

Essential Steps Towards Minimising Accidents at Work When Using Heavy Equipment

In a modern industrialised society, working with heavy machinery and equipment is fairly commonplace. Thanks to technology, manufacturing may soon become fully automated, but until then, human workers are still required. Manufacturing accounts for around 8% of the workforce in the UK, with many businesses involved.



Businesses working in these industries need to ensure they have the correct protocols in place to reduce accidents and avoid injuries. Workplace accidents and injuries cost the UK economy a huge sum each year, and although regulations have improved standards, more can still be done. Here are some steps that businesses can take to minimise accidents that happen with heavy equipment.

Regular Inspections and Maintenance

Damaged or broken equipment is one of the leading causes of workplace accidents. Even a small amount of damage can result in a machine not working correctly, resulting in serious risk of injury for the workers around it. Regular inspections and maintenance are the key to avoiding this, ensuring that all equipment is working as it should.

When inspections are carried out, a safety tag is attached to the equipment, detailing the date and time of the checks and information on any maintenance required. This way, maintenance can be scheduled quickly, and workers know not to use the equipment until this is complete. [Safety tags from RS](#) can be used on any piece of equipment, and help create a detailed record of any inspections and work carried out.

Some equipment, such as ladders and scaffolding, must be inspected regularly by law. Other regulations also govern the inspection and maintenance procedures for heavy equipment used in manufacturing and other industries. As a result, failing to follow proper inspection procedures can result in fines, as well as putting employees at risk.

Suitable Training

The biggest impact on the safety of a workplace is training. Before employees can use heavy machinery and equipment, [they need to be trained correctly](#) on the right safety procedures to follow. Incorrect or poor training methods may result in employees who are unsure of what they're doing, increasing the risk of injury significantly.

All workplaces should make safety training a regular part of an employee's onboarding process, and regular training helps to ensure that bad habits aren't picked up over time. The ultimate goal of this training should be to inform and help

employees, resulting in improved safety standards. Ideally, it should be engaging and fun for employees to take part in, leading to better results.

Safety supervisors should carry out training, but there should be input from all employees to share their thoughts on potential hazards. Ultimately, the aim should be to create a positive and safety-focused culture with employees that look out for one another.

Safety Signs and Warnings

Training is useful for ensuring employees know how to complete their work safely while avoiding risks. However, constant reminders of the correct procedures are important to ensure that this information is retained over time. While managers should be observing employees and how they use machinery, signs also help provide indirect reminders of how to operate equipment safely.

An example of this is a sign to remind employees that eye protection must be worn while operating the machinery. Signs are simple, and convey a meaning without using a lot of words. A diagram and short message gets the point across quickly, with clear, bold colours used to attract the eye.

[Safety](#) signs should be positioned in all areas to warn of potential hazards, especially around heavy equipment and machinery. Other safety information, such as evacuation procedures, can be printed onto signs and left in employee common areas.