

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Checklist

When going about your daily tasks it is highly likely you will use substances that could be hazardous to yours and others health. It is important that you and others know what substances are potentially hazardous, how to safely use and store the substance and what to do should something go wrong.

This checklist will help you identify, assess and control substance to improve safety.

Identify all substances that could be hazardous

- Substances come in different forms. Do you have any of the following
 - Chemicals liquids/droplets
 - Gasses
 - Dust (particulates)
 - Fumes
 - Vapours/mists
 - Biological agent (Germs)
- For those substances you have identified, do any of them have a hazard warning label (see Annex A below)?
 - Explosive
 - Compressed gas
 - Harmful
 - Flammable
 - Corrosive
 - Health hazard
 - Oxidising
 - Toxic
 - Environmental hazard

Y	N
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Y	N

Now create a COSHH register – a list of all your hazardous substances.

If you have answered yes to any of the above and you have no controls in place you are potentially at risk. Your next step would be to understand more about the hazards presented by the substance, refer to the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). If you do not have this document, request one from your supplier, they are legally required to do so.

Understand how the substance enters the body

- Ingestion - eating/drinking
- Absorption - contact with the skin or eyes
- Inhalation – breathing in through nose or mouth
- Injection – via needles or open wounds/sores

Y	N

You now understand what is hazardous and how it enters the body. You can now select the best way to control the hazard.

Consider the following hierarchy of controls

- Eliminate – remove or replace the substance with something non-hazardous
- Substitute – with something less hazardous

Y	N

- Engineer controls – separate the person from the substance, provide extraction etc
- Administration – reduce exposure time, work in open spaces etc
- Provide PPE – this should only be used if all other controls are insufficient

Essentially you have now conducted a risk assessment, remember to record your findings, and monitor the process to ensure all controls are working as expected.

Other considerations

Y	N
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Storage of hazardous substances

- Fire retardant container
- Environmentally safe
- Lockable
- Suitably positioned – Away from busy traffic and emergency escape routes, away from heat sources.

First Aid – do you have all the correct first aid provisions at hand?

- A copy of the MSDS, at hand, which identifies the correct first aid procedures
- All the correct equipment – cleansing shower/eye wash etc
- Trained first aider – who understand the specific procedures
- Other

Emergency procedures

- Fire
 - Detection/Alarm/Suppression
 - Evacuation – Procedure communicated and practiced
 - Substance information to provide to the emergency services

Annex A - Global Harmonised



GHS01 Explosive



GHS04 Compressed Gas



GHS07 Harmful



GHS02 Flammable



GHS05 Corrosive



GHS08 Health Hazard



GHS03 Oxidizing



GHS06 Toxic



GHS09 Environmental Hazard