

16 tips for auto service and repair shops.



Every day, you drive to get things done.

Customers bring you what's broken, bent or beat up, and together, you and your team repair it.

The problem? It's not always as simple as it sounds.

Whether it's a new part or a new paint job, no two jobs are exactly the same. Each one brings different risks and rewards — which is why protecting your employees (and your business) should be your top priority.

The good news? Promoting a safe workspace is the easy part. Just stick to these quick tips:

1. **Wear boots with non-slip soles.** Protect yourself and your employees from slips and falls (and from things falling on your feet).
2. **Gear up with gloves.** Almost everyone is exposed to things that could hurt their hands, like chemicals, hot engines and sharp equipment.
3. **Protect your eyes.** Offer safety goggles that cover the eyes completely.
4. **Clean spills and slick spots.** A lot of automotive maintenance involves changing oil and transmission fluid — both of which can coat the garage floor and increase the risk of slips.
5. **Label your chemicals.** Don't let your team question which fluid is in which container.
6. **Store them separately.** Anything flammable should be stored far from any ignition source.
7. **Get rid of shop rags.** Once a rag has wiped off oil (or any other flammable substance), it actually becomes a fire hazard. Because of the heat inside so many auto service and repair shops, rags can actually combust if they're not properly disposed of. Be sure to store all used rags in a UL-Listed metal waste container equipped with a spring loaded lid. The contents of the containers should be properly disposed of daily, or at the end of each shift.
8. **Use insulated tools for electrical work.** Without them, you could be in for a shock.
9. **Get safety data sheets from manufacturers.** Make sure you're using and storing your

equipment according to their specifications.

10. **Allow proper ventilation.** Working with chemicals can cause respiratory irritation, infection and additional issues.
11. **Implement an accident prevention program.** Combine adequate employee training with annual site inspections.
12. **Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.** A little technology could save a life.
13. **Keep fire extinguishers in your shop.** Employees shouldn't have to walk more than 50 feet to find one.
14. **Enforce a "no smoking" policy.** Believe it or not, the smallest spark could send everything up in flames.
15. **Update your paint booth.** All paint booths should have explosion-proof wiring, explosion-proof lighting and proper ventilation. More importantly, it's the only space in which someone should paint.
16. **Don't eat or drink in the shop.** Any chemicals in the air could actually contaminate your meal.
17. **Build a first-aid kit.** For cuts, scrapes and bruises, keep a first-aid kit easily accessible.

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