

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

SET UP YOUR SWMS. USE IT ON THE JOB.

A step-by-step guide to personalising your Safe Work Method Statement template, with screenshots of every section, and how to use it on site once it's done.

[Insert Company Name]
ABN: ADDRESS: PHONE: EMAIL:

PLACE YOUR LOGO HERE

[INSERT COMPANY NAME]
Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)

ABN: Address: Phone: Email:

Project: Client/Principal Contractor (PC):

Risk Assessment #: SWMS-XXXX Site: Work Activity: Angle Grinder

NOTE: Work must be performed in accordance with this SWMS. All persons involved in the works must have the SWMS explained and COMMUNICATED to them prior to start of works. This SWMS must be kept and be available for inspection until the work to which this SWMS relates is completed. If the SWMS is revised, all versions should be kept. If a notifiable incident occurs in relation to the high risk construction work in this SWMS, the SWMS must be kept for at least 2 years from the date of the notifiable incident.

Prepared By:	Signed & Dated:
Reviewed By:	Signed & Dated:
Date Assessment Conducted: //	Date to be Reviewed: //, or when processes change, or an incident occurs

Personnel Responsible for Monitoring this Activity: Managing Director, Supervisor, Operators, Site Foreman

Plant and Equipment Required for this Activity: Angle Grinder

Hard Hat	Steel Cap Boots	Ear Protection	Eye Protection	Face Shield	Protective Gloves	Welding Mask	P2 Mask	Respirator	Fall-Arrest Harness	Sun Protection	High Vis Clothing
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Details of Maintenance Checks Required for this Activity: Angle grinders and associated electrical equipment must undergo daily pre-start inspections, scheduled inspections, and maintenance in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and AS/NZS 62841 for hand-held electric power tools. Faulty or damaged equipment must be tagged out of service and reported immediately.

Materials Used: Nil

VERSION: v1.0 ISSUE DATE: //

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Before you start, have these handy

- ✓ Your business name, ABN, address, phone and email
- ✓ Your logo as a PNG or JPG file (optional)
- ✓ The project, site and client details for the job
- ✓ A few minutes with the workers who'll be doing the task

START HERE

HOW YOUR SWMS WORKS

A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) sets out the steps in a task, what can go wrong at each step, and the controls your workers will use to stay safe.

A SWMS is legally required for **high risk construction work**. Plenty of businesses outside construction use one too, as their written task risk assessment, the same way others use a JSA or Safe Work Procedure. Clients and head contractors also ask for "a SWMS" whatever the work is.

Your template is a strong starting point, not the finished product.

The hazards and controls are written for how this task is usually done. Your job is to check them against how *your* workers do it, on *this* site, and change anything that doesn't match.

WHAT'S INSIDE YOUR SWMS

Page 1

Business and job details, sign-off, PPE

Page 2

SDS, codes, training and high risk work

Risk matrix

How the risk ratings are worked out

Risk assessment

Each job step, its hazards and controls

Site specific

Hazards unique to this site

Sign-off

Worker sign-on and consultation record

SIX STEPS TO A SWMS THAT'S READY TO USE

Don't just fill in the blanks. At every step, read what's there and edit anything that doesn't match your work, your site, your equipment or how your workers do the job.

1 Add your business details and logo
Do this once and save it as your master copy

2 Fill in and check the job details
Edit the plant, PPE and roles to suit your job

3 Review codes, training and high risk work
Update page 2 for your state and your task

4 Review and edit the risk assessment
Add, remove or change steps and controls

5 Add site hazards and consult workers
Make changes based on what they tell you

6 Sign off and use it on the job
Brief the team, keep it on site, review it

STEP 1

ADD YOUR BUSINESS DETAILS AND LOGO

Open your SWMS in Microsoft Word or Google Docs. These details sit on page 1 and in the header at the top of every other page.

1

[INSERT COMPANY NAME]
Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)

2

PLACE YOUR LOGO HERE

3

ABN:	Address:		Phone:	Email:
Project:			Client/Principal Contractor (PC):	
Risk Assessment #:	SWMS-XXXX	Site:	Work Activity:	Angle Grinder

Page 1 of your SWMS

1 Replace [INSERT COMPANY NAME]

Click on the placeholder text and type your business name. Use your legal or trading name, whichever your clients know you by.

2 Swap in your logo

Word: right-click the "Place your logo here" image and choose *Change Picture > From a File*. **Google**

Docs: click the image, then *Replace image*. No logo? Delete the placeholder.

3 Add your ABN, address, phone and email

Click in the space just to the right of each label and type the details.

