across the floor.

Please be careful when ... is another way of giving a warning.

It might be slippery.

Note *might/may* indicates that something is possible. *It might/may be* is used with an adjective:

It might be hot. It may be noisy.

There might be a fork-lift truck reversing into the storage area.

There might/may be is used with a noun:

There might/may be oil on the floor.

... some of you are already familiar with the safety procedures ...

You can also say:

Some of you already know about the safety procedures.

Some of you have already been shown the safety procedures.

A *procedure* is the correct way of doing things, usually in a fixed order.

... make sure you know how to stop the machine ...

Note other ways of talking about safety regulations:

Never attempt to clean a machine that's in motion.

Tell your supervisor immediately.

Check that the area around the machine is clean and tidy.

Wear goggles when you are welding.

Don't throw tools in the workshop.

Note *do not* would be used in a written notice or in a strong spoken instruction. Usually in speech we used the contracted form, *don't*.

... always check that all the safety guards are fitted correctly ... if you don't, someone might have a bad accident.

Note the use of *if* to talk about possible consequences if safety procedures aren't followed:

Always wear goggles when welding. If you don't, you might damage your eyes.

Never smoke in the workshop. If you do, you might start a fire.

British/American differences

British

American

Mind out!

This expression is only used in British English.

In both American and British English the expression *Watch out* is used. For example:

Mind you don't trip.

Watch you don't trip.

Mind your head!

Watch your head!



Dialogues 2

5

- A:** Is that a no-smoking sign?
B: Yes, it is. As you know, **some of the materials we use are highly-flammable** so we have a very strict non-smoking policy in the factory.
A: What does that sign mean?
B: It means there must be no naked flames or sparks anywhere near flammable materials. If the materials ignite, it could cause a serious fire and **the fumes they give off can be very dangerous** if you inhale them.

6

- A:** **Could you just run through the evacuation procedure?**
B: Yes, of course. **When you hear the fire alarm**, which is a very loud, continuous ringing noise, you should **go to the nearest fire exit or fire escape** as quickly as possible.
A: Should we use the stairs?
B: Yes, don't use the lifts. We have regular fire drills so you'll soon become familiar with the procedure. And **always shut the fire doors to prevent the fire spreading.**

7

- A:** What should I do if I notice a fire?
B: **Raise the alarm by breaking the glass** of the nearest fire alarm. Call Security, say 'Fire' and give your name and exact location. At night you should phone the fire service from the nearest telephone.
A: Should I try to put the fire out?
B: If you discover a small fire, **you can try to put it out with a fire extinguisher** but only do this if you have been trained. Make sure you use the right extinguisher. They are all colour-coded and contain different substances to put out the fire.

8

- A:** **Your hand is bleeding.** What have you done to it?
B: I cut it on that blade.
A: **I'll get the first aid box.** There's some antiseptic cream and a bandage in there.

9

- A:** Ow! I've twisted my ankle. I slipped on that greasy patch over there. I don't think it's broken but **it really hurts.**
B: Sit down here – don't put any pressure on it. **I'd better call the company doctor.**

10

- A:** Marco has fallen off a ladder. **I think he's hurt his back. What shall we do?**
B: **We'd better not move him. I'll get the first-aid.**

Notes

... some of the materials we use are highly-flammable ...

Instead of *are flammable* you could say: *catch fire/ignite/burn easily*.

Some of the materials we use burn easily.

Sometimes the word *inflammable* is used (e.g. *highly inflammable aircraft fuel*) with the same meaning as *flammable*.

... the fumes they give off can be very dangerous ...

Produce/emit can be used for *give off*.

Could you just run through the evacuation procedure?

You could use *go through* or *explain* for *run through*:

Could you explain/go through the safety instructions again?

To *evacuate* means to move people from a dangerous place.

When you hear the fire alarm, ... go to the nearest fire exit or fire escape ...

Note these expressions with *fire*.

