Simple Risk Assessment Template

A **risk assessment** is a systematic look at your business to identify what could cause harm (hazards) and to decide on precautions to prevent harm. Completing a risk assessment is a legal requirement for all businesses. If you have **five or more employees**, you must **write it down**, but even if you have a smaller shop, it is wise to keep a written record.

How to use this template

Make a list of hazards in your shop— think of anything that might injure someone or make them ill. For each hazard, note who might be harmed (staff, customers, a contractor) and how. Then fill out the columns: assess the risk level (how likely something is and how severe it could be), list the control measures you have (or will put in place) to reduce the risk, assign responsibility for those controls and set a date to review the risk. Focus on practical steps. You don't need to overcomplicate it for a small shop—just cover the main risks with sensible precautions.

We have included a couple of example rows in the table in this guide to illustrate.

Add rows for other hazards specific to your shop. For example, you may include:

- **Manual handling** (risk: back injury from lifting stock – control: use trolleys, train in lifting techniques)
- **Violence/ robbery** (risk: injury during a theft – control: keep minimum cash in till, CCTV, staff training to comply with robbers)
- **Working at height** (risk: fall from ladder when changing light bulbs or retrieving stock – control: use a stable step ladder, don't do it alone, etc.)
- **Electrical shock** (control: regular PAT testing, staff not to mess with wiring)
- **Illness** (control: hygiene practices, encourage sick employees to rest at home), etc.

For **Risk Level**, a simple Low/ Medium/ High is sufficient. Think of Low as unlikely or minor injuries, High as likely to happen soon or could be very serious, and Medium in between. The goal is to prioritise – focus on the High risks first to ensure strong controls.

Under **Control Measures**, list what you already do and anything further needed. Be specific (eg store heavy boxes on bottom shelf or staff wear slip-resistant shoes).

Responsible means the person or role who will make sure those controls are implemented. Often, it's the owner or manager for many items, but you might assign some duties (eg a supervisor to do the weekly alarm test or a particular staff member to monitor first aid supplies). If it is just you, you are responsible for all – but still fill it in to show you have considered it.

Review Date – Set a reminder for when to revisit this assessment. If you have 1-4 employees, reviewing annually is usually fine (and required by law at least annually or when things change). You might write a specific date or just 'Annual' or 'Quarterly'. Always update the assessment sooner if there is a significant change (eg new equipment, new layout etc.) or after an accident/ near-miss (to learn from it).

Keep the risk assessment in your records (and accessible to staff if you have them). It doesn't need to be sent to anyone by default, but if an inspector visits or if there is an accident claim, this document shows you were proactive about safety. More importantly, implement the control measures—a risk assessment is only useful if it results in action. Once completed, the risk assessment should inform some of the routine checks you do (for instance, if 'wet floor' is a hazard identified, your daily floor checks and spill response are the controls which we have included in the checklist below).

By doing a risk assessment, you are basically checking that your daily and weekly routines cover all bases, and you are thinking ahead about what could go wrong and preventing it. It is a cornerstone of good health and safety management for any business, large or small.

Hazard (What could cause harm?)	Risk Level (Low/Med/High)	Control Measures (What are we doing about it?)	Responsible (Who ensures this?)	Review Date (Next check)
Wet floor (spill or rainwater) – Someone could slip and fall.	Medium	- Clean up spills **immediately** and put out a 'Wet Floor' sign. - Use door mats in wet weather to keep floors dry. - Regularly check floors, especially entrance, for water or debris. - Keep walkways clear of clutter at all times.	All staff on duty *(anyone who sees a spill should act)*	Ongoing *(daily)*

Hazard (What could cause harm?)	Risk Level (Low/Med/High)	Control Measures (What are we doing about it?)	Responsible (Who ensures this?)	Review Date (Next check)
Fire hazard (eg blocked exit or electrical overload) – Fire could break out, or people can't evacuate safely.	High	- **Never block fire exits**; keep exit routes clear of obstructions. - Have at least one appropriate fire extinguisher and service it annually. - Don't overload plug sockets or use unsafe electrical hookups. - Unplug portable appliances at night (reduces overheating risk). - Train staff in basic fire response (location of extinguishers, how to evacuate customers).	Owner/Manager *(overall in charge)* All staff *(keep areas clear, follow training)*	Annual *Every January (and after any incident)*

HIGH STREETS MATTER

Hazard (What could cause harm?)	Risk Level (Low/Med/High)	Control Measures (What are we doing about it?)	Responsible (Who ensures this?)	Review Date (Next check)

HIGH STREETS MATTER

Hazard (What could cause harm?)	Risk Level (Low/Med/High)	Control Measures (What are we doing about it?)	Responsible (Who ensures this?)	Review Date (Next check)