

Example risk assessment for a motor vehicle mechanical repair workshop

Setting the scene

The garage manager did the risk assessment. The business employed 12 mechanics, including two apprentices who carried out mechanical repairs.

How was the risk assessment done?

The garage manager first looked at relevant guidance on the HSE website, including:

- The health and safety toolbox: How to control risks at work (www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/index.htm)
- Health and safety in the motor vehicle repair (MVR) industry (www.hse.gov.uk/mvr/index.htm)
- COSHH essentials sheets for repair workshops (www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm)

He also read the manufacturers' instructions for chemicals and equipment.

He then identified the hazards in the garage. He did this by:

- walking around the repair workshop and noting things that may cause harm
- talking to workers to learn from their knowledge and experience and listen to their concerns and opinions

about health and safety issues. He confirmed what training had been provided and asked that they consider particular requirements the two young apprentices may need

- phoning the licensed disposal contractor to discuss the arrangements for waste disposal
- looking at the accident book to learn what had previously resulted in accidents or near misses.

As he identified the hazards he also thought about who could be harmed and how. He noted what he was already doing to control the risks and considered whether he needed to do anything more. He then recorded any further actions required.

Putting the risk assessment into practice, the manager set out what actions needed to be taken. Who would do them and by when. He placed a copy of the risk assessment where all workers could see it.

The findings of the risk assessment were discussed by the supervisors and their teams of mechanics.

The manager decided to review the risk assessment whenever there were any significant changes such as new work equipment, work activities or workers.

How to use this example

This example risk assessment shows a wide range of hazards that might be present in this type of small business. It can be used as a guide to help you think through some of the hazards in your business and the steps you need to take to control the risks.

However, this is not a generic risk assessment. Every business is different. To satisfy the law you must identify and assess the hazards your business poses, think through the controls required to provide effective protection to people who may be affected by them, and record the significant findings from your risk assessment of your business.

Company name: PQR Motor Vehicle Repair shop (mechanical repairs only)

Date of risk assessment: 01/05/2012

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Hazardous substances Contact with used engine oil etc during servicing	Skin contact over a long period can lead to severe dermatitis and skin cancer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nitrile gloves supplied and used ■ Garage overalls supplied and used ■ Contract for regular cleaning of overalls ■ Workers informed to clean hands thoroughly and use skin creams provided after contact with hazardous substances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Supervisor to start keeping a check that gloves are being used 	JB	10/03/12	09/03/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Risks from dermatitis and skin cancer to be explained to workers 	JB	10/03/12	09/03/12
Car engine running inside, toxic exhaust fumes, eg carbon monoxide	The fumes may cause eye irritation and breathing difficulties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Car exhaust attached to extractor system when engine is running ■ Extractor system maintained and tested to prevent leaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action required 			
Fire Petrol and LPG fires	If trapped workers and customers could suffer fatal injuries from smoke inhalation/ burns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fire alarms maintained and tested by manufacturer ■ Extinguishers provided and inspected under contract ■ Special fire exits not needed as all work areas have immediate access to outside ■ Fuel retriever used to empty vehicle fuel tanks outside ■ Spillages cleared immediately ■ Component cleaning in re-circulating paraffin system, not petrol ■ LPG fuelled vehicles ported in safe places ■ Workers trained in hazards of LPG ■ Fire risk assessment has been done, and any necessary action taken, see www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manager to arrange training on use of extinguishers for all workers 	SP	1/7/12	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Annual fire drill to be carried out 	RB	11/11/12	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brief workers on safe working with petrol. Refer to HSE's <i>Safe use of petrol in garages</i> (INDG331). 	RB	02/07/12	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brief workers on safe working with LPG. Refer to HSE's <i>LPG-fuelled motor vehicles</i> (INDG387) 	RB	02/07/12	
Battery charging	Workers could suffer burns from contact with battery acid while charging, particularly if battery is overcharged and explodes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proprietary charger, installed by electrician, is used in accordance with instructions ■ Acid-resistant gloves and goggles supplied and used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action required 			

