

# Hazardous manual task risk assessment template

Use this risk assessment to determine if a task is a 'hazardous manual task' and if so, how to control the risks. The workers performing the task are the task experts and should be involved and consulted in this assessment.

SCHOOL/WORKPLACE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of worker/s assessing task e.g. Fred Bloggs, SO, Blue Sky SHS, 0404 040 040, <a href="mailto:fbloggs@eq.edu.au">fbloggs@eq.edu.au</a>		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
Details of task		
Name of task:		
Where is task done, and by who?		
General task description including tools/equipment:		
How often is task done? <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually    More info: _____		
Why was the task identified as a potential hazardous manual task?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Caused previous injury ( <i>MyHR Incident No.(if known):</i> _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Dangerous <input type="checkbox"/> Hate it? Why? <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipate it will cause injury <input type="checkbox"/> Awkward / difficult <input type="checkbox"/> Causes fatigue / discomfort / pain <input type="checkbox"/> Strenuous <input type="checkbox"/> Causes numbness / tingling <input type="checkbox"/> Tiring <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Repetitive		
Are there stressors? <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of control over work <input type="checkbox"/> Tight deadlines <input type="checkbox"/> Distractingly boring <input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelmingly mentally demanding <input type="checkbox"/> Poor support <input type="checkbox"/> Poor relationships	Are there environmental factors? <input type="checkbox"/> Broken/ poorly maintained equipment: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Poor lighting/glare: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Slippery/uneven floor: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Physical obstructions: _____	Is there an injury history? <input type="checkbox"/> Worker/s had previous sprain/strain injury <input type="checkbox"/> Worker/s currently recovering from sprain/strain injury How old is the worker/s? <input type="checkbox"/> Under 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 20 - 30 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 - 40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40 - 50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50 - 60 <input type="checkbox"/> 60 + <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to disclose



<input type="checkbox"/> Poor communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Heat: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Cold: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Humidity: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Wind: _____

Does the load have any of these higher risk characteristics?

<input type="checkbox"/> Heavy (weight?): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Unstable / unwieldy	<input type="checkbox"/> Live (people / animal): _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Large/bulky (dimensions?): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficult to grip	_____

<b>Assess risks</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick which risks are present The task is a hazardous manual task if one or more boxes are ticked. The more boxes ticked, the more hazardous the task.	<b>Body parts</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick which body part is affected by the risk/s				
	<b>Neck</b>	<b>Back</b> upper and lower back, and hip	<b>Shoulder</b>	<b>Arms</b> elbows, wrists and fingers	<b>Legs</b> knees and ankles
Are there forces that are high, sudden, repetitive or sustained? <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy work or high effort required e.g. takes all or almost all your effort <input type="checkbox"/> Sudden or jerking effort e.g. opening a tight window, starting machinery with a pull cord, handling a live or unstable load <input type="checkbox"/> Fast forces are involved e.g. throwing, catching, hitting, kicking, jumping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there awkward or sustained postures with long duration? <input type="checkbox"/> Joint at extreme range (very uncomfortable) <input type="checkbox"/> Joint near extreme range (uncomfortable) <input type="checkbox"/> Joint in mid-range (not in neutral position so slightly uncomfortable over time) <input type="checkbox"/> The same position is held for 30 or more seconds (how long? _____) AND <input type="checkbox"/> The task is done continuously for 30 minutes or more (how long? _____), OR for two or more hours when spread across a day/shift (how long? _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> standing on one leg 



