



Risk Assessment – Axe Throwing

GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT – **Axe Throwing**

Location:			
Who is affected by the risks?	Instructors, Participants, spectators, members of the public		
How many are affected	Each risk is generally to a single person but there may be occasions where 1-5 may be at risk	Assessment Date	23/06/2025

Risk Rating Matrix

Consequence	Likelihood					
		Rare – 2	Unlikely – 3	Possible – 4	Likely – 5	Almost Certain - 6
	Minimal - 1 (hazard or near miss requiring reporting and follow up action)	Low (2)	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (5)	Low (6)
	Minor - 2 (hazard or near miss requiring reporting and follow up action)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Low (8)	(10)	Medium (12)
	Moderate - 3 (hazard or near miss requiring reporting and follow up action)	Low (6)	Low (9)	Medium (12)	Medium (15)	High (18)
	Major - 4 (hazard or near miss requiring reporting and follow up action)	Low (8)	Medium (12)	Medium (16)	High (20)	Extreme (24)
	Severe - 5 (hazard or near miss requiring reporting and follow up action)	Medium (10)	Medium (15)	High (20)	Extreme (25)	Extreme (30)

Risk Rating
Low = 1-9
Medium = 10- 17
High = 18 - 23
Extreme = 24-30



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Activity / Area of Assessment	Hazard(s)	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating (severity X likelihood)			Additional Control Measures required to reduce the risk	Additional Actions assigned to and date to be completed	
			S	L	RR		Name	Date
Axe Throwing Range	Cut or Impact Injury from Dropped Axe	Give a verbal warning that axes are sharp and to be careful when handling them. Remain Vigilant with participants. Carry first aid kit.	2	5	10	None		
Axe Throwing Range	Cut or Impact Injury from Rebounding Axe	Distance from the target maintained. Target designed to absorb the impact and lessen the rebound. Remain vigilant.	3	3	9	None		
Axe Throwing Range	Trip or Stumble over hazards or uneven ground	Ensure shooting range is free from trip hazards and is on even ground. If tent pegs are within the shooting area then cordon them off with rope/bunting or adjust the ropes to remove them from the area. Fill any holes prior to the event.	2	2	4	None		
Axe Throwing Range	Cut or Impact Injury from handling Axe blade	Give a verbal warning that axes are sharp and to be careful when handling them. Remain Vigilant with participants. Carry first aid kit.	2	5	10	None		
Axe Throwing Range	Injury from damaged or faulty equipment	All Axes should be checked between each participant for signs of wear (loose head, splintered handle, cracks, etc) lightly damaged handles bound with heavy duty fabric tape to re-enforce them heavily damaged handles will be removed from the rotation and replaced if unable to repair	3	4	12	None		
Axe Throwing Range	Person injured by entering the axe throwing range	Instruction given regarding waiting and throwing areas Area double roped off with signage telling the public not to enter the	5	2	10	None		



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		<p>roped off area. Stop command explained to all participants and used by everyone instructing and participating. Instructor to remain vigilant at all times of the boundaries of the range. Plenty of overshoot on the boundaries allowing good line of sight.</p>						
Axe Throwing Range	Bruising or crush injury from axe target falling on participant	<p>Instructor collects axes in almost all cases When participant collects axes they will be given instruction on best practice and monitored. Best practice applied to removal of axes from the wood by all. Stuck Axes should always be removed by the instructor. Targets secured to ground by rope or by stakes Dynamic assessment made of wind conditions which may result in toppling targets.</p>	3	3	9	None		
Axe Throwing Range	Injury from Axe swing during throwing	<p>Sufficient space between participants to make it highly unlikely Instructor stands beside the throwers. Demonstration of Correct technique should make this possibility highly unlikely Instructor remains watchful for poor technique and corrects accordingly. Spectators kept to a safe distance rope barrier at waist height</p>	5	2	10			
Axe Throwing Range	Injury from Axe head sliding down shaft	<p>Most axes used are solid drop forged or the head is attached in a manner that makes this impossible</p>	1	2	2			
Axe Throwing Range	Injury from Axe head Coming loose	<p>Most axes used are solid drop forged making this impossible All axes are checked between participants to ascertain if there are any issues. Any loose heads will be taken out of</p>	3	4	12			



