



5 Steps for Staying Safe on the Job

— Young Workers in Shops and Stores —

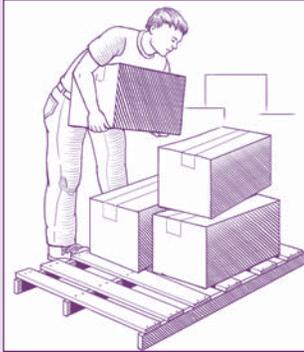


1. Get safety training
2. Look for hazards in your workplace
3. Follow safety rules
4. Know your rights
5. Ask questions and get help

TRUE STORIES

Many young workers are eager to work in a shop or store. This may seem like a safe place to work, but there are definitely safety problems to watch out for. Find out what to do so you do not get hurt, like these young workers did. . . .

“One day, I was actually held up at gunpoint. I was terrified and didn’t know what to do. I gave him the money, and he left. Now I’m scared every time I go to work.”



“I have to clean the floors every night with a cleaning chemical. It makes my hands cracked and dry, but we don’t have any gloves to wear.”



“We have to lift and move boxes all day. One day, as I was lifting a heavy carton, there was a sharp pain in my back. I couldn’t move without hurting. I had to miss work for a week, and it keeps coming back.”



It’s your boss’ job to make sure your workplace is safe!

This factsheet is for young people who work in shops or stores. U.S. laws require employers to provide *all* workers with a safe place to work. There are also laws that give special protection to *younger* workers. Not all employers know about or follow these laws, and the laws are not always enforced. But it is important for you to know what your employer *should* do.

In shops and stores, your boss can do a lot to improve safety. For example, your boss should:

- Provide safe equipment, such as good ladders, or carts or trolleys for moving heavy boxes.
- Make sure there is a security plan to protect you from assault or robbery. This may include posting signs that store employees only have a small amount of cash available, having a locked safe or “drop safe” for larger amounts of cash, or making sure someone else is present when money is counted or moved.
- Make sure the floor is clear of clutter or things to trip on.
- Give you proper gloves if you use cleaning chemicals.
- Provide cleaning products that do not hurt your skin or cause headaches.

It's your job to follow the 5 steps for staying safe!

1. Get safety training

The boss must train you to do *every* task that's part of your job, like how to handle any chemicals you need to use, how to lift safely, or how to use box cutters or other tools safely. Your boss should also teach you what to do if there is a robbery, crime, or abuse from a customer.

2. Look for hazards in your workplace

If you work in a shop or store, there are things that can hurt you or make you sick. Use the chart on the next page for ideas about what to watch out for.

3. Follow safety rules

Use your training to protect yourself and other workers. Do every task the way you have been trained. Keep your eyes open and report any problems you see.

4. Know your rights

U.S. and state laws protect workers on the job. There are also special laws that protect workers under 18. These laws say:

- Employers must provide a safe workplace.
- Employers must provide workers' compensation to pay your medical expenses and lost wages if you get injured.
- Workers under 18 may not do certain dangerous tasks, and may only work certain hours (not too late, too early, or too long).

For more information go to www.youthrules.dol.gov or www.osha.gov/SLR/teenworkers.

5. Ask questions and get help

Pay attention. If something seems unsafe, ask about it. If you don't know how to do a task you are given, ask a co-worker or your boss for help. If that does not work, get help from someone else, such as a safety or union representative, teacher, or parent. For more information, contact:

- National Young Worker Safety Resource Center, www.youngworkers.org.
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Teen Workers page, www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers.
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, www.youth.eeoc.gov.
- Your state labor dept., www.youthrules.dol.gov/states.htm or your state OSHA, www.osha.gov/dcsp.osp.

The *5 Steps for Staying Safe on the Job* series includes an overview pamphlet on young worker job safety and specific factsheets on:

- Construction
- Agricultural Field Work
- Hotel Cleaning
- Restaurants & Food Service
- Motor Vehicle Repair
- Working in Shops & Stores

Hazards in Shops and Stores

Here are some hazards you need to watch out for, and things you can do about them once you are trained and know the safety rules.

	HAZARDS	WHAT YOU CAN DO
VIOLENCE	Robberies and assaults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not count cash in front of customers. Do not work alone or isolated from others. Make sure back doors are locked at night (but workers should still be able to exit). Do not resist during an attempted robbery. Do not chase or confront thieves or shoplifters. Call your boss.
	Angry or abusive customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are being yelled at or harassed by customers, get help from your boss.
FALLS	Slippery and cluttered floors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean up spills immediately. Keep walkways free of things to trip on. Do not carry items too tall for you to see over. Never run or move too fast. Wear shoes with non-skid soles.
	Working on ladders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a ladder or footstool to reach objects up high. Never stand on a box or cart, or climb racking or shelves. Do not stand on the top step of a ladder.
BODY STRAIN	Lifting, bending, and reaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use wheeled carts or trolleys to move boxes and other items. Get help when lifting heavy items. Follow these safe lifting methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bend your legs, not your back, when you pick up something heavy. Hold the heavy item close to your body. Move to face the heavy object before you lift instead of twisting your body.
	Standing for long periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take regular breaks. Wear cushioned shoes. Stand on a mat. Change position, move around, or shift weight from one foot to the other.
CHEMICALS	Cleaning products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for information about the chemicals you use. Read labels and follow instructions before using. Wear goggles and gloves when needed. Your boss should provide them.
OTHER	Electric shocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not touch or plug in electrical equipment with wet hands. Do not use equipment that has a frayed cord or is damaged. Tell your boss about it.