<p>Are there repetitive movements with long duration?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The same movement is done very frequently (at least once every 30 seconds) e.g. sweeping, wiping, stacking chairs, handling books, hammering, shovelling, lifting and carrying similar items</p> <p>AND</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The task is done continuously for 30 minutes or more (how long? _____), OR for two or more hours when spread across a day/shift (how long? _____)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Is there exposure to vibration?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Frequent or prolonged use of power tools or equipment with high vibration e.g. brush cutter, grinder, mower, chainsaw, jack hammer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Using vehicles, machines or power tools where the manufacturer's handbook warns of vibration and safety instructions are not followed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Frequent or prolonged driving on rough roads, or driving for long periods</p>		<p>The following may cause risk of vibration, but further assessment will be needed:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Using high grip forces or awkward postures when using power tools</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Using vehicles, machines or power tools not suitable for the task</p>			



Suggested controls	Implementation details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss control options with workers, as the task experts</li> <li>• Firstly, always implement Level 1 controls, if reasonably practicable. If not, document why, and next try to implement Level 2 controls. If a Level 2 control is also not reasonably practicable, again document why, and then implement Level 3 controls. A combination of controls may be required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide details about implementing the controls</li> <li>• Document all decisions, including why Level 1 or 2 controls may not have been reasonably practicable to implement</li> </ul>
<p>Stressors, environmental factors, injury history, and age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stressors that are identified are reviewed/discussed between workers and managers to identify ways to manage these</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental factors that are identified are addressed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Injury history and age of workers is taken into consideration via consultation between workers, managers and rehabilitation staff</li> </ul>	
<p>Forces that are high, sudden, repetitive or sustained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 control – eliminate or partially eliminate task e.g. automate task or deliver goods to point of use to reduce multiple handling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- substitution e.g. replace hand tools with power tools to shorten task</li> <li>- engineering e.g. use mechanical lifting aids or provide workstations or work platforms that are height adjustable</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 control – administrative e.g. use team handling (as an interim control only as it carries risks), more rest breaks</li> </ul>	
<p>Awkward or sustained postures and repetitive movements with long duration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 control – eliminate or partially eliminate task e.g. automate task or deliver goods to point of use to reduce multiple handling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- substitution e.g. replace hand tools with power tools to shorten task</li> <li>- engineering e.g. use mechanical lifting aids or provide workstations or work platforms that are height adjustable</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 control – administrative e.g. reduce work pace, rotate workers, more rest breaks, additional workers</li> </ul>	
<p>Vibration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 control – eliminate or partially eliminate task e.g. redesign grounds/gardens to reduce mowing, leaf blowing, brush cutting etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- substitution e.g. purchase tools/equipment with least vibration</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- isolation e.g. isolate vibrating machinery from the user, such as by providing fully independent seating on mobile plant</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- administrative e.g. rotate workers, more frequent breaks</li> <li>- personal protective equipment (PPE) e.g. provide vibration-absorbing gloves administrative – e.g. rotate workers, more frequent breaks</li> </ul>	
--	--

### Approval

<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved as submitted.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved with the following condition/s:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not approved for the following reason/s:

By:	Designation:
-----	--------------

Signed:	Date:
---------	-------

Once approved, risk assessment details should be entered into the **Hazardous Manual Tasks Register** by administrative staff.

Monitor and review	Yes	No
To be completed after the controls have been implemented.		
Are the control measures effective?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have there been any changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are further actions required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details:		

By:	Designation:
-----	--------------

Signed:	Date:
---------	-------

## Explanatory notes

### What is a hazardous manual task?

A hazardous manual task is a task that involves any of the following: a) high or sudden forces; b) awkward or sustained postures; c) repetitive movements; d) long duration (when coupled with other risk factors); and/or e) exposure to vibration. See further information below.

