



Example Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is an examination of activities, and their potential to cause harm. The aim is simply to ensure that sufficient precautionary measures are in place to prevent harm.

In everyday life, all activities involve hazards - but the activity may not be risky. Being hit by a car while crossing the road is a potentially severe hazard - but the probability of it occurring is low - hence the risk that you will be harmed in that way is also low.

There are four sample risk assessments in this document:

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You must adapt these to your own activities ahead of time, carrying out a review of the site specific hazards. The example risk assessments list the possible hazards associated with the activity, their severity and probability of occurring and thus their risk. These are firstly assessed without any preventative action, then following suggested actions the probability and risk is revised.

Severity score

- 1 = No injury
- 2 = Minor injury (professional medical attention is not required)
- 3 = Major injury / permanent disability
- 4 = Fatality

Probability of occurrence score

- 1 = Very improbable
- 2 = Remote
- 3 = Could possibly occur
- 4 = Probable
- 5 = Likely

Risk score

Risk is calculated by multiplying the hazard severity score by the probability of occurrence score (risk = severity x probability).

- 1 – 6 = acceptable (low risk)
- 8 – 10 = broadly acceptable (medium risk)
- 12 – 20 = not acceptable (high risk)

We recommend that you do not carry out any activity in the 'not acceptable' category, for example walking along steep banks next to water.

1. Sample risk assessment: leading a bat detector workshop

Activity	Hazard	Severity	Probability	Risk	Action to reduce risk	Revised probability	Revised risk
Training in classroom	Participant falling ill	4	3	12	Record any medical conditions when booking course. Make sure know where medical services situated and how to get there Make sure venue is not overcrowded or too hot and access to water is easy. Take frequent breaks Make sure know local emergency numbers or where to find them & where local hospital/casualty department is	2	8
	Fire	4	3	12	Make sure everyone knows fire drill and exits. Ensure venue has safety certificate and equipment – extinguishers etc. Know where fire equipment is kept Avoid leaving unattended equipment running (eg.OHP) Make sure all domestic appliances are turned off	1	4
	Trips / slips	3	3	9	Place cables out of people's way Avoid leaving equipment lying around Make drinks in designated area away from main classroom to avoid spilling onto floor Give people time to get back to their places after breaks etc	2	6
	Contact with animals	3	2	6	If you do bring captive bats, or arrange for someone else to do so, make sure that no-one handles them apart from the designated handler who must be fully vaccinated Always wear appropriate gloves for handling bats (see BCT's fact sheet on gloves for further information)	1	3
Refreshment Break	Burns/scalds	2	3	6	Provide hot but not boiling beverages Provide enough space to reduce risk of spillage	1	2
	Allergic reaction to food	4	3	12	Do not provide food – ask people to bring their own or go to outside caterer Advise people with allergies to bring their own tea/coffee and biscuits Make sure any caterers employed to provide food are aware of any allergies/dietary requirements	1	4

Sample risk assessment: leading a bat detector workshop cont.

Transport to/from venue (leader)	Car accidents (leader)	4	2	8	Avoid driving when tired. Stay overnight at B&B if needed Make sure details left with someone about when returning Carry mobile phone Take public transport if available	1	4
	Becoming stranded (leader)	2	3	6	Make sure you get train/bus timetables if using public transport Carry a mobile phone Tell someone where you are going and when you will be back If in doubt if you are going to make it, get a B&B Arrange a back-up plan	1	2
Transport to practical/bat walk site	Road accident	4	2	8	Set meeting time before sunset when still light Give clear directions Walk to venue if possible. Put torches on at front and back and wear high visibility jacket Observe highway code Use site as close as possible to daytime venue Check insurance covers your activity. Don't give lifts	1	4
Leading walk	Trips, slips falls	3	3	9	Check people have sensible footwear (if not, don't take them) Use torches (carry at least two torches plus one spare and spare batteries) Do not go where ground is excessively wet or muddy Avoid dense vegetation and steep banks Stay on paths where possible Walk route beforehand to identify potential hazards (if possible) Stand still to talk to group Walk at pace of slowest people Do not climb any fences	2	6
	Participant getting lost	3	3	9	Stay within 1km of venue/car park/meeting point Stay on paths Keep group together Make sure no-one turns back alone	2	6
	Change of weather/cold/wet	3	3	9	Make sure everyone has suitable clothing Do not go if wet/foggy Check weather forecast	2	6

