



PLAYING IT **SAFE**

Workplace Safety for Carpet Layers

Helpful tips for avoiding accidents

As a carpet laying professional, you are installing flooring in homes and businesses using sharp cutting tools, chemical adhesives and treatment products on a daily basis. These items have the potential to cause serious injuries if you do not properly protect yourself.

And it's not just the tools you use that can cause injury. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports that carpet layers spend approximately 75 percent of their working time kneeling, which can cause serious back, neck and knee injuries as well.

Protect Against Injuries

To protect against knee injuries and workplace hazards, consider the following safety recommendations.

- Use proper lifting techniques when moving furniture and old carpeting materials before the installation process. To minimize your risk of injury, consider taking short breaks throughout the day to stretch your muscles.
- Rotate your tasks as much as possible to prevent repetitive use injuries.
- Using a knee-kicker tool to stretch carpet from wall-to-wall can cause injuries to the knees due to the use of excessive force. When using this tool daily, you strike down using your knees 120 to 140 times. Use a hand- and arm-operated power carpet stretcher instead.
- Wear knee pads to protect your knees from tack strips and flooring irregularities. This will also help alleviate some of the pressure put on your knees from constantly kneeling.
- Wear gloves to protect your hands against injuries from carpet cutting tools, sharp tack strips, sewing materials and staples.
- Use the proper eye protection to guard your eyes against flying objects and sharp tool edges.
- Ensure that cutting tools are in good working condition before each shift. If your tools are damaged and/or broken, notify your supervisor right away.
- When cutting, watch where you place your hands and knees to avoid inflicting an injury by accident.
- Follow the directions listed on Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all carpet, padding adhesives and glues. These chemicals require specific precautions when handling and mixing, and may vary between products.
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Always Read the Label!

Every carpet manufacturer is different and requires varying precautions during installation. Read the health information on the label to determine exactly what precautions must be taken before you start installing the carpet.