Foreword
Thanks for getting your copy of the Ultimate Cable Management Guide 2015. This document has been created to aid you and those around you in making your working environment safer.

Over a third of accidents in the workplace in the UK are caused by slips, trips and falls and a huge number of these are as a result of trailing cables.

We hope that the contents of this document can be a real help in making your working environment safer. We’ve used our experience to pool together ideas that we feel are often overlooked by site workers. Many of the points will be common sense, but when these things are overlooked, serious hazards can appear which may result in an accident.

We’ve also created a printable toolbox talk which will help you bring the issue of slips, trips and falls into the minds of your site operatives, and a printable poster that you can stick around site. For printed copies of these please contact us.

Disclaimer
This document is written with the intention of aiding your current safety activities, as opposed to replacing them. Every tip or piece of advice in this document is correct at the time of writing. This guide is not exhaustive and must be used in conjunction with your company’s current health and safety policy. Everyone on your site must be correctly trained for the work that they carry out and failure to ensure this is a breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc (1974).

Further Information
For more information on receiving or providing the correct training please contact one of these safety bodies or refer to the referenced acts:
1. Iosh - http://www.iosh.co.uk/
2. The Health and Safety Executive - http://www.hse.gov.uk/

“Where you need cables for temporary lighting or mains-powered tools, run them at high level, especially along corridors.”
Health and Safety Executive
Tidi-Cable’s 10 Biggest Hazards (and Solutions)

Electric cables are lifelines that keep building sites productive and safe by bringing power to tools and lights. Until the day when cordless technology can power these essential items, we will have trailing cables. When poorly managed, trailing cables can cause serious accidents, but when made aware of and taken into consideration, they present a very minimal risk. The following 10 points demonstrate the most frequent hazards that we encounter and quick ways to solve them.

1. Running cables across doorways
2. Running cables across driving routes
3. Cutting cables
4. Loops hanging from above head height
5. Labelling important cables
6. Running cables down stairwells
7. Running cables at ground level
8. Scouting your route
9. Cables across the top of stairwells
10. Routine checks

Hazard 1 - Don’t Run Cables Across Doorways

In corridors, if you have cables running on the floor along the wall, make sure that they don’t cross the entrance to a doorway. People walking in and out of the room will be looking ahead to make sure they don’t walk into the wall and not looking at the cable crossing the doorway. **Solution:** Run the cables above head height when it comes to the doorway by using cable hooks, trunking or cable ties.

Hazard 2 - Avoid Cables Crossing Roads Without a Cable Ramp

The rubber/plastic coating on temporary cables found on site is not designed for vehicles to drive over – especially not HGVs. Wear and tear from this can cause breaks in the covering of the cables and should this exposed section end up in a puddle, it could pose a serious danger. **Solution:** Always use a suitable cable ramp and check the tolerance to ensure it can hold the load of the vehicles coming onto site.

Hazard 3 - Don’t EVER Cut a Cable Unless the Power Supply is in Sight

A common cause of electric shock is when someone cuts a cable that they thought was dead, but it was actually live. Whilst 110v is unlikely to cause serious injury, cutting a 230v cable is potentially life threatening. **Solution:** Always have the power end of the cable in sight before cutting it. If this isn’t possible, unplug it and get another member of the site team to supervise the plug end.

Tidi-Hooks®
Fix up to 15 cables to walls or ceilings with the fantastic Tidi-Hooks®
Hazard 4 – Don’t Allow Hanging Loops

Whilst the chances of someone being hanged by a looping cable are pretty slim, there is a chance that a low hanging cable will cause an accident. Whether the loop is near ground presenting a trip hazard or at neck level presenting a strangling hazard, cables hanging down are unsafe.

Solution: Secure them to an overhead feature with cable ties or duct tape.

Hazard 5 – Label Important Cables

On site, there are often cables that are extremely important for safety. One cable may be responsible for powering a light that illuminates a key fire escape. Cutting or disconnecting these power supplies can pose a huge danger.

Solution: In situations like this, label the cable every 3 metres. Ordinary office labels can be used or a length of masking tape wrapped around and written on.

Hazard 6 - Don’t Run Cables Down Stairs

A common cause of people falling down the stairs on site is that there are obstructions in place. These obstructions are often cables that have to run from one level to another. When a transformer/power supply is on a different level to the one you’re working on, there is often no other option but to use the stairway.

Solution: When this is the case, be sure to run them above floor level. This can be done by fastening them to the handrail or using cable hooks.

Hazard 7 – Humps in Cables that are at Ground Level

When running along the floor, cables rarely lie flush with the ground. This must be avoided as passers by can easily get their foot caught and trip over. What’s more, if they’re carrying something heavy, they could cause themselves a serious injury.

Solution: Raise above head height or tape down flat.