2. Sample risk assessment: evening field work

Activity	Hazard	Severity	Probability	Risk	Action to reduce risk	Revised probability	Revised Risk
Working in the countryside	Danger of injury or of illness through contact with animals	4	2	8	Identify potential hazards during day Talk to landowners about location of potentially hazardous animals Avoid contact with animals and dung If walking in close proximity to long grass/bracken - check exposed parts of body for ticks. If a tick is found and you contract flu like symptoms - inform your doctor that you may have been exposed to Lyme's disease. Do not handle bats on any survey (there should be no need to do this)	1	4
	Inclement weather	2	3	6	Be aware that hazards may increase with rain, strong wind, thunderstorms Avoid /terminate outdoor activity in poor weather. You are requested not to survey in heavy rain/storms or high winds or at temperatures lower than 7°C	2	4
Remote working	Danger of injury through accident	4	2	8	Contact relevant landowners/water bailiffs before carrying out survey/walk Avoid well-known danger spots including urban areas. Do not cross railway lines or other potential hazardous sites e.g. quarries, ravines Notify someone of destination (grid reference of site) and have unambiguous contingency procedure if no contact within anticipated time of return Wear clothing/footwear appropriate to the location/terrain, carry torch and spare batteries & bulbs, compass and survival bag/warm clothing	1	4
	Physical attack	4	2	6	Take fully charged mobile phone for use in emergency Carry personal alarm in urbanised areas	1	4
	Getting lost	1	3	3	Identify/locate nearest phone box during daytime Do not survey alone	2	2

Sample risk assessment: evening field work cont.

Working at night	Slips, trips, falls e.g. climbing fences/stiles/obstacles, falling into holes	2	3	6	Identify potential hazards in daytime and avoid during night Use head torch and pocket notepad to keep hands free if recording observations Be extra vigilant at night and wear reflector jacket when walking on roads Ensure tetanus is up to date	2	4
	Getting lost	1	3	3	Use map and compass/GPS and walk route in daylight in advance	2	2
Working by steep banks	Danger of injury by falling on land or near water	3	3	9	If next to water - avoid activity Keep at safe distance from bank/cliff/water edge	2	6
		3	4	12	Identify potential hazards during day and avoid these areas at night Wear footwear appropriate for the location/terrain and weather conditions	2	6
Working by water	Risk of drowning	4	2	8	Non-swimmers should always be accompanied when walking by water Do not cross rivers unless by bridge Avoid work when risk of flooding and be aware of tides	1	4
	Risk of waterborne diseases, especially Weil's disease	4	2	4	Avoid contact with water especially if cut or grazed If contact with water made - wash affected area. If you contract flu like symptoms, inform your doctor that you may have been exposed to Weil's disease.	1	4

3. Sample risk assessment: public bats walks

Hazard	Severity	Probability	Risk	Action to reduce risk	Revised probability	Revised risk
Cuts / abrasions / bruises from slips / trips / falls	2	4	8	Make a daytime planning visit to select route for walk to as far as possible avoid narrow paths and/or trip hazards such as tree roots. Advise participants to bring a torch, try to ensure that those that do are distributed among the participants.	2	4
Excited children may fail to notice hazards	4	3	12	Advise participants that a responsible adult should accompany children. No unaccompanied children under 14 will be permitted to go on the walk.	2	8
Bites from insects Poisonous plants	2	3	6	Advise use of insect repellent. This risk is highest at dusk when most bat walks take place. Ensure that walk avoids areas with poisonous plants (such as giant hogweed) or that these are pointed out to participants.	1	2
Drowning or hypothermia from falling into rivers or ponds and lakes	4	3	12	Ensure that participants are made aware of the position of banks etc. Try to route walk away from any particularly narrow or hazardous areas.	1	4
Toxocariasis	3	1	3	Risk from contact with dog faeces, particularly to small children. Try to ensure that walk avoids areas of contamination.	1	3
Weil's disease	3	1	3	Only a risk to those who accidentally come into contact with potentially contaminated water. Any such persons should be warned to watch for flu-like symptoms within a few weeks and visit their doctor immediately telling them of the contact with possibly contaminated water.	1	3
Problems with dogs	2	2	4	Advise any participants bringing a dog that it must be strictly kept on a lead. Consider a policy of discouraging dogs.	1	2
Physical assault	2	2	4	Advise participants not to become separated from the main body of participants. A group volunteer with a torch should act as back marker while group is on the move.	1	2

