

Stop Slips and Falls Before They Happen

Slips, trips, and falls can be hugely expensive for building owners and property professionals. It's important to be proactive in addressing the root causes. Check out these tips for keeping your facility safe and slip-free.

COMMON CAUSES OF SLIPS AND FALLS

Do any of these conditions sound familiar?

- Slippery or wet walkways
- Walkway changes like steps, curbs, or ramps—especially if they're not clearly marked
- Poor lighting
- Seasonal weather and tracked-in snow, mud, rainwater, and debris
- Temporary obstructions, such as large tree branches
- Spilled food and beverages
- Roof or pipe leaks
- Floors treated with coatings or cleaners that are inappropriate for the floor type
- Loose, unanchored rugs or mats

TIPS FOR AVOIDING SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Flooring

- Make sure you've specified the proper flooring solution for a particular space type. Walk-off matting is the best choice for entry areas, and grouted ceramic tile is good for restrooms and food areas.
- Mats should be no more than 0.5 inches higher than the flooring. Inspect them frequently to make sure there's no buckling or curling, and secure them to prevent migration.
- Clean mats regularly so they don't have buildup of contaminants like grease, water, or debris.

Lighting

- Ensure indoor and outdoor pathways are illuminated adequately.

Cleaning

- Choose cleaning products that don't leave residues. Read the manufacturer instructions to make sure your staff is applying cleaning solutions properly.
- Immediately clean up spills or other wet spots, especially during wet/snowy weather.
- Establish a cleaning schedule that accounts for traffic flow and periodic maintenance vs. daily attention. Identify zones (outside, entry, restroom, common areas, etc.) and identify likely soils, then tailor your cleaning practices to each zone.

Policy

- Ask employees and occupants to be mindful of potential hazards and report spills, damage, and other safety issues immediately.
- Check floor and walkway surfaces for dangers at least daily.
- Implement ANSI/National Floor Safety Institute floor safety standards in your facility. These standards cover everything from flooring materials and auto-scrubbers to cleaning chemicals and mats.
- Put a floor maintenance program in place that includes ways to properly store products and equipment, training for staff, regular floor inspections, and proper procedures and protocols.
- Ensure proper documentation and follow-up on cleaning is being done. Verification is important.
- Have floor blowers and wet floor signs ready for deployment to make occupants aware of potential hazards, especially when there's rain or snow on the horizon. 