Also: *a fire drill, the fire service, fire fighters*.

... always shut the fire doors to prevent the fire spreading.

You can also use *stop* for *prevent*:

The best thing is to stop the fire starting in the first place.

Prevent can be used with just a noun:
We must try to prevent accidents.

Raise the alarm by breaking the glass ...

Raise the alarm means warn people of danger.

... you can try to put it out with a fire extinguisher ...

To *put out* and to *extinguish* mean the same.

Note the word order: *Try to put out the fire*,
or: *Try to put the fire out*.

Be careful with the word order with *it*: *Try to put it out* (Note: **NOT** *put out it*)

Your hand is bleeding.

Some other injuries:

I've twisted my ankle.

I've got something in my eye.

I'll get the first aid box.

Note we use *I'll* to show that the speaker is going to take immediate action. A *first aid box* contains items such as scissors, plasters etc. to treat minor injuries.

... it really hurts.

It hurts means something is painful:

My arm hurts.

I'd better call the company doctor.

Note the use of *I/you/we had better* to talk about the correct thing to do in a difficult situation.

Had is usually shortened to *'d*. We don't use *to* after *had better* (Note: **NOT** *I'd better to call ...*)

I think he's hurt his back.

We can also say:

I think he's injured his back.

What shall we do?

Note the use of *shall I/we* to ask for an opinion on the correct thing to do.

Shall I call an ambulance?

We'd better not move him.

Note the negative form.

I'll get the first-aider.

A *first-aider* is someone in the workplace who has been given basic medical training to help people who have an accident or are ill at work.

British/American differences

British	American
<i>non-smoking policy</i>	<i>no smoking policy</i>
<i>lifts</i>	<i>elevators</i>
<i>To raise the alarm.</i>	<i>To sound the alarm</i>
<i>the fire service</i> (also known as <i>the fire brigade</i>)	<i>the fire department</i>
<i>the first-aider</i>	

There is no *first-aider* equivalent in American English. You would see *the company doctor* or *nurse* in an American company, but this would be a professionally trained person.

<i>plasters</i>	<i>Band-Aids</i> (Band-Aid is a trademark)
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Practice

1 Match the hazard with the possible result.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 a live wire | a you might be hit |
| 2 a loose piece of flooring | b you might slip over |
| 3 a sharp blade | c you might damage your hearing |
| 4 steam | d you might burn yourself |
| 5 a careless truck driver | e you might electrocute yourself |
| 6 a greasy floor | f you might cut yourself |
| 7 a very loud noise | g you might trip over |

2 Complete the sentences with words from the box below.

when you mind oil out tools don't careful hot sharp floor low

- a Mind don't trip. There are lots of lying around.
- b Be ! Don't touch the blades. They're very
- c Mind ! Someone's left some boxes on the
- d your heads! The doorway is very
- e Be careful you walk across the factory. There are often patches of on the floor.
- f Mind you burn yourself. The metal is very

3 Match the two parts of the sentences.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1 Always wear ear protection | a check electrical installations regularly. |
| 2 Don't leave | b emergency exits clear. |
| 3 Keep | c a machine without checking the safety procedures first. |
| 4 Never place | d when using a pneumatic drill. |
| 5 Make sure you | e bottles of chemicals carefully. |
| 6 Check that | f a ladder near an electricity line. |
| 7 Do not operate | g tools lying on the floor. |
| 8 Label | h the safety guard is in place. |

4 Choose *It* or *There*.

EXAMPLE: ...*It*... might be slippery.

- a might be very noisy.
- b might be a lot of dust.
- c might be very sharp.
- d might be trucks unloading.
- e might be bits of broken glass on the floor.
- f might be live.