4. Sample risk assessment: running a stand at a public event

Activity	Hazard	Severity	Probability	Risk	Action to reduce risk	Revised probability	Revised risk
Event set up/ dismantling: displays, etc	Danger of injury through inappropriate adopting correct manual handling and lifting.	3	2	6	Advise volunteers to adopt the RSI guidelines on manual handling and lifting e.g. keep a straight back when lifting and not to carry too much heavy objects in one go. Ask for assistance.	1	3
	Slips, trips, falls	2	2	4	Exhibitor to observe clearly marked zones for their stall/display/activity All items constructed, erected and maintained to suitable standard and located in position to minimise risk to themselves and the general public. Ensure obstacles are moved where possible	1	2
Art and craft activities	Danger of injury from using arts and craft tools or engaging in bat mask, finger puppets etc. making activity	2	2	4	Provide craft tools appropriate for children to avoid injury e.g. rounded scissors Ensure ratio of adult to children supervision during activity Ensure table where activity is held is sturdy and prevent overcrowding Only use equipment in the designated areas and participants are not allowed to wander off with these.	1	2
Face painting	Allergy to paints	4	1	4	Erect sign: If child has allergy/ skin condition then must not have face painted. Painter to ensure all parents/guardian has read the sign and gives verbal confirmation re. no allergy/giving permission.	1	4
Bat box building	Danger of injury from using hand tools	2	3	6	Ensure ratio of adult to children supervision during activity Provide children and adult gloves for the activity. Volunteers and general public given clear instructions on how to assemble bat box and use of tools. Provide appropriate, designated space for the activity and ensure participants are not working in confined spaces or within 1m of another person. All tools to be securely and safely stored before and during the events, and dealt with responsibly after the event. Only use equipment in the designated areas and participants are not allowed to wander off with these. Provide first aid kit and ensure a first aider is available.	1	2

4. Sample risk assessment: running a stand at a public event

Presence on site: General public	Misunderstanding between volunteers and members of the public. Harm and injuries arising from physical assaults or verbal abuse.	2	2	4	Volunteers told to secure all personal belongings at all times and to keep work area tidy to prevent trips and falls. Volunteers to be reminded to be aware of what others are doing at all times. Also told to look out for people wandering into the area. Stop work if they don't move away or are acting suspicious. Inform the Police community support officer of event.	1	2
Showing a live bat	Risk of rabies	4	1	4	Bat worker to adopt BCT Good Practice guidelines for Bats and Rabies i.e. not bring Daubenton's bats to educational events and handle with glove in front of members of the public.	1	4
	Disturbance to bat that could lead to stress of the animal	1	1	1	Limit length of time of showing bat in the hand to the audience. Ask the children to talk quietly as the bat is shown around (but whispering can disturb bats) and get them to sit round, perhaps in a circle, or in aisles that allow the bat worker to show the bat easily. Provide cover and water and/or food to ensure the welfare of the bat inside the bat box.	1	4
Working indoors	Risk of fire during day	4	1	4	Follow site protocols and evacuation procedures.	1	4
	Welfare and environment – toilets and water	1	1	1	Have toilets and café facilities clearly signposted.	1	1
	Slips, trips and falls from litter and other debris generated from the activity	1	2	2	Ensure a litter pick is undertaken after the event and thrown in bin bags provided. Remove all objects and materials from site following the end of the event.	1	1

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