



**A GUIDE TO SAFE
WORKING PRACTICES**

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BRITISH BLIND & SHUTTER ASSOCIATION

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GUIDE TO SAFE WORKING PRACTICES**

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Introduction	4
General responsibilities	4
Housekeeping and removal of waste	5
Operating machinery	6
Tools and equipment	6
Electricity and portable electrical equipment	7
Manual handling	8
Hoists and lifts	9
Fork lift trucks	10
Vehicles	10
Reporting of accidents, dangerous occurrences and disease	12
First aid	13
Flammable liquids and other hazardous substances	13
Personal protective equipment	15
Scaffolds	16
Towers	17
Ladders	18
Steps	19
Roofs	20
Weather conditions	21
Noise	22
Drugs/Alcohol	22
Smoking	22
On Site	23
Fire precautions and procedures	25
General	27
Lone working	27
Important notes	28
Acknowledgements	28
Reference list of publications on Health & Safety	28

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines and procedures have been compiled to ensure safe working and improve safety standards in those industries covered by the British Blind and Shutter Association. Each section highlights practices and conditions which can lead to accidents and recommends procedures for safe working in the workplace.

It is hoped that all having read these procedures will continue to act with caution and common sense.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees, as well as the employer, have a legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to work safely at all times and may be prosecuted if found working in an improper manner or using equipment likely to cause an accident. It must be stressed that non compliance with Health and Safety legislation is a criminal offence.

Employers are required to:

- Provide and maintain safe plant and systems of work.
- Provide and maintain a safe working environment, including handling and transport issues and provide information, training and instruction as appropriate.

Risk assessments of all work activities are required and details of such brought to employees' attention.

Both employers and self-employed are required to conduct their work so as to ensure the safety of the public and other persons not in their employment.

Employers must have a system in place whereby they can receive, send and discuss safety issues within their organisation.

Employees are required to:

- Work safely and efficiently using the protective equipment provided and by meeting statutory obligations.
- Liaise with other workmen working in the same area to ensure the safety of all concerned whilst together.
- Report incidents that have led, or may lead to an injury - details should be entered in the regulation accident book.
- Adhere to company procedures for securing a safe working place.
- Co-operate in the investigation of accidents with the object of introducing measures to prevent any recurrence.
- Notify management of any medical condition that could affect their work.
- Notify management of any potential hazards.
- Make safety and the safety of others a priority.
- Liaise with contractors on site to ensure the safety of all.
- To take note that horseplay is not permitted in a place of work.
- Refer to supervisors on any aspect of safe working practices of which they are uncertain.

HOUSEKEEPING AND REMOVAL OF WASTE

All staff are responsible for keeping their work areas tidy and must not allow rubbish or scrap materials to accumulate. All waste must be placed in suitable receptacles or removed daily.

Stack and store all materials as they arrive.

Remove tools and fittings to allocated places on completion of work.

Lower any waste to ground floor by chute, hoist or lift. **DO NOT** throw it down.

Staff must only consume food in designated areas and must assist in keeping these areas clean and tidy.



OPERATING MACHINERY

Only persons who are trained and competent to use a particular machine will be authorised to operate it.

Unauthorised staff must not tamper with or interfere with machinery.

Staff authorised to use machinery must first check that guards are in position and that any other safety device (eg emergency stops) are in working order. Under no circumstances may a machine be used with defective or missing guards or safety devices.

Any faults or defects must be drawn to the attention of the management and the machine identified as out of use and withdrawn from service.

Always disconnect the power supply of a machine or tool that is to be repaired, cleaned or adjusted.

Always follow a safe system of work and isolation procedures.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

It is essential that all tools used are fit for their purpose and that all persons should be trained in the use of all tools which they may be required to use.

Keep tools dry and in good order.

DO NOT use damaged tools.

Keep safety guards in place.

DO NOT operate tools or equipment if you do not know how.

Plugs and sockets must be undamaged and correctly earthed and wired.

Automatic cut-out switches must not be interfered with.

DO NOT force or overload tools and equipment.

