

Safety first with your cellars and stairs

Watch your step!

Accidents involving cellars and stairs are all too common. They have caused serious injuries, and on occasion, some accidents have been fatal.

In most cases these falls can be prevented. Please read the checklist overleaf and make sure your premises are safe...

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Cellar hatch checklist...

When your cellar hatch is open could people injure themselves if they fell down the opening?

Do you have to use the cellar via this route?

Is the cellar hatch ever likely to be left open when in use?

Have you provided a barrier to prevent people falling down the hatch (this is to protect staff and members of the public)?

Is the barrier substantial enough to stop someone falling through it (it needs to be at least 1100mm high with an intermediate rail – single loose ropes, chairs and other ad hoc barriers are not sufficient)?

Is it necessary to open the hatch door when you have customers?

Are staff suitably trained to know about the need for a barrier as well as how to put one in place?

Are staff adequately supervised to ensure shortcuts aren't being taken?

Is the access route to the cellar safe?

Could the cellar hatch fall on someone?

Is there enough lighting around the cellar hatch to be able to see clearly?



Stairs and steps checklist...

Are they well constructed and maintained?

Do they have at least one handrail that runs right up to their entire height?

Are they well lit?

Are the surfaces slip resistant (this is especially important if they get wet from water that is walked-in or directly from rain)?

Are they covered with a carpet that is loose, worn, has holes in it or has worn nosings?

Are they likely to be used by people with poor vision (if so make sure they have contrasting nosings)?

Are they easily visible as you approach them?

Are they kept clear of distractions (eg sales gondolas, stock, information signs)?

Do you need to cross the head of the stairs to access anything?

Do the people using them always have a hand free to use the handrail?

Are there alternatives to using the stairs to move goods from one floor to another?

Is it clear to people how they can access different floors?

Are there any hazards present at the bottom of the stairs (eg glass panels)?