

Avoid slips, trips and falls. How to manage the risks in your club

Slips or trips cause over a third of all major injuries reported each year*. They are the single most common cause of injury and actions brought as a result can be extremely damaging to sports clubs, especially where members of the public are involved.

The key to minimising the risks posed by slips, trips and falls is in identifying potential hazards, both inside and outside the clubhouse and taking steps to eliminate or mitigate them.

First and foremost, keep all floor coverings and outside surfaces in a good state of repair. Carry out all necessary maintenance work, including inspection, testing, adjustment, repair and cleaning at suitable intervals – and keep records so that the work can be monitored.

Similarly, lighting should enable people to see obstructions and potentially slippery areas so they can move around safely. Replace, repair or clean lights before they add to or create slip or trip hazards.

Finally, it is vital that any spillages are cleaned up immediately, using a cleaning agent if necessary. After cleaning, a floor may be wet for some time so make sure appropriate warning signs are in place. Arrange alternative routes and ventilate the area to assist drying.

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Other simple actions you may wish to consider:

- Trailing cables create trip hazards. Position equipment to avoid cables crossing pedestrian routes and use cable covers to fix securely to surfaces – or restrict access to prevent contact.
- Miscellaneous rubbish, for example plastic bags, should not be allowed to build up. Remove rubbish regularly to keep pedestrian areas clear.
- Ad-hoc storage in traffic routes creates risk. Keep such routes, steps and stairs clear and free from obstructions.
- Ensure all rugs and mats are fixed securely and do not have curling edges.
- Where pedestrians are likely to move between wet and dry floor surfaces, use warning signs and securely fixed doormats to highlight and reduce the risk.
- Steps and changes of floor level should be well-lit and fitted with visible tread nosings.
- Similarly, sloping floors and walkways should have good visibility, even handrails and floor marking in high risk areas.
- Prevent smoke and steam outlets from obscuring visibility, for instance, by redirecting smoke and steam away from risk areas.



Kick the risk

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For some clubs, it is particularly important to consider the risks facing those wearing studded footwear, which is likely to be slippery on hard surfaces away from the pitch.

You can minimise risks by providing soft walkways, putting up warning signs, and asking members and visitors to change their footwear whilst in and around the clubhouse.

Clearly the full list of preventative measures is more detailed but these easy low cost tactics will go some way to reducing the risk of slips, trips and falls at your club.

Perhaps the most important action of all is to consult an insurance expert for assistance. Bluefin Sport has a range of experts that can help you understand and manage risk. For further information, please contact us.

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