Goggles must be worn when drilling, when using a hammer and chisel and for any form of disc cutting or grinding operation.

ELECTRICITY AND PORTABLE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT



- Do not use power tools in areas where there are flammable materials.
- No unauthorised persons should interfere with electrical distribution boxes or wiring.
- Check that tools and equipment always have fuses of the correct type and capacity.
- DO NOT overload sockets or equipment.
- Staff are asked to recognise the following visual signs that equipment is not in sound condition.

- The plug is damaged, for example the casing is cracked or the pins are bent.
- The outer sheath of the cable is not effectively secured where it enters the plug or the equipment - obvious evidence would be if the coloured insulation of the internal cable cores were showing.
- There is damage to the external casing of the equipment or there are some loose parts or screws.
- There is damage (apart from light scuffing) to the cable sheath or taped joints.
- The equipment has been subjected to conditions for which it is not suitable, e.g. it is wet.
- There is evidence of overheating.
- In the event that equipment is damaged or defective, isolate the equipment then report the matter to your supervisor.
- Check for buried or concealed cables.
- On site, always use 110 volt or, where possible, cordless equipment.

MANUAL HANDLING

All techniques should be based on a risk assessment of the activities carried out by employer or self-employed person. All persons should be given instruction and training in any manual handling carried out.

Employees are required to make full and proper use of any handling aids and personal protective equipment provided.

Employees must inform management of any physical condition suffered that might affect their ability to undertake any manual handling operations safely.

Exercise care and diligence at all times, giving consideration to others who may be affected by your activities.

Co-operate with your employer to facilitate compliance with health and safety duties.

DO NOT attempt to move heavy or bulky objects without additional manual or mechanical assistance.

HOISTS AND LIFTS

Inspect hoists and lifting tackle daily before use - look for broken welds, frayed ropes, bent struts, distorted chain links or faulty mechanical parts. If operating a hoist or assisting in craneage:

DO NOT operate if capacity of lifting equipment is not visible.

DO NOT exceed the rated capacity of the hoist or tackle.

NEVER ride a hoist.

NEVER lift a load over anyone's head.

DO NOT allow anyone to walk under a suspended load.

Keep your clothes and fingers away from hoist and conveyor mechanisms.

Keep debris away from hoisting areas. Keep them tidy.

Where cranes are used for lifting, make sure that loads are lifted correctly, using proper slings and safety hooks.



When using hoisting equipment, ensure it is properly fixed by a competent person, that rope or chain is in good order and that the equipment is not overloaded beyond its plated capacity.

All lifting operations should comply with the requirements of the "Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998". These make specific comment on inspection, certification, usage and training.

FORK LIFT TRUCKS

Staff are not permitted to drive a fork lift truck unless they have a valid certificate of basic training as a fork lift operator appropriate to that type of truck.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES can passengers be carried on a fork lift truck unless specifically designed to allow for that purpose.

A fork lift truck is **NEVER** to be used as a working platform unless specifically designed to allow for that purpose.

VEHICLES

Only authorised staff with valid licences are permitted to drive company vehicles.

Under no circumstances may company vehicles be used for personal errands or purposes without the express permission of management.

Loads must be within the safe weight limit for the vehicle and should not project beyond the vehicle body in such a manner as to present a hazard to other vehicles or pedestrians.

ALL LOADS MUST BE PROPERLY SECURED AND THIS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE

DRIVER. PARTICULAR CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT LADDERS OR LOADS ON ROOF-RACKS ARE PROPERLY SECURED.

It is the driver's responsibility to report any defects on the vehicle to the management using the proper forms provided.

No vehicle may be driven if it is known to be defective, overloaded or in any unroadworthy condition.

Passengers must never be carried without permission and unless a proper seat is provided.

Staff using private vehicles for company business are responsible for ensuring that they are roadworthy, fully insured, taxed and tested.

Company cars must not be lent to other parties without permission.

Staff must not get on or off any vehicle whilst it is in motion.

Drivers must observe all traffic rules and regulations relevant to their vehicles, in particular their attention is drawn to driver's hours and rest periods.



