STIVEN CATALYST

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MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Management without theatre.



OPERATIONS

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS: THE ORDINARY ACCIDENT

Why the fall on the level is the most common accident, where it happens in Germany, a trial with free slip-resistant shoes, three layers of prevention, and a floor walk at the end of the shift.

24.1% of reportable accidents at work in Germany in 2024 were slips, trips and falls on the level: 164,912.

DGUV, 2025

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NO. 100 · OPERATIONS

In this issue

A fall from a roof gets an investigation. A fall over a cable or on a wet floor gets a plaster and a note. This hundredth issue is about the accident that is too ordinary to count, and about order on the floor treated as a standard of the operation, not as cleaning.

In Great Britain slips, trips and falls on the level cause 30% of reported injuries but 46% of the specified ones, which are mostly fractures. In Germany they were 24.1% of reportable accidents in 2024; half on floors and walkways. Free slip-resistant shoes cut slipping injuries in school kitchens from 3.54 to 1.18 per 10,000 worker-months. Prevention works in three layers. A floor walk for the end of the shift closes the issue.

Stiven Janaqi EDITOR · STIVEN CATALYST

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HOW TO READ THIS ISSUE

Figure
Every figure has its source and year at the foot of its page.

Our reading
Where the editor interprets rather than the research, it says so.

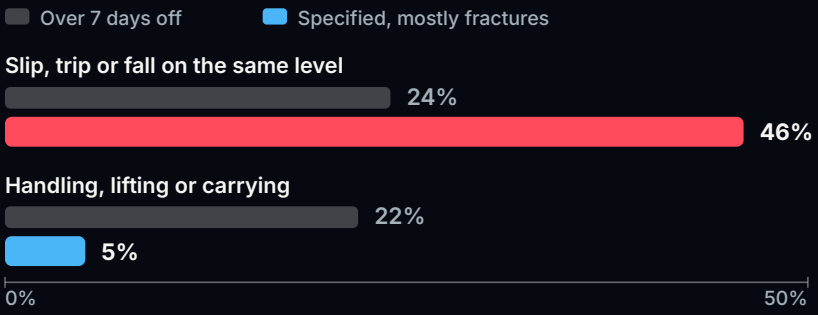
Practice
The steps and the card are proposals to try, not research results.

COVER STORY

Too ordinary to count

HSE's statistics for 2024/25 put slips, trips and falls on the same level first among the injuries employers report, in most sectors. Together with handling injuries they make about half of all reports, yet only 1% of the deaths at work over five years. That is why they look minor.

SHARE OF EACH KIND OF INJURY REPORTED BY EMPLOYERS, GREAT BRITAIN, 2024/25



Specified injuries are a fixed list in British law; around 90% of them are fractures. Nearly half of these specified injuries came from a slip, trip or fall on the level.

OUR READING

Rare deaths make the fall look small. The fractures and the weeks off say otherwise.

Source: Health and Safety Executive, 2025

HSE, RIDDOR reports to employees, 2024/25, provisional; reporting is estimated at about half. Each bar is a kind's share of one category. The overall ranking of kinds, slips 30% and handling 17%, is in No. 15; lifting in No. 99.

THE NUMBERS

Where people fall in Germany

The German statutory accident insurance counts slips, trips and falls on the level apart from falls from height. In 2024 they were 164,912 of 685,543 reportable accidents at work, those with at least four days off or a death.

24.1%
of reportable accidents at work

27.1%
of new accident pensions; in 68% of these the injury was a fracture

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS BY WHAT THE PERSON FELL ON, GERMANY, 2024



Within floors, about 13,500 falls were on a surface wet from water, rain, snow or ice, and about 4,800 on oil or grease. Most injuries were to the ankle and foot (38%) or the knee and lower leg (21%).

Source: Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV), Referat Statistik und Datenanalyse, 2025

DGUV, Statistik Arbeitsunfallgeschehen 2024 (2025), tables 4 and 44: employees and entrepreneurs, accidents during work, extrapolated from a sample. Bars are shares of the 164,912; the rest are other objects. Ladder cases here are slips and trips, not falls from height.

THE MODEL

Three layers of prevention

In their review for the journal Ergonomics, Wen-Ruey Chang and colleagues set out prevention in three layers, after Haslam and Stubbs: design the hazard out, reduce what remains, and help people cope with what is left. Housekeeping sits in the middle layer.

Design out

- slip-resistant flooring
- walkways without trip hazards
- enough storage, good light

Reduce

- sustainable cleaning and inspection
- mark what cannot be removed
- no rushing, no awkward loads

Help people

- footwear for the floor
- eyesight, balance
- fatigue on shifts

The review warns that cleaning routines tend to slip back over time, so they must be built to last. It describes a fast-food chain where clean floors depended on the detergent head office chose, on how it was used locally, and on supervision amid high staff turnover.

OUR READING

A wet floor is the last link of a chain that starts with a leak, a detergent or a rushed task. Fix the chain, not only the floor.

Source: Wen-Ruey Chang, Sylvie Leclercq, Thurmon E. Lockhart & Roger Haslam, Ergonomics 59(7), 2016

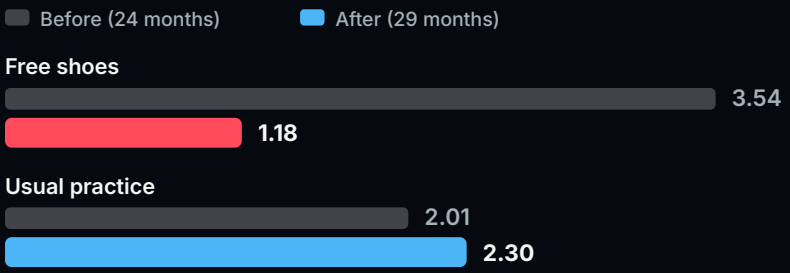
Layers and items from table 2 of Chang et al. (2016), adapted from Haslam and Stubbs (2006), shortened by the editors. The authors add that evidence for the single elements and their priority is sparse. Fatigue is in No. 89.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Shoes for 226 school kitchens

Jennifer Bell and colleagues at NIOSH randomised 226 US school districts whose kitchens were run by one food service company. In one group, workers could get slip-resistant shoes free of charge from August 2011; in the other they kept buying their own. 16,949 workers took part over 53 months.

