

# Health and safety at work – how to write an incident report

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In vielen Unternehmen gewinnt das Thema „Arbeitssicherheit“ immer mehr an Bedeutung. Es gilt, Produktionsmaschinen, Arbeitswege und Fahrzeuge sicherer zu gestalten und damit Unfälle auf ein Minimum zu reduzieren. Die Auswertung von Vorfallsberichten trägt in vielen Firmen erheblich hierzu bei. Vor allem in internationalen Unternehmen müssen Auszubildende heutzutage in der Lage sein, einen *incident report* auch auf Englisch verfassen zu können.

Diese Unterrichtseinheit hat zum Ziel, den Auszubildenden die Wichtigkeit des Themas „*health and safety*“ nahezubringen. Die Lernenden erarbeiten thematischen Wortschatz und setzen sich mit dem Aufbau von *incident reports* auseinander. Sie wiederholen die Bildung des Passivs und erhalten einen Überblick über die wichtigsten *linking words*, die sie zum Strukturieren eines Berichts verwenden können. Abschließend verfassen die Schüler einen eigenen Bericht und geben sich mithilfe eines kriteriengestützten Fragebogens gegenseitig Feedback.



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Nach Arbeitsunfällen müssen heutzutage in vielen internationalen Unternehmen Berichte auf Englisch verfasst werden.

## Das Wichtigste auf einen Blick

<p><b>Kompetenzen</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– thematischen Wortschatz zum Thema „<i>health and safety</i>“ kennen und anwenden</li> <li>– den Aufbau eines <i>incident report</i> kennen</li> <li>– die Bildung von Passivkonstruktionen kennen und anwenden</li> <li>– einen <i>incident report</i> selbstständig verfassen</li> </ul>	<p><b>Dauer</b></p> <p>5 Schulstunden (+ Test)</p> <p><b>Niveau</b></p> <p>B1</p> <p><b>Ihr Plus</b></p> <p>eine PowerPoint-Präsentation zur Verwendung des Passivs auf CD</p>
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## Materialübersicht

### 1. Stunde Introducing the topic

- M 1 (Qz) Do you take a lot of risks? – A questionnaire  
 M 2 (Tr) Caution, slippery floor! – International safety signs  
 M 3 (Ws) Me as an evacuee – a report about an industrial accident

### 2./3. Stunde The structure of an incident report

- M 4 (Ws) What exactly happened? – An incident report  
 M 5 (Tx) At first, ... – using linking words in an incident report

### 4. Stunde How to use the passive voice in incident reports

- M 6 (Gr) He was taken to hospital – using the passive voice  
 M 7 (Ws) The alarm was activated – practise using the passive voice

### 5. Stunde Writing one's own incident report

- M 8 (Tx) My colleague was hurt – writing your own incident report  
 M 9 (Ws) How is my incident report? – Getting feedback

**Vocabulary** Health and safety in the workplace (M 10)

**Test** Health and safety in the workplace (M 11)

### Bedeutung der Abkürzungen

**Qz:** Quiz; **Tr:** Transparency; **Tx:** Text; **Ws:** Worksheet; **Gr:** Grammar sheet

### Minimalplan

Sie haben nur zwei Stunden zur Verfügung? So können Sie die wichtigsten Inhalte erarbeiten:

1. Stunde: The structure of an incident report  
 2. Stunde: Writing an incident report

**M 4**

**M 8**

### Zusatzmaterialien auf CD

- M2\_Zusatz\_Tic\_Tac\_Toe (Spiel zu den Sicherheitskennzeichen)  
 M6/M7\_Zusatz\_irregular\_verbs (Liste der häufigsten unregelmäßigen Verben)  
 M6\_Zusatz\_presentation\_passive\_voice (PowerPoint-Präsentation zur Wiederholung des Passivs)  
 M5/M8\_Zusatz\_incident\_report\_form (leeres Formular zum Verfassen eines *incident report*)



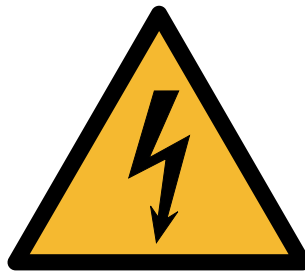
## Caution, slippery floor! – International safety signs