5 What might happen if you don't follow safety procedures?

First match the sentences.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Never store cylinders by naked flames. | a | Someone might slip over. |
| 2 | Always wear gloves when welding. | b | Someone may get poisoned. |
| 3 | You must wipe spillages up immediately. | c | They may explode. |
| 4 | You mustn't store chemicals in milk bottles or jam jars. | d | Someone might trip over them. |
| 5 | Never leave bits of wood lying around on the floor. | e | You might burn your hands. |

Now choose *If you do*, or *If you don't*, to join the two sentences. Write out the whole sentences below.

EXAMPLE: *Never store cylinders near naked flames. If you do, ... they may explode.*

- a
- b
- c
- d

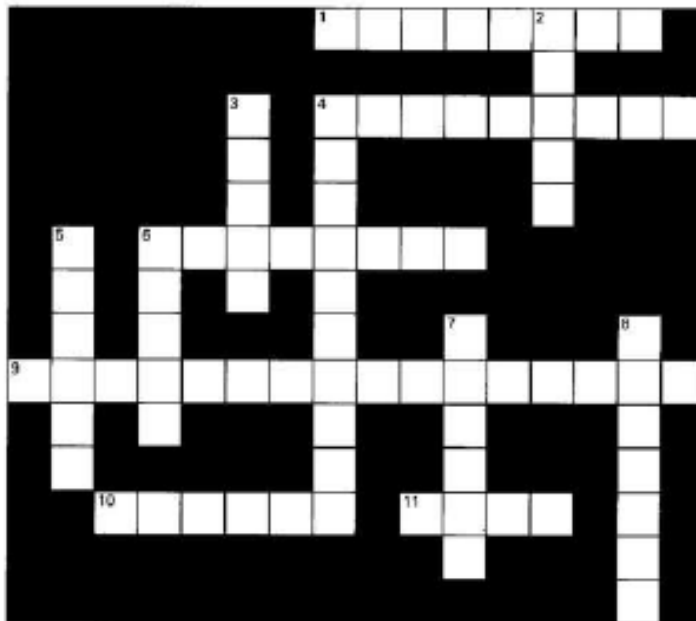
6 Rearrange these words to form questions.

- a it/where/hurt/does?
- b move/arm/you/can/your?
- c happen/it/did/how?
- d get/the/I/shall/first-aider?
- e keep/first aid/where/we/box/do/the?
- f injured/anyone/been/has?
- g anyone/ambulance/has/yet/called/an?
- h your/to/what/done/have/you/hand?

7 Match the sentences on the left with the responses on the right.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 I think I've twisted my ankle. | a We'd better order some more. |
| 2 I've cut my finger. | b We'd better take her out into the fresh air. |
| 3 Look! The warehouse is on fire. | c We'd better not use it. Switch it off! |
| 4 José has fallen and hurt his back. | d You'd better not put any pressure on it. |
| 5 I've splashed some chemical on my skin. | e You'd better put a plaster on it. |
| 6 Maria has inhaled some fumes. | f You'd better wash it off immediately. |
| 7 The machine is making a funny noise. | g We'd better not move him. |
| 8 We haven't got any bandages. | h We'd better call the fire service. |

8 Fire vocabulary crossword.



Across

- 1 Move people from a dangerous place. (8) (v)
- 4 Catches fire easily. (9) (adj)
- 6 A door for leaving a building when there is a fire. (4,4) (n)
- 9 A metal cylinder containing water or chemical at high pressure used for putting out fires. (4,12) (n)
- 10 Burning gases in pointed shapes that come from something on fire. (6) (n)
- 11 To be on fire. (4) (v)

Down

- 2 Something like a bell that makes a loud noise to warn people of danger. (5) (n)
- 3 A small piece of bright burning material that flies up from something burning. (5) (n)
- 4 These practice what to do if there is a fire. (4,6) (n)
- 5 To catch fire or set fire to. (6) (v)
- 6 Unhealthy smoke, gas or smells produced when something burns. (5)
- 7 To extinguish. (3,3) (v)
- 8 The fire is the organisation which has the job of putting out fires. (7) (n)