

SLIPS TRIPS AND FALLS

OSHA maintains general industry regulations on walking/working surfaces that guard against hazards including clutter, protruding objects and wet conditions. These hazards can harm everyone in a facility, regardless of title or job responsibilities.

Slips, trips, and falls cause nearly 700 fatalities per year and many more injury accidents in the workplace according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

There are three physical factors involved in slips, trips, and falls: friction, momentum, and gravity. Each one plays a role. Friction is the resistance between objects, momentum is affected by the speed and mass of an object, and gravity is the force exerted on an object by the Earth.

Slips Trips & Falls

- **Slips** are a loss of balance cause by too little friction between your feet and the surface you walk or work on. Loss of traction is the leading cause of workplace slips.
- **Slips** can be caused by wet surfaces, spills, or weather hazards like ice or snow. Slips are more likely to occur when you hurry or run, wear the wrong kind of shoes, or don't pay attention to where you're walking.
- **Trips** occur whenever your foot hits an object and you are moving with enough momentum to be thrown off TRIPS balance. Trips are more likely to happen when you are in a hurry and don't pay attention to where you're going.
- **Falls** occur whenever you move too far off your center of FALLS balance. Falls account for more workplace fatalities than any other reason.

Slips

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You can help avoid slips by following these safety precautions:

- Practice safe walking skills. Take short steps on slippery surfaces to keep your center of balance under you and point your feet slightly outward.
- Clean up or report spills right away. Even minor spills can be very dangerous.
- Don't let grease accumulate at your workplace.
- Be extra cautious on smooth surfaces such as newly waxed floors. Also be careful walking on loose carpeting.

Trips

Trips occur whenever your foot hits an object and you are moving with enough momentum to be thrown off balance.

To prevent trip hazards:

- Make sure you can see where you are walking. Don't carry loads that you cannot see over.
- Keep walking and working areas well lit, especially at night.
- Keep the workplace clean and tidy. Store materials and supplies in the appropriate storage areas.
- Arrange furniture and office equipment so that it doesn't interfere with walkways or pedestrian traffic in your area.
- Properly maintain walking areas, and alert appropriate authorities regarding potential maintenance related hazards.

Falls

To avoid falls, consider the following measures:

- Don't jump off landings or loading docks. Use the stairs
- Repair or replace stairs or handrails that are loose or broken
- Keep passageways and aisles clear of clutter and well lit.
- Wear shoes with appropriate non-slip soles.