Hazard 8 – Never Carry Out Lifting Without Scouting the Route First

Lifting can’t really be avoided on an active construction site. Whether light or heavy, anything that obstructs your vision can prevent you from seeing a trip hazard that is in front of you, potentially causing an accident.

Solution: Always scout a route first before taking part in any lifting and if you see any hazards, sort them out.

Tidi-Hangers®

Tidi-Hangers® are highly visible, non conductable polypropylene cable hooks that can be used to raise cables and temporary lighting above head level and out of harms way.
**Hazard 9 - NEVER Allow Cables to Run Across the Top of a Stairway**

Cables running across the top of stairways is one of the most dangerous situations that can happen on a construction site. Should someone trip over these, they could easily fall down the whole flight of stairs, which would certainly cause a serious injury, and in some cases even death. **Solution:** Avoid this by moving the cable to the other side of the corridor and taping it to the floor. If this isn’t possible, it must be raised above head height to get it completely out of the way.

**Hazard 10 – Don’t Allow Cables to get Worn Down**

It is only a matter of time before a tear in a cable’s protective layer shocks someone. The exposed conductor will have a live current flowing through it and just one touch is likely to give someone a nasty shock. **Solution:** The HSE advises that all cables, plugs and extension leads are formally, visually inspected at least once a year. However, we recommend that this is done at least once a month. An easy way to make sure this is done is to ask all site workers to carry out a quick visual check of the cables that they’re using every time they move a piece of equipment or temporary light.

**The HSE recommends:**

> 1. Check that the plug is not damaged and that the cable is properly secured with no internal wires visible.
> 2. Check the electrical cable is not damaged and has not been repaired with insulating tape or an unsuitable connector. Damaged cable should be replaced with a new cable by a competent person.” [http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/electricequip.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/electricequip.htm)

**7 Key Points to Include in Your Site Induction**

Make sure your site induction is up to scratch by including these 7 key points:

1. Where possible, always run cables above head height.
2. When running cables down stairways, always fix them to the handrail or wall.
3. Never cut a cable unless you know where both ends lead. Get a colleague to supervise the power end if out of sight so that a passer by doesn’t plug it in without knowing.
4. Don’t allow loops of cabling to hang down from above head height.
5. Always fix cables to the floor with duct tape.
6. Scout every route for trailing cables before carrying out any lifting.
7. Check the cable on your equipment/tools before every use to ensure there are no exposed wires.
Why do they occur?

1. The majority of slips, trips and falls happen as a direct result of poor housekeeping.
2. Trip hazards can be coiled cables, trailing cables, pipes, timber, litter, spillages (such as oil, grease and water), uneven floors, tools, bricks/blocks, hoses and mud on ladders.
3. Uncovered holes in the ground.
4. Inadequate lighting.
5. Not looking where you’re walking.
6. Obstructed vision e.g. while lifting a large object.

Facts

☻ Falls from height and STFs on the same level are associated with more fatal and major injuries to workers than any other injury kind.
☻ Falls from height were the most common cause of fatalities, accounting for 29% fatal injuries (RIDDOR) (2013/14).
☻ Slips & trips were the most common cause of major/specified injuries to employees, with falls from height (RIDDOR) (2013/14).
☻ STFs were responsible for 36% of all reported injuries (2013/14).

1.5 million working days were lost because of slips, trips and falls in 2013/14 (http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/slips-trips-and-falls.pdf)

What can we do to prevent them?

1. Clear up waste materials as they’re created.
2. Keep to pedestrian routes.
3. Don’t leave tools laying around on the floor.
4. Clear up any spillages as they’re created or as you find them.
5. Scrape mud off your boots before climbing ladders or stairs.
6. Make sure any holes in the ground are safely covered and signposted
7. Raise cables above head height. If not possible, tape them to the floor.
8. Store pipes/timber in the corner of the room and where necessary tape them together.
9. Pick up litter even if it isn’t yours.
10. Raise hoses above head height. If not possible, tape them to the floor.
11. Ensure all walkways and working areas are safely lit.
12. Scout evey route before lifting or carrying for trip hazards.

Don’t be trippin’

Tidi-Cable Ltd designs and manufactures products that solve the problem of trailing cables in industrial workplaces. Contact us to find out which of our products could make your site safer.

www.tidi-cable.com
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Resources
1. Reg 27 (1) CDM Regulations 2007
2. Health & Safety at Work Act etc 1974
Don’t Walk Past Those Trailing Cables!

1. Get all cables above head height if possible.
2. Tape down any cables that run at floor level.
3. Scout all routes for trailing cables before lifting.
4. Carry out a quick visual check of the cables on all equipment before using it.
5. Never cut a cable unless you know it’s 100% dead.

Safety is everyone’s responsibility, including YOU!

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Health and Safety Executive

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