FREE TEMPLATE

Risk Assessment and Risk Matrix

A general risk assessment form with a 5×5 risk matrix, likelihood and consequence definitions, the hierarchy of control and an action plan.

How to use this template

Replace the text in [square brackets] with your own details, delete what does not apply and add what does. Blue hints inside the form cells describe what goes there; delete them as you fill the form in.

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Part 1 — Assessment details

Activity, area or plant assessed	
Site / location	
Assessment date	
Assessed by	[Name, role]
Workers and others consulted	
Approved by	[Name, role, date]
Review due	[Before the activity changes, after an incident, and at least annually]

Part 2 — Scales

Likelihood	Definition
5 Almost certain	Expected to occur in most circumstances; has happened here more than once a year
4 Likely	Will probably occur at some time; has happened here or in similar work
3 Possible	Could occur at some time; has happened in the industry
2 Unlikely	Not expected, but conceivable
1 Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances

Consequence	People	Other
5 Catastrophic	Death or permanent total disability	Major plant or structural loss; prosecution likely
4 Major	Serious injury or illness requiring hospital treatment; notifiable to the regulator	Significant damage; work stopped
3 Moderate	Injury or illness requiring medical treatment and time off work	Moderate damage; task delayed
2 Minor	Injury requiring first aid only	Minor damage; repaired on site
1 Insignificant	No injury, or no treatment needed	Negligible damage

Likelihood ↓ / Consequence →	1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Catastrophic
5 Almost certain	Medium (5)	High (10)	High (15)	Extreme (20)	Extreme (25)

Likelihood ↓ / Consequence →	1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Catastrophic
4 Likely	Medium (4)	Medium (8)	High (12)	High (16)	Extreme (20)
3 Possible	Low (3)	Medium (6)	Medium (9)	High (12)	High (15)
2 Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Medium (6)	Medium (8)	High (10)
1 Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Medium (4)	Medium (5)

Rating	What it means
Extreme (17–25)	Stop. Do not start or continue the activity until the risk is reduced. Senior management approval needed for any decision to proceed.
High (10–16)	Start only with the supervisor's written approval and the listed controls in place; add controls to reduce the rating.
Medium (5–9)	Proceed with the listed controls; monitor and review.
Low (1–4)	Manage by routine procedures; review when the activity changes.

Part 3 — Hazard register

Hierarchy of control, highest first: Eliminate · Substitute · Isolate · Engineering · Administrative · PPE. Record the level of each control; a serious risk controlled by PPE alone needs a higher control.

#	Hazard and how it could cause harm	Who is exposed	L	C	Rating	Existing and additional controls (with hierarchy level)	L	C	Residual
1	Example: manual lifting of 25 kg bags from a pallet to a bench, repeated through the shift (back and shoulder strain)	Store workers	4	3	High (12)	Engineering: pallet lifter and bench at waist height; Administrative: job rotation each hour; Substitute: 15 kg bags from supplier	2	3	Medium (6)
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									

Part 4 — Action plan

Hazard #	Additional control to be implemented	Owner	Due	Completed (date, initials)

Hazard #	Additional control to be implemented	Owner	Due	Completed (date, initials)

Role	Name	Signature	Date / time
Assessor			
Approver			

Need the document that goes with it?

SWMS templates by trade: swms.ohconsultant.com.au/swms/purchase

The paid SWMS templates use this same 5×5 matrix with the hazards, inherent and residual ratings and controls already written for the activity, prepared for your state.

All free templates: swms.ohconsultant.com.au/swms/free-resources

General information, not legal advice. Work health and safety laws differ between states and territories: check the requirements that apply where the work is done, and the principal contractor's own site requirements.