



Safety SOP Template

A safety standard operating procedure (SOP) is a documented, step-by-step instruction for performing a task safely, the same way every time. Use this template to write a safety SOP for any task in your workplace, from chemical handling and machine maintenance to working at height, confined space entry, and emergency response. Replace the prompts in each section with your own detail, then have it reviewed and approved before use.

How to use it: fill in the header, complete each section, and keep the revision history up to date. Keep each SOP to a single task. You can print and complete this on paper, or build the same SOP as a digital checklist in GoAudits so staff complete it on mobile with photos, timestamps, and an audit trail.

SOP header

SOP title		SOP number	
Version		Effective date	
Prepared by		Review date	
Approved by		Department / area	

1. Purpose

State why this SOP exists and what it prevents (for example, to prevent exposure and injury when handling hazardous chemicals).

2. Scope

Define which tasks, areas, shifts, and roles the SOP applies to, and anything it does not cover.

3. Definitions

Explain any terms, abbreviations, or equipment names a new starter would not recognise (for example, SDS, PPE, LEV, exposure limit).

4. Responsibilities

List who performs the task, who supervises it, and who verifies it was done correctly.

5. PPE and equipment

List everything required before work starts: PPE, tools, ventilation, containment, spill kit, emergency equipment.

6. Procedure (step by step)

Write each action as a short, numbered step in the order it happens. Use instructions rather than descriptions. Add a photo or diagram wherever a step is easier to show than describe.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

7. Hazards and controls

List what can go wrong at each stage and the control in place for it (for example, splash to eyes, controlled by face shield and eyewash station within 10 seconds).

8. Emergency response

State what to do if something goes wrong: immediate action, who to notify, and within what timeframe. Include emergency contacts.

9. Records

List the records this SOP produces and where they are kept (for example, training records, inspection logs, incident reports).

10. Revision history

Version	Date	Description of change	Approved by
1.0		Initial version	

Worked Example: Chemical Handling SOP

This filled example shows how the template looks in practice. Adapt the detail to the chemicals and exposure limits in your own workplace.

SOP title	Handling and storage of hazardous chemicals	SOP number	HS-CHEM-002
Version	1.0 (eff. 01 / 10 / 2026)	Department / area	All production and laboratory areas

1. Purpose

To prevent exposure, injury, and environmental release when receiving, handling, storing, and disposing of hazardous chemicals.

2. Scope

Applies to all employees and contractors handling chemicals classified as hazardous under the Hazard Communication Standard. Does not cover cleaning products used in office areas in consumer quantities.

4. Responsibilities

The operator follows this procedure and reports any spill or exposure immediately. The supervisor verifies training is current before assigning the task. The safety officer maintains safety data sheets.

6. Procedure (step by step)

1. Check the safety data sheet (SDS) before first use of any chemical, and whenever the supplier or formulation changes.
2. Confirm the container label is intact, legible, and shows the correct hazard pictograms.
3. Put on the PPE specified in Section 5 and confirm ventilation or extraction is running.
4. Decant or dispense using the designated equipment only. Never use food or drink containers.
5. Label any secondary container immediately with product name and hazard information.
6. Return the chemical to its designated storage location. Do not store incompatible chemicals together.
7. Wash hands and exposed skin before eating, drinking, or leaving the area, and dispose of waste and empty containers through the approved route. Do not pour to drain.

7. Hazards and controls

Splash to eyes or skin: face shield, gloves to SDS specification, eyewash within 10 seconds of the work area. Inhalation: local exhaust ventilation, respirator where the SDS requires it. Incompatible storage: segregated storage by hazard class, checked monthly. Spill: spill kit in the immediate area, trained responders on every shift.

8. Emergency response

Skin or eye contact: flush with water for 15 minutes and seek medical attention, taking the SDS with you. Spill: evacuate the area, notify the supervisor, and use the spill kit only if trained. Report every incident, including near misses, the same shift.

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