M 2

### 1. Prohibition signs



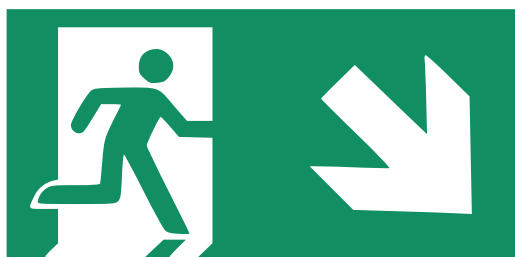
### 2. Warning signs



### 3. Mandatory signs



### 4. Emergency and fire safety signs



#### Vocabulary box

**to be prohibited:** verboten sein

**to warn so. of sth.:** jmdn. vor etw. warnen

**protective gloves:** Schutzhandschuhe

**hearing protection:** Gehörschutz

**emergency exit:** Notausgang

**high voltage:** Hochspannung

**to slip:** ausrutschen

**goggles:** Schutzbrille

**first aid kit:** Erste-Hilfe-Kasten

**fire extinguisher:** Feuerlöscher

## M 4 What exactly happened? – An incident report

In many companies you have to fill in incident<sup>1</sup> report forms in English after an accident has taken place.

**Incident report form** (Use this form to report any accident, injury<sup>2</sup> or incident.)

**This is documenting a(n):**                                           

Lost time<sup>3</sup>    Injury    First aid    Incident    Close call<sup>4</sup>    Observation

**Details of person injured or involved** (to be filled in by person injured/involved if possible)

Person completing report: Elisa Meyer (sales department)    Date: 15 October 2012

Person(s) involved: Steffen Stinger (sales department)    Employee's ID: DE-SD-0508-2

**Event details**

Date of event: 15 October 2012        Location of event: staircase in building block C

Time of event: 10:45 a.m.        Witnesses<sup>5</sup>: Elisa Meyer, Maren Koslowski, Sam Greenaway

**Description of events** (Write detailed incident report by describing the sequence of events)

**1** On Tuesday, 15 October 2012 at approximately 10:40 a.m. the fire alarm was set off. During the evacuation, Steffen Stinger got hurt on the staircase of building block C after being pushed on the stairs.

**2a** When everyone heard the alarm they started to rush down the stairs. In front of me was Mr Stinger who was not able to walk fast due to a chronic back injury. He was pushed by other employees. Then he lost balance and fell down the last three steps. Mr Stinger seemed to be in great pain and mentioned his foot and his back. He was also bleeding from his head.

**2b** First, I phoned the German emergency line 112 and the company's own emergency services. Maren Koslowski and Sam Greenaway witnessed the incident and joined me to help Mr Stinger. He was able to move, so he was lifted up<sup>6</sup> and brought out of the building. About five minutes later, the company's emergency ambulance<sup>7</sup> arrived and the paramedics<sup>8</sup> took care of Mr Stinger. After that, he was taken to hospital and received medical care. He suffered an injury on his head which required stitches<sup>9</sup>, and he broke his foot. He has to stay in hospital for a week and he is going to be off sick for another month.

**Was event/injury caused by an unsafe act (activity or movement) or an unsafe condition (machinery or weather)? Please explain:**

Mr Stinger complied<sup>10</sup> with all health and safety regulations.<sup>11</sup> He was holding onto the banister<sup>12</sup> while walking down. The people who accidentally<sup>13</sup> pushed Mr Stinger could not be identified.

Signature of employee: Elisa Meyer        Date: 16 October 2012

### Vocabulary

1 **incident**: der Vorfall – 2 **injury**: die Verletzung – 3 **lost time**: die Ausfallzeit – 4 **close call**: die gefährliche Situation, der Beinaheunfall – 5 **witness**: der Zeuge, die Zeugin – 6 **to lift so. up**: jmdn. hochheben – 7 **ambulance**: der Krankenwagen – 8 **paramedic**: der/die Sanitäter/-in – 9 **to require stitches**: genäht werden müssen – 10 **to comply with sth.**: etw. einhalten – 11 **regulation**: die Bestimmung, die Vorschrift – 12 **banister**: das Geländer – 13 **accidentally**: aus Versehen

Source: <http://image.slidesharecdn.com/incidentreportingform-140712000151-phpapp01/95/incident-reporting-form-1-638.jpg?cb=1405123328> (form slightly shortened and adapted)

## M 5 At first, ... – using linking words in an incident report

Here are some phrases you can use to connect ideas and sentences in a report.

