

Accident Prevention.

Accident prevention is the process of preventing accidents from happening. It can be proactive (the prevention of accidents before they have a chance to occur), or reactive (the prevention of repetitions of accidents that have already occurred).

Importance.

Accidents can cause pain and suffering. In serious cases, they can be fatal or cause life-long disability. Accidents have financial consequences to individuals from loss of earnings and extra expenses due to injuries. They can also have financial consequences to businesses through both insured and uninsured losses, including fines and prosecutions.

Regulations.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act places duties on all persons at work, including employees. Everyone must do their bit to create a safe working environment and accident-free workplace. Everyone has a responsibility to take reasonable care of their health and safety and others.

Guidance.

Accidents can be caused by unsafe acts or conditions.

Unsafe acts:

- Not following instructions
- Not thinking about the task
- Not following the training
- Unsafe manual handling, loading, stacking and storing
- Horseplay / messing about
- Overloading of working platforms
- Incorrect use of equipment
- Use of faulty equipment with improvised repairs
- Ignoring safety signals, signs and warning devices

Unsafe conditions:

- Missing guards and barriers
- Failure to use safety measures
- Defective tools or equipment
- Poor housekeeping
- Poor lighting or ventilation
- Congestion of working area

Good practice:

- Always comply with safe working practices and risk assessments
- Always comply with manufacturers instructions
- Never remove guards from machines, without authority and training
- Never use any machines if not trained and follow instructions
- Wear and use PPE correctly
- Never mess around while working
- Never use defective equipment
- Help to keep the workplace tidy
- Keep good personal hygiene
- Always report unsafe conditions
- Always use the correct tools and equipment
- Obey all safety rules and signs

Questions.

1. What is proactive accident prevention?
2. Can you list 5 unsafe acts?

Summary.

Accidents are preventable. It is better to stop bad things from happening than to fix them after they have already happened.