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Electrical equipment Portable appliances, eg hand lamps.	Workers could get electrical shocks or burns from faulty electrical equipment or on installation. Electrical faults can also lead to fires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low voltage 24 V hand lamps used ■ Residual current device (RCD) built into main switchboard. ■ A few 240 V tools are used. All have industrial plugs and leads ■ Testing carried out annually on all portable 240 V tools and workers are trained to carry out pre-use visual checks and report defects ■ Safety checks of the electrical equipment and installations are carried out to ensure that equipment continues to be safe. Where necessary this is done by a competent electrician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manager to assess suitability of replacing 240 V tools with air-powered or 110 V alternatives 	SP	15/06/12	
Mechanical equipment Use of grinding equipment	Workers may suffer serious injury from unguarded moving parts of machinery. Workers can also get cut on sharp edges or scald themselves on hot parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All mechanical equipment checked before use and faults reported to supervisor ■ Equipment not to be left running unattended ■ Guarding provided ■ Ear defenders and safety goggles provided and worn. ■ Grinding wheels changed by trained person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action required 			
Falling objects Car lift failure or car jack failure	Failure of a car lift, jack or other lifting equipment may cause severe crush injuries to an employee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Car lifts and jacks serviced by supplier and inspected by insurers every 6 months ■ Jacks only used where ground conditions are firm, stable and level. Once vehicle lifted, axle stands used ■ Axle stands regularly maintained and inspected ■ Safe working loads not exceeded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action required 			
Work involving air conditioning systems	Workers could suffer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ frostbite – through skin or eye contact with refrigerant liquid or gas ■ asphyxiation – if sufficient quantities of gas escape into confined space ■ exposure to harmful gases – through thermal decomposition of refrigerant if exposed to a naked flame. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Workers are trained in correct procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brief workers on safe working with air-conditioning systems (from HSE's <i>Safe working with vehicle air-conditioning systems</i> INDG349). 	RB	05/11/12	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Compressed air Explosion of equipment tyres	Workers could suffer blast injuries from tyre or equipment explosion. Workers could suffer damage to internal organs if air is introduced into the body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All workers trained in safe working procedures and dangers of horseplay ■ Airline has deadman's handle ■ System inspected and serviced every year by insurers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action required 			
Handling vehicle air bags	Air bags could explode when not fitted, causing injury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Units are stored in suitable cabinet of their own ■ Workers are trained in correct handling and fitting ■ Faulty units are returned to supplier for disposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brief workers on safe handling of air bags (from HSE's <i>A guide to the handling and storage of airbags and seat belt pretensioners at garages and motor vehicle repair workshops</i> (INDG280)) 	RB	02/07/12	
Manual handling Movement of components	Workers risk injuries or back pain or pain elsewhere from handling heavy and/or bulky objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Workers are trained in safe manual handling and to ensure contractors follow safe manual handling techniques ■ Manual handling aids are available, eg lift truck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manager to arrange manual handling training for the workers in the store. 	SP	10/07/12	15/05/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brief workers on handling tyres, refer to HSE publication <i>Collection and delivery of tyres - Tackling the risk of manual handling injuries: a practical guide</i> 	RB	15/05/12	15/05/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A detailed assessment to be done using HSE publication <i>Manual handling assessment charts</i> (INDG383) 	JB	15/08/12	15/05/12
Vehicle movements	Workers and customers risk potentially serious injury if struck by a moving vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Safe parking provided for customers without need for reversing ■ Marked walkways for pedestrians ■ Vehicles driven slowly around premises ■ Workers ensure that cars being manually pushed always have a person seated at the wheel, to keep the vehicle under control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action required 	JB	18/05/12	20/05/12

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Slips and trips Doorways (rain), spillages, uneven surfaces	Workers and customers may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages, eg oil or water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good housekeeping standards maintained through training and monitoring ■ Floors degreased weekly ■ Absorbent granules and sawdust put on spills as soon as possible ■ Entrances and exits maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Walkways and storage areas to be designated by yellow lines 	JB	09/06/12	07/06/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Weekly housekeeping check to be started 	JB	09/05/12	12/05/12
Working at height	Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures and potentially serious injuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appropriate access equipment is provided for work on trailers and tops of commercial vehicles ■ Handrails fitted at edges of raised storage areas and access stairway provided ■ Workers are competent to use ladders where appropriate ■ Vehicle inspection pits clearly marked and covered when not in use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Supervisor to monitor use of portable ladders, access equipment for working on vehicles, and safety at inspection pits 	JB	03/06/12	03/06/12
Public access to workshop	Customers could suffer various injuries if they wander into the workshop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Signs banning customers from the workshop and viewing window provided in reception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Workers to be reminded to challenge anyone entering the workshop without permission 	SP	15/07/12	

Assessment review date: 01/04/13