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		rotation and repaired or replaced					
Axe Throwing Range	Participant injured by falling while carrying axe	Ensure Participants walk at all times on the range Ensure Axes are always carried head downwards towards the ground	2	3	6		
Axe Throwing Range	Spectator hit by axe	Instruction on safety, best practice and direction that axes must be thrown plenty of buffer zone between range and boundary verbal warning for dangerous behaviour and removal from the activity	5	2	10		

Assessor:	John Steels	Signed:		Dated:	23/06/2025
Manager / Proprietor	John Steels	Signed:		Dated:	23/06/2025
Actions to be completed: None at this time					
Date Actions to be completed by:		N/A		Date Completed:	
				N/A	

Risk Assessment

The purpose of carrying out risk assessments is to identify those activities where action needs to be taken to improve existing control measures (or introduce new ones) in order to eliminate accidents which result in personal injury or ill health. There is no need to repeat earlier risk assessments such as manual handling, COSHH, etc., but they should be referred to in this general risk assessment.

*****GUIDANCE*****

To properly use a Risk Assessment Matrix follow these four steps:

- Step 1 – What is the Likelihood of the hazard causing harm working from left to right, determine if this will be rare or anything else through to almost certain.
- Step 2 – Consider the Consequence of the harm by working from bottom to top, to determine how severe the harm (injury/illness) posed by the hazard would be from minimal to something that could cause death or permanent disability.
- Step 3 - Follow the rows and columns to their meeting point to identify the level of risk.
- Step 4 - Use the outcome to determine the risk controls and identify any corrective and/or preventive actions. Depending on the outcome of the risk, action is determined according to the severity and depending on the level of risk, the matrix is to help determine the priority for action. For example, the hazards that have the potential to cause the greatest harm must be addressed first.

RISK FACTORS TO CONSIDER

More than one person should always be involved in a risk assessment as it is not always easy to come to the right conclusion when thinking about the likelihood and consequence. Input from others will help to bring a mixture of ideas and experiences to the process which will result in a more accurate assessment.

The people affected by the risk assessment should always be consulted during the process. It can be helpful to consider a number of factors when assessing the risk of a hazard. For example:

- The potential number of people that can be harmed
- The duration the risk can remain e.g. how long does it take to do the task that involves the hazard
- The same hazard can often cause a different level of injury/illness to different people (e.g. a person prone to allergies is more likely to develop an allergy to animal dander if they are required to handle animals).
- The risk of injury/illness can be different for similar substances e.g. solvent based paints are far more likely to cause illness than water based paints. • Not all hazards take the same time to cause injury/illness; the time duration and event frequency of hazards is often a determining factor when assessing risk potential (e.g. a carcinogen may take up to 30 years to show symptoms).
- People often have different perceptions of potential hazards and the damage the hazards can cause e.g. sitting at a desk working on a computer may not be seen as a hazard by a person operating a piece of machinery, but there is a risk with this activity as well if not well managed.



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RISK CONTROL

Once the risk assessment has been completed the next step is to identify and select the appropriate risk controls. Controls need to be developed using the Hierarchy of Controls which works through a number of options from the most to the least desirable.

- Elimination – can the hazard be eliminated altogether e.g. by eliminating the need to do the job?
- Substitution – if elimination is not possible can something less harmful be used instead e.g. – changing the activity, using different equipment or moving the activity to a less hazardous location
- Engineering – can the hazard be isolated from the person e.g. through safety equipment, harnesses or other “PPE”
- Administration - where the other preferable controls are not possible or not sufficient on their own are there other controls available such as training, employment of external contractors, specialist procedures or staff rotation

Controlling or eliminating hazards through a series of steps is the ultimate goal. In most cases leisure pursuits carry at least a small level of risk and will require a combination of the steps to adequately guard participants and staff from risk of injury, but never so much as to eliminate the purpose of participation. It is also important to ensure that participants are well informed of the risks posed to them by any given activity and that their explicit acknowledgement of those risks by way of a signed waiver document is completed.

Demonstrating and deploying strong risk controls through each of your activities will not only demonstrate to your customers that your approach to health & safety is taken seriously, it will also help protect you from disingenuous claims.

RISK REVIEW

The final step in the Risk Management process is risk review. Things can change during the activity e.g. Weather & damage to activity equipment.

Further, your organisation may see changes to their processes, introduce new activities, or other factors outside your control such as legislative changes that can impact the effectiveness of risk controls.

Ongoing monitoring and review ensures that the highlighted control measures remain suitable for the hazard(s) identified