

# Preventing slips, trips, and falls

Hazards such as greasy or wet floors, low lighting, and loose mats are common contributing factors to slips, trips, and falls in the food service industry. Creating a safe workplace and properly training employees can lessen the risk of falls.

## Safety equipment and accessories

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Simple safety accessories in the workplace will help keep employees safe. Consider adding these items to your kitchen if not already available.

- Non-slip floor mats for wet areas
- Anti-fatigue mats for workstations
- Warning signs for wet floors
- Ladders and footstools
- Handrails and non-slip surfaces on staircases

## Safety tips to avoid slips, trips, and falls

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Employees should wear non-skid, waterproof shoes with low heels to prevent slips. To help reduce the risk of trips and falls, workers should not wear oversized or baggy pants or skirts.

## Equipment

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Use grills and hot surfaces with a built-in guard bar to help prevent accidental burns. Purchase fryers that have automatic features like dumping used grease and lowering food into hot oil, and always use splash guards on fryers.

## Workplace housekeeping

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Good housekeeping can positively impact safety in the workplace.

- Keep high-traffic pathways clear
- Clean up spills immediately
- Clean floors regularly to prevent grease build-up
- Ensure good lighting in work areas, delivery, and storage rooms

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## Ergonomic hazards

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Lifting, carrying, bending, and reaching should all be considered when designing a workplace, placing equipment, and training employees. Reduce the need for lifting and carrying by providing hand trucks or other lifting devices. Assign monotonous, repetitive tasks such as food preparation to various employees throughout the day to avoid fatigue, soreness, and strained muscles. Additional ways to increase safety include installing a garbage chute and storing heavy items on lower shelves.

### Train employees on safe lifting methods, such as:

- Do not carry more than you can handle — make extra trips or ask for help
- Do not overload trays or pans
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Keep the load close to your body
- Do not lift if you cannot see over the load
- Do not twist your body — instead, move your feet to pivot
- Use your leg muscles to set down the load
- Be sure fingers and toes are clear before setting it down

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