SLIPPING INJURY CLAIMS PER 10,000 WORKER-MONTHS



The odds of a slipping injury fell by 67% in the shoe group, while they rose in the other, and the difference held after adjustment for age. Earlier, in three US hospitals, a programme of eleven measures from dry floors to lighting went with a fall of over 50% in claims, as Chang and colleagues report it.

OUR READING

The shoes worked where the employer paid and nearly everyone signed up. A rule that people pay for themselves is a weaker rule.

Sources: Jennifer L. Bell, James W. Collins & Sharon Chiou, Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health 45(2), 2019; Wen-Ruey Chang, Sylvie Leclercq, Thurmon E. Lockhart & Roger Haslam, Ergonomics 59(7), 2016

Bell et al. (2019), cluster randomised; outcome: compensation claims for slips on wet or greasy floors indoors. 94% of workers took part; whether the injured wore the shoes is not known. The hospital study (2008) was not read; its result as Chang et al. (2016) give it.

HOW IT IS MEASURED

Map the falls, not only count them

A count of falls tells you there is a problem. Where they happen tells you what to fix. HSE points to a mapping tool for finding the hot spots of slips and trips; the DGUV sorts them by place and by what the person fell on.

01	**Where**	a cross on the floor plan: door, ramp, kitchen, stairs, car park
02	**Underfoot**	water, grease, ice, an object, a cable, an edge, a worn mat
03	**Doing what**	carrying, hurrying, looking elsewhere, cleaning in progress
04	**When**	hour, shift, weather; winter quarters stand out in the German data
05	**Near misses too**	a slip without a fall goes on the same plan

OUR READING

Three crosses at the same door are one problem with an address. That is where the next action goes.

Sources: Health and Safety Executive, 2012; Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV), Referat Statistik und Datenanalyse, 2025

The fields are the editors' selection, built on HSE's mapping advice in INDG225 and the DGUV's categories; the winter peak is the DGUV's finding for 2021–2024 commuting falls. Near misses are in No. 63, the safety cross and rates in No. 87.

TOOL OF THE ISSUE

The end-of-shift floor walk

One walk per area at the end of each shift, by the person who owns that area, with what is found handed over by name. The 5S Audit tool scores the same area over time and turns findings into actions with an owner.

01 Area, time, owner one area per card; who walks it

02 Floors clean and dry spills, leaks, where cleaning left the floor wet, the right detergent

03 Walkways clear boxes, pallets, cables, trolleys parked in the way

04 Surfaces and light damaged floor or mats, steps and edges visible, lamps working

05 Entrances and weather matting in place, rain or ice plan for the next shift

06 Open findings what, where, who fixes it, by when; handed over by name

Sources: Health and Safety Executive, 2012; Wen-Ruey Chang, Sylvie Leclercq, Thurmon E. Lockhart & Roger Haslam, Ergonomics 59(7), 2016

The card is the editors' proposal, built on HSE's practical steps in INDG225 and the layers in Chang et al. (2016). The essay linked below gives the author's own end-of-shift check for one area.

More in the essay — 6S without a poster: order you can see

Open the tool: 5S Audit — stivencatalyst.com/tools/five-s-audit/

SOURCES AND METHOD

Every figure has a source.

The figures in this issue come from the sources below. The year shows how recent each one is.

Kind of accident statistics in Great Britain, 2025
Health and Safety Executive, 2025
https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/kinds-of-accident.pdf

Statistik Arbeitsunfallgeschehen 2024
Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV), Referat Statistik und Datenanalyse, 2025
https://publikationen.dguv.de/statistiken/arbeitsunfallgeschehen/5157/arbeitsunfallgeschehen-2024

State of science: occupational slips, trips and falls on the same level
Wen-Ruey Chang, Sylvie Leclercq, Thurmon E. Lockhart & Roger Haslam, Ergonomics 59(7), 2016
https://doi.org/10.1080/00140139.2016.1157214

Effectiveness of a no-cost-to-workers, slip-resistant footwear program for reducing slipping-related injuries in food service workers: a cluster randomized trial
Jennifer L. Bell, James W. Collins & Sharon Chiou, Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health 45(2), 2019
https://doi.org/10.5271/sjweh.3790

Preventing slips and trips at work: a brief guide (INDG225, rev2)
Health and Safety Executive, 2012
https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg225.pdf

EDITORIAL METHOD

Each figure was checked for its year, its publisher and what it measures, in the full text where it could be opened. A source read only in a summary, an abstract or excerpts is marked “via”. A figure not confirmed in what was read is marked so on its page, or left out. The editor's interpretation is marked “Our reading”.



MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Management without theatre.

Every issue, one management question, checked against the best research.

ALL ISSUES

stivencatalyst.com/magazine/management-review.html

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Edited by Stiven Janaqi, who answers for it; “the editors” in this publication means him. Its texts, translations, layout and the checking of figures against their sources are done in working sessions with Claude, an AI model by Anthropic.
stivencatalyst.com/how-this-is-made.html