4

[Insert Company Name]
ABN: ADDRESS: PHONE: EMAIL:

PLACE YOUR LOGO HERE

The header on page 2 and every page after it

4 Update the header once, and it updates every page

Word: double-click the header area at the top of page 2 to open it. Replace the company name, fill in the details and swap the logo the same way as step 2. Double-click the page body to close the header.

Google Docs: click into the header and edit it directly.

ACME Industries Pty Ltd
Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)



ABN: 12 345 678 901 Address: 14 Example St, Noosaville QLD 4566 Phone: 07 5000 0000 Email: admin@acme.example

Project:	Workshop fit-out, Stage 2		Client/Principal Contractor (PC):	Coastal Builders Pty Ltd	
Risk Assessment #:	SWMS-0014	Site:	22 Sample Rd, Noosaville QLD	Work Activity:	Angle Grinder

How it looks once your details and logo are in

Save time on every job. Once your details and logo are in, save the file as your master copy, for example *Angle Grinder SWMS - MASTER.docx*. For each new job, open the master and use *Save As* with the job name. You'll never re-enter your business details again.

STEP 2

FILL IN AND CHECK THE JOB DETAILS

Still on page 1. This tells anyone reading the SWMS what job it covers, who wrote it and what PPE is needed.

A	Project:		Client/Principal Contractor (PC):									
	Risk Assessment #: SWMS-XXXX	Site:	Work Activity:	Angle Grinder								
NOTE: Work must be performed in accordance with this SWMS. All persons involved in the works must have the SWMS explained and COMMUNICATED to them prior to start of works. This SWMS must be kept and be available for inspection until the work to which this SWMS relates is completed. If the SWMS is revised, all versions should be kept. If a notifiable incident occurs in relation to the high risk construction work in this SWMS, the SWMS must be kept for at least 2 years from the date of the notifiable incident.												
B	Prepared By:		Signed & Dated:									
	Reviewed By:		Signed & Dated:									
C	Date Assessment Conducted: //		Date to be Reviewed: //, or when processes change, or an incident occurs									
D	Personnel Responsible for Monitoring this Activity: Managing Director, Supervisor, Operators, Site Foreman											
	Plant and Equipment Required for this Activity: Angle Grinder											
E	Hard Hat	Steel Cap Boots	Ear Protection	Eye Protection	Face Shield	Protective Gloves	Welding Mask	P2 Mask	Respirator	Fall-Arrest Harness	Sun Protection	High Vis Clothing
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F	Details of Maintenance Checks Required for this Activity:		Angle grinders and associated electrical equipment must undergo daily pre-start inspections, scheduled inspections, and maintenance in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and AS/NZS 62841 for hand-held electric power tools. Faulty or damaged equipment must be tagged out of service and reported immediately									
	Materials Used:		Nil									

A Project, client, site and SWMS number
Add the project name and the client or principal contractor you're working for (your own business name if it's your workplace). Give each SWMS its own number, for example SWMS-0014, so you can track versions. Add the site address and check the work activity describes what you're actually doing.

B Prepared by and reviewed by
The person who prepared the SWMS and the person who reviewed it, usually a supervisor and a manager. Both sign and date.

C Dates
The date the assessment was done, and when it's due for review. Twelve months is a common choice, but review sooner if anything changes.

D Who monitors the work, and the plant used
Edit the roles to match your business. List all plant, tools and equipment your workers will use for this task.

E Tick the PPE
Tick every box for PPE workers must wear. In Word, click the box to tick it. In Google Docs, delete the box and type an X.

F Maintenance checks and materials
Check the maintenance checks match what you do with this equipment. List any materials or substances used, or leave "Nil".

Leave the NOTE paragraph as it is. It explains who the SWMS must be communicated to and how long it has to be kept.

STEP 3

REVIEW THE CODES, TRAINING AND HIGH RISK WORK

Page 2 covers the rules that apply, the training workers need and whether the task is high risk construction work.