### Info box: Structuring an incident report with linking words

A good incident report consists of several paragraphs. Linking phrases and words create a connection between ideas and sentences. Here are some words and phrases typically used to structure a report.



#### Writing about the order of events

- At first; First of all; Firstly
- Next
- Before that; Beforehand
- Secondly; Thirdly etc.
- Afterwards; After that
- Eventually; Finally

#### Adding ideas or facts

- In addition (to this); Additionally
- Similarly<sup>1</sup>
- Not only ... but also
- Furthermore; Moreover; Besides
- In the same way

#### Writing about consequences or reasons

- Therefore
- For this reason
- Because of (the)
- Consequently; As a result (of)
- That's why



**Caution!** The linking words and phrases above are usually at the beginning of a sentence!

#### Vocabulary

<sup>1</sup> **similarly**: in ähnlicher Weise

### Task

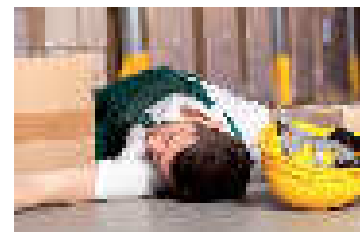
You have witnessed an accident at work. During the lunch break, on the way to your company's canteen, you saw another member of staff collapsing.

Write an incident report including linking words where possible. Invent the necessary information not given. Use an extra sheet of paper or write in an empty incident report form.

You could, for example, include the following sentences:

[...] First, I immediately went to him and next I checked his pulse. [...]

[...] He couldn't get up. For this reason, I stayed with him until the ambulance arrived. [...]



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## M 6 He was taken to hospital – using the passive voice

In a report you often find more passive constructions than in other types of text. Practise them here.

**Info box: Active and passive voice**

• **The ambulance** takes/took **injured people** to hospital. (active voice)

subject                      object


↙    ↘

• **Injured people** are/were taken to hospital (by **the ambulance**). (passive voice)

subject    object

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- ✓ You use the passive voice when the event or the action is more important than the agent.
- ✓ The **by-agent** in a passive sentence (here: “by the ambulance”) can be left out if the information is not important.
- ✓ In the **simple present** the passive is formed as follows: *am/are/is + past participle (third form)*.
- ✓ In a report, you usually use the passive in the **simple past**: *was/were + past participle (third form)*.



### Task

Fill in the gaps using the correct passive form of the simple present and the simple past.

evacuate – help – practise – injure – announce – follow – cause

- a) Yesterday, the passive voice was practised by the students.
- b) Many accidents in companies \_\_\_\_\_ because employees don't take care.
- c) All employees \_\_\_\_\_ by the fire fighters yesterday.
- d) Steffen Stinger \_\_\_\_\_ by paramedics during the emergency alert on 15 October.
- e) Only one person \_\_\_\_\_ in the accident.
- f) Important messages \_\_\_\_\_ always \_\_\_\_\_ on the airport loudspeakers.
- g) The health and safety rules \_\_\_\_\_ to avoid accidents.

# My colleague was hurt – writing your own incident report

M 8

*Practise writing your own incident report.*

## Task

1. Read the info box below.
2. Think of an incident at work you have had yourself or you have seen. Take notes on it.
3. Write your own incident report.



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## How to write an incident report step by step

### 1. Take notes about the incident

- Take notes before you start writing. This helps you to structure your text in a logical order.
- Make sure that all important information is included. (What?, Who?, When?, Where?, How?, Why?, Which consequences?)
- To look up important words you will need in a dictionary.



### 2. Start by writing the introduction

- Give the most important information (What?, Who?, When?, Where?) in one or two short sentences. This will immediately give the reader an overview about what happened.



### 3. Write the main part of your report

- In the first paragraph give the detailed sequence of events leading to the incident.
- In the second paragraph describe the follow-up after the incident and the consequences. (e.g. injuries, lost time, damage to property)
- Write in the simple past and use sentences in the passive where possible.
- Use linking words (e.g. At first, then, after that ...) to structure your report.