### What does 'reasonably practicable' mean?

The guiding principle of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) is that all people are given the highest level of health and safety protection from hazards arising from work, so far as is reasonably practicable (section 18). The term 'reasonably practicable' means what could reasonably be done at a particular time to ensure health and safety measures are in place. In determining what is reasonably practicable, there is a requirement to weigh up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of a hazard or risk occurring (i.e. the probability of a person being exposed to harm)
- the degree of harm that would result if the hazard or risk occurred (i.e. the potential seriousness of injury or harm)
- what the person concerned knows, or ought to reasonably know, about the hazard or risk and ways of eliminating or minimising it
- the availability of suitable ways to eliminate or minimise the hazard or risk
- the cost of eliminating or minimising the hazard or risk. Ordinarily, cost will not be the key factor in determining what it is reasonable for a duty holder to do unless it can be shown to be 'grossly disproportionate' to the risk. If the risk is particularly severe, the Principal/Manager will need to demonstrate that costly safety measures are not reasonably practicable due to their expense and that other less costly measures could also effectively minimise the risk.

## Stress

Research indicates that stress is closely linked with the onset of sprain and strain injuries, due to the physiological impact stress has on the body. Therefore if a worker is performing a hazardous manual task and is also stressed, they are at even greater risk of injury. If workers identify any of the stressors listed on page one, explore the issues in greater depth with them to determine possible solutions. For more information refer to the [Work Health and Safety Consultation, Co-operation and Co-ordination Code of Practice 2011](#).

## Aging workforce

An additional risk factor that will increasingly contribute to sprain and strain injuries is the aging workforce. Research indicates that older workers (e.g. 50+) have reduced strength and flexibility, and slower movements and reaction times. Older workers are more likely to have cumulative damage from long-term wear and tear, and tend to have less frequent but more serious injuries requiring longer (and therefore more costly) recovery periods. Research shows that older workers are an asset for workplaces due to their reliability, commitment and dedication to duty, minimal turnover and absenteeism, and diversity of expertise, knowledge and skills. Therefore, the risk of aging needs to be managed to prevent injury to older workers so they can continue to contribute key benefits to workplaces.





## Force

High forces are related to a) the intensity of the force needed, b) the speed involved, and c) whether the force is jerky or sudden. Any task involving high force may be a risk, even if it is only done occasionally or for short periods. Forces may approach maximum where objects are heavy, bulky, unstable, difficult to grip, or handled from an awkward or static posture or not in close to the body. High and sudden forces are also associated with the handling of live persons or animals. If a worker has to take a break during or after a task e.g. stop for a breather, maximum force has probably been exerted.

## Awkward or sustained postures

A **neutral** posture is standing relaxed in a forward facing position, with elbows slightly bent, wrists in the handshake position and feet at shoulder width apart. Muscles are relaxed (neither contracted nor stretched), joints are at rest, the spine is aligned (not twisted sideways or bent forwards/backwards) and there is the least tension/pressure on the nerves, tendons, muscles and bones. **Awkward** postures begin when body parts deviate from the neutral or natural posture. Awkward postures may include squatting, kneeling and bending or twisting of various joints. At worst, joints are at their extremes of range, such as head bent fully back/forward/sideways, arms fully overhead or outstretched, back bending over completely, or legs in full squat. **Sustained** postures are those held in the same position for more than 30 seconds e.g. supporting a load.

## Repetitive movements

Repetition is using the same parts of the body to repeat similar movements i.e. the same task is performed very frequently, such as more than twice a minute (task cycle is 30 seconds or less). The shorter the cycle time, the higher the level of repetition. Cleaning tasks are commonly highly repetitious e.g. mopping a floor, where one cycle would be one second to push the mop forward and backward. Stacking chairs can also be very repetitions, where it may take 30 seconds (or less) to pick up, carry and place one chair and return for another.

## Vibration

Vibration can be whole body or hand-arm and can cause symptoms such as fatigue, pain, numbness, tingling or general discomfort in any body parts. Examples of sources of vibration are: driving, particularly on rough roads; lawn mowing, frequent or prolonged use of power tools; and using machines or tools where the manufacturer's handbook warns of vibration. A jack hammer produces extreme vibration, moderate vibration is produced by equipment such as leaf blowers, high pressure cleaners, brush cutters, ride-on or push mowers, and power tools, and low vibration is produced by equipment such as vacuum cleaners.