A	SDS Required? (Yes / No)	Yes ☐ No ☒		
B	Codes of Practice / Standards Consulted: These must be complied with.	[INSERT THE CODES OF PRACTICE AND AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS THAT APPLY TO THIS ACTIVITY IN YOUR STATE OR TERRITORY]		
C	Personnel Qualifications Required for this Activity: Relevant state certification for task has been undertaken or plant being operated	Relevant training General Construction Induction Card		
D	Specific Training Required for this Activity: All personnel to have completed a Site Induction. Must be trained in this SH&ESWMS and have all relevant certification for this task.	Site Specific Induction Work Activity Training		
E	High Risk Work involves:	☐ Risk of falls from greater than 2 metres	☐ Work on a telecommunications tower	☐ Demolition of load-bearing structure
		☐ Likely to involve disturbing asbestos	☐ Temporary load-bearing support for structural alterations or repairs	☐ Work in or near a confined space
		☐ Work in or near shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5m or a in tunnel	☐ Use of Explosives	☐ Work on or near pressurised gas pipes or mains
		☐ Work on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines	☐ Work on or near energised electrical installations or services	☐ Work in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere
		☐ Work with tilt up or pre-cast concrete	☐ Work on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor in use by traffic other than pedestrians	☐ Work in an area with movement of powered mobile plant
		☐ Work in or areas with artificial extremes of temperature	☐ Work in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning	☐ Diving work
	☐ Other [please specify]:			

A SDS required?
Tick Yes if the task uses any hazardous chemicals. If so, keep the Safety Data Sheets where workers can get to them.

B Codes of practice and standards
Replace the placeholder with the WHS Act, Regulations and Codes of Practice for your state or territory. Copy them from the Legislation and Codes of Practice Reference List included with your purchase, and list any Australian Standards that apply.

C Qualifications
List any licences, tickets or certificates workers need, such as a White Card, high risk work licence or trade qualification.

D Training
List the training workers must complete before starting, such as a site induction and training on this task.

E High risk construction work
Tick every category that applies to this job. If any box is ticked, a SWMS is legally required before the work starts, and the work must be done the way the SWMS says. Use *Other* to describe anything not listed.

Not doing construction work?

Leave the high risk boxes unticked. Your SWMS still works as a written risk assessment for the task.

STEP 4

REVIEW AND EDIT THE RISK ASSESSMENT

This is the main body of your SWMS and the part that matters most on site. Read it through with the job in mind.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Activity Break the job down into steps	Potential Safety and Environmental Hazards What can go wrong	Risk Rating C P R	Control Measures	Risk Rating After Controls C P R	Person Responsible To ensure management method applied
Pre-operation Inspection of equipment	- Failure to inspect - Equipment Failure resulting in injury or property damage - Inadequate maintenance could result in plant disintegrating/failing	4 4 16	- Person responsible for operating the equipment must be trained in its use. - Conduct a visual inspection of the equipment and ensure it is fit for use (including any Grinding disc wear and electrical leads). - Angle Grinder to be maintained in line with manufacturers specifications. - Any faults identified need to be reported to the Project Manager/Supervisor and the Angle Grinder NOT used until all faults have been repaired.	2 2 4	Supervisor Worker

How each row of the risk assessment works

1 Activity

The job broken into steps, in the order they happen.

2 Hazards

What can go wrong at that step.

3 Risk rating

How bad it is before any controls. C (consequence) x P (probability) = R (risk).

4 Control measures

What workers do to make it safer. This is the part to read most closely.

5 Rating after controls

The risk once the controls are in place. This should be lower.

6 Person responsible

Who makes sure each control is followed.

MAKE IT MATCH HOW YOUR TEAM WORKS

✓ **Remove** steps that don't apply to your job. Select the row, right-click and choose *Delete Rows*.

✓ **Add** steps your workers do that aren't listed. Click in a row, right-click and choose *Insert > Rows Below*.

✓ **Edit controls** so they describe what your workers actually do, using your own equipment and procedures.

✓ **Re-rate** any row you change, using the risk matrix on page 3. Aim for a rating after controls of 6 or below.

1 to 6
Acceptable

7 to 10
Acceptable with strict controls or short duration

11 to 25
Unacceptable. Don't start until controls bring it down

Start at the top of the hierarchy of controls. When you add or change a control, try to remove the hazard first, then substitute, isolate or use engineering controls. Rules, signs and PPE come last, because they rely on people getting it right every time.

STEP 5

ADD SITE-SPECIFIC HAZARDS AND CONSULT YOUR WORKERS

No template can know your site. Use the Site Specific Hazards and Controls table near the end of your SWMS for anything unique to this job.

Site Specific Hazards and Controls									
Cutting in shared workshop	• Sparks and flying debris reaching other trades working nearby	4	3	12	• Set up welding screens and a 3 m exclusion zone before cutting. Tell other trades at pre-start. Clear timber shavings from the bench and keep an extinguisher within reach.	2	2	4	Supervisor

Example: a filled-in site specific row

WALK THE SITE AND ASK

- ✓ Are other trades, the public or customers nearby?
- ✓ Overhead power lines or underground services?
- ✓ Traffic, mobile plant or tight access?
- ✓ Weather, heat, poor lighting or working alone?
- ✓ Asbestos, chemicals or other hazardous materials already on site?
- ✓ Any client or site rules you need to follow?

