

Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls

One of the most common hazards for custodians is slipping on wet floors or tripping over an object. A slip or trip may result in a fall. A fall may cause injuries such as broken bones, head injuries, sprains, strains or bruises.

Slips occur when there is too little traction between the footwear and the floor, such as:

- Wet, waxed, oily floors
- Weather hazards (ice, rain, snow)
- Loose mats or carpets
- Improper footwear (slippery soles)

Trips occur when your foot hits something that causes you to lose your balance and fall, such as:

- Poor lighting
- Cables/cords in the open
- Clutter
- Bottom drawers open
- Wrinkled carpeting
- Uneven surfaces (steps, thresholds)
- Obstructed view

Good Housekeeping is the first and most important step in preventing falls due to slips and trips. Non-slip flooring, specialty footwear, or training on techniques of walking and safe falling are only effective with good housekeeping practices.

- Spread grease-absorbent compound on oily surfaces
- Mark spills and wet areas with warning signs and barricades
- Cover cords/cables that cross walkways
- Clean all spills and debris immediately
- Keep working areas and walkways well lit
- Always close cabinet or storage drawers
- Secure mats, rugs, and carpets that do not lay flat by tacking or taping them down
- Keep walkways and doorways free of clutter



Footwear: use properly fitted footwear in areas where floors may be oily or wet (outdoors). Proper footwear increases comfort and prevents fatigue, which improves safety. No footwear has anti-slip properties for every condition (consult manufacturer).



Appropriate Pace: avoid rushing through your work to reduce the chances of a fall.

- Walk with your feet pointed slightly outward
- Make wide turns at corners
- Adjust your pace to suit the type of flooring and the tasks you are doing
- Take your time and pay attention to where you are going



Proper Visibility

- Ensure the things you carry, push, or pull, do not prevent you from seeing obstructions or spills
- Use a flashlight when entering a dark room
- Always use available light sources to provide sufficient light for your tasks

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Safety Talk Discussion

Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!