

Example risk assessment for a butcher's shop

Setting the scene

The owner carried out the risk assessment in this butcher's shop, which is located on a busy high street. The owner employs five people, two of them part-time. The owner will soon be taking on a 17-year-old apprentice.

At the rear of the shop is a staff toilet and washing facilities, an area where staff can make hot drinks etc, a cold store and storage space for dry goods. The shop trades from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm, six days a week.

Important reminder

This example risk assessment shows the kind of approach a small business might take. It can be used as a guide to think through some of the hazards in your business and the steps you need to take to control the risks. Please note that it is not a generic risk assessment that you can just put your company name on and adopt wholesale without any thought. This would not satisfy the law – and would not be effective in protecting people.

Every business is different – you need to think through the hazards and controls required in your business for yourself.

This risk assessment addresses the risks to the owner and his staff from work activities in the shop. It does not cover compliance with food safety and hygiene legislation, information can be found at www.foodstandards.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/.

How was the risk assessment done?

The owner followed the guidance in *Five steps to risk assessment* (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf).

- 1 To identify the hazards, the owner:
 - looked at HSE's web pages for small businesses, to learn where hazards can occur;
 - walked around the shop, the stockroom and all other areas, noting what might pose a risk and taking HSE guidance into consideration. The owner also considered occasional activities, such as changing light bulbs;
 - talked to staff to learn from their knowledge and experience, and listen to their concerns and opinions about health and safety issues in the shop;
 - looked at the accident book, to understand what previous problems there have been;
 - decided that, on the apprentice's first day at work, they would go through the risk assessment with him and decide what additional risk control measures were

necessary, taking account of the apprentice's lack of both experience and awareness of risk.

- 2 The owner wrote down who could be harmed by the hazards and how.
- 3 For each hazard, the owner wrote down what controls, if any, were in place to manage these hazards. These controls were then compared to the guidance on HSE's website. Where existing controls were not considered good enough, the owner wrote down what else needed to be done.
- 4 The owner discussed the findings with staff, displayed the risk assessment in the staffroom and made it part of the induction process for new staff. The owner decided when the actions that were needed would be done, and who would do them, and decided to tick the actions off as each was completed.
- 5 The owner decided to review and update the risk assessment every year or straightaway if major changes in the workplace happened.

Company name: Smith's Butchers Date of risk assessment: 1/7/07

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Manual handling Deliveries	Staff risk strains or other injuries, to their back or elsewhere, from handling carcasses or other stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All staff are trained how to lift properly. ■ High shelves are for light goods only. ■ Walkways kept clear. ■ Porter's trolley available. ■ Carcasses quartered by supplier, prior to delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff that where possible, stock should be moved using the trolley. 	Owner	7/7/07	6/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff of the need to lift properly and safely, particularly when handling carcasses. 	Owner	7/7/07	6/7/07
Slips and trips	Staff/customers risk sprains, fractures or bruising if they trip over objects, such as stock, or slip on spillages, eg from fat build up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff try to stop meat debris/blood getting on the floor – drip trays used, leaks on machines are fixed and staff put meat debris straight into bins. ■ Staff 'clean as they go'. ■ Wet floor warning signs always used. ■ Tiled floor even, in good condition and has good drainage. ■ Doormats at entrance in wet weather. ■ Good lighting in all areas. ■ Staff wear sensible, non-slip footwear. ■ Floor in all areas cleaned thoroughly according to a daily schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to check for ice debris in the cold store and to clear this away. 	Owner	20/7/07	19/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to clean shoes at end of day and check soles have not worn smooth. 	Owner	20/7/07	19/7/07
Machinery Bandsaws, mincers, cutters, slicers	Staff risk deep cuts or amputations from contact with blades or other machinery parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All machines guarded according to manufacturers' instructions. ■ Staff trained in using machines safely, including pre-use checks and safe systems of work for clearing blockages. ■ Blade carriers are always used when a blade is removed, and staff are trained to use them safely. ■ Warning signs displayed at machines. ■ Sufficient space provided for operator around machines. ■ Push sticks provided as necessary. ■ Apprentice not to use or clean machinery where there is access to moving parts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff not to distract colleagues who are using machinery. 	Owner	20/7/07	19/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to do pre-use checks on machinery guards and to follow the safe system of work for clearing blockages, being especially sure to turn off the machine before doing so. 	Owner	20/7/07	19/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan a closely supervised programme for the apprentice in how to use and clean machinery. 	Owner	20/7/07	19/7/07

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Knives	Staff risk deep cuts or amputations from contact with blade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff trained in the safe use, maintenance and storage of knives. ■ Staff use the right knives for the job. ■ Knives kept sharp. ■ PPE (chain mail gauntlet/apron) provided and staff know how to wear it and for what jobs. ■ Sufficient space for staff to work safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff not to distract colleagues when they are using knives. 	Owner	20/7/07	17/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Check that shop first-aiders are trained in first aid for stab wounds. 	Owner	20/7/07	17/7/07
Infection	Staff risk zoonotic infection from absorbing raw meat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good personal hygiene from all staff. ■ Good washing and welfare facilities. ■ Food waste stored in closed containers. ■ Staff trained in washing out puncture wounds and covering cuts with food-grade plasters and dressings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to clean and disinfect waste buckets every time they are emptied. 	Manager	20/7/07	17/7/07
Work at height Changing light bulbs or displays	Falls from any height can cause bruising/ fractures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Suitable stepladder in good condition provided, and staff know how to use it safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ None. 	Manager	20/7/07	17/7/07
Contact with bleach and other cleaning chemicals	Staff doing cleaning risk skin irritation or eye damage from direct contact with cleaning chemicals. Vapour may cause breathing problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mops, brushes and strong rubber gloves are provided and used. ■ Staff shown how to use cleaning products safely, eg follow instructions on the label, dilute properly and never transfer to an unmarked container. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Replace 'irritant' chemicals with milder alternatives, where possible. 	Manager	20/7/07	20/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff reminded to check for dry, red or itchy skin on their hands. 	Manager	20/7/07	20/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff reminded to wash gloves before taking them off carefully and storing in a clean place. 	Manager	20/7/07	20/7/07
Electrical Faulty building wiring, faulty electrical appliances	Staff could get electrical shocks or burns from faulty electrics, including portable electrical equipment – heaters, fans etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff trained to spot and report any defective plugs, discoloured sockets, damaged cable and on/off switches and to take defective equipment out of use. ■ Staff know where the fuse box is and how to turn electricity off in an emergency. ■ Clear access to the fuse box. ■ Only qualified electricians work on electrical installation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manager to do visual check of plugs, sockets, cables and on/off switches every three months. 	Manager and all staff	20/7/07	First check done on 18/7/07

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Violence and threatening behaviour	Staff may suffer assaults and abuse from customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff trained not to resist a robbery. ■ Staff provide good, polite service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contact local police for advice on what else can be done (eg safe procedures for opening/closing). 	Manager	20/7/07	20/7/07
Fire, eg smoking, faulty electrics, arson	If trapped, staff could suffer from smoke inhalation/burns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fire risk assessment done, see www.communities.gov.uk/fire and necessary action taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to keep backyard gate locked out of hours to stop intruders getting in. 	Manager	20/7/07	20/7/07

Assessment review date: 1/7/08