Fill in each row the same way as the main risk assessment: the activity, the hazard, a rating, your controls, the rating after controls and who's responsible.

TALK TO THE WORKERS DOING THE JOB

Your workers know where the task goes wrong. Before you finalise the SWMS, walk them through it and ask:

- ✓ Is this how we actually do the job?
- ✓ Is anything missing or out of order?
- ✓ Will these controls work in practice?

Make any changes they raise, then tick the two boxes in the **Worker Consultation and Participation** section and add the date. Consulting workers is a legal duty under WHS laws, and it gives you a SWMS people will actually follow.

WORKER CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

- ☒ Workers consulted in SWMS development: Date: / /
- ☒ Worker suggestions incorporated:

The Worker Consultation and Participation section, on the sign-off page

Need more rows? Click in the last row of the table, right-click and choose *Insert > Rows Below*. If you check the site and find nothing extra, write "No additional site hazards identified" and the date, so anyone reading it knows the check was done.

STEP 6

SIGN OFF AND USE IT ON THE JOB

A SWMS only works if the people doing the work know what's in it and follow it.

1

Name	Qualification Required for this Activity	Signature	Date	Time	High Risk Licence number & Expiry
Sam Taylor	Trade certificate	S. Taylor	06/10/26	7:00am	N/A
Jordan Lee	Site induction	J. Lee	06/10/26	7:00am	N/A

2

WORKER CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

☒ Workers consulted in SWMS development: Date: / /

☒ Worker suggestions incorporated:

The sign-off page, filled in

- 1

Every worker signs before starting

Explain the SWMS at a pre-start meeting or toolbox talk. Each worker then signs, confirming they understand it and their qualifications are current. Anyone who joins the job later is briefed and signs too.

- 2

Record the consultation

Tick that workers were consulted and their suggestions were included, and date it.

VERSION: v1.0

ISSUE DATE: / /

AUTHORISED BY:

REVISION DATE: / /

Page 2 of 11

The footer on every page: update the version, issue date, who authorised it and the revision date whenever you change the SWMS

USING YOUR SWMS EVERY DAY

Keep it on site

Printed or on a phone or tablet, the SWMS must be easy to get to for workers, supervisors and anyone who asks to see it.

Check the work matches

Supervisors should check the controls are being followed. That's what the "Person Responsible" column is for.

Stop if it doesn't fit

If the work can't be done the way the SWMS says, stop work, review the SWMS, update it and re-brief workers before starting again.

Keep your records

Keep the SWMS until the job is finished, plus every revised version. If a notifiable incident happens during high risk construction work, keep it for at least 2 years.

WHEN TO REVIEW YOUR SWMS

1

Every 12 months

Check it still matches current WHS laws and how you do the job.

2

When something changes

New equipment, a new process, a new site or a change to the task.

3

After an incident or near miss

Find out what went wrong and update the controls.

4

When a worker raises a concern

If a control isn't working, fix the SWMS, not just the job.

After any update, change the version number and revision date in the footer, and brief your workers on what's changed.

QUICK CHECKLIST: IS YOUR SWMS READY?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Business name, ABN, contact details and logo added (page 1 and header) | ☐ Qualifications, training and high risk work boxes completed |
| ☐ Project, client, site and SWMS number filled in | ☐ Risk assessment steps and controls match how your team does the job |
| ☐ Prepared by and reviewed by completed, signed and dated | ☐ Site specific hazards added |
| ☐ Plant, equipment and PPE match what will be used | ☐ Workers consulted and their input included |
| ☐ Codes of practice for your state or territory listed | ☐ Every worker briefed and signed on before starting |
| | ☐ A copy is on site and easy to get to |

Need a hand?

Get in touch through the Everything OHS website at workplace-safety.com.au and we'll help you get your SWMS sorted.

Disclaimer: We cannot, and do not, give you legal or any other professional advice. While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the information we provide is comprehensive, accurate and clear, it may not cover your particular circumstances. Only you are aware of the purpose for which you intend to apply a product or service you order from us. For this reason we provide this to you on an "as is" basis, and it does not constitute legal or professional advice of any kind. If you do require personalised legal or professional advice we recommend that you consult a suitably qualified person. If you think you may have noticed any error or omission, please let us know through the Everything OHS website.