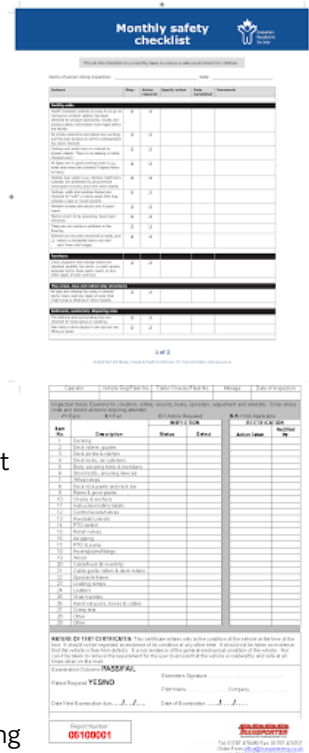


- *Pre-use checks* – these are usually visual/functional checks to ensure everything is in proper working order before the activity begins. It is essential that all PPE and safety critical equipment is checked comprehensively before every use. This means identifying any defects – wear and tear; rips and tears; decoupling; malfunctioning etc. If equipment is faulty in any way, then it needs to be substituted.
- *Weekly/Monthly checks* – These checks are usually more exhaustive. They include things like fire alarm tests, tyre pressure checks, thorough visual checks of fixtures/fittings. These checks can usually be done internally but require more time, knowledge and effort.
- *Periodic thorough testing and examination* – These checks usually involve a thorough examination of equipment by a specialist. They may involve special testing technique; use of special appliances (i.e. PAT testers); and may need equipment to be deconstructed/internally surveyed. Examples of equipment that would need period testing and examination include safety critical equipment, electrical, gas and fire related equipment. Local legislation may dictate minimum timeframes for testing and examination of certain equipment (i.e. elevators).



The image shows a 'Monthly safety checklist' form. It includes a header with the TUI logo and the title 'Monthly safety checklist'. Below the header, there are several sections for recording inspection details, including a table with columns for 'Item', 'Description', 'Status', 'Entry', 'Action Date', and 'Priority'. The form also contains a 'CHECKED BY' section with a signature line and a date field. At the bottom, there is a 'REVISIONS' section and a 'DATE OF NEXT CHECK' field.

How often do safety inspections need to be carried out?

The frequency of inspection should be determined through risk assessment, taking account of the manufacturer's recommendations, industry advice and your own experience.

The frequency of inspection may also vary depending on environmental conditions (e.g. equipment subject to harsh outdoor conditions is likely to need more frequent inspections than if used in an indoor environment) or to the conditions that the equipment is exposed to.

Recording Equipment Checks

All equipment checks should be documented in order to prove that you have done them. In the event of a legal case, it is likely you would be asked to produce such records. You should have standard check templates on which checks can be recorded by staff members. You should ensure that all checks include the follow:

- What specific item of equipment is being checked (included any unique reference numbers).
- What checks were conducted (visual, functional etc)
- What parts of the equipment were checked.
- What was the result of the check – were any defects found? If so, what was done about them? Was the equipment substituted?
- Who conducted the check – this may include initials so long as the person is identifiable.
- When the check was conducted (date/time).
- Any other relevant information.

It is best for equipment checks to be done electronically where possible (i.e. via an app). This generally ensures records can't be backdated, amended etc, as entries are liable to be timestamped. Some apps may also allow for the order of questions to be randomly changed to make staff members read and consider each question on the checklist every time, preventing complacency. Certain apps also allow for checks to have minimum completion time requirements (i.e. not permitting a check to take any quicker than X minutes), which helps ensure checks are always being done thoroughly – and aren't just a form-filling exercise.

Equipment checks can also be recorded on paper. Where this is the case, records should never be backdated or amended retrospectively (indeed this is actually a criminal offence in some jurisdictions). Furthermore, they should

always be done in pen, not pencil, to prevent erasure and replacement of entries. Checks should be carefully overseen by Management to ensure they are being properly done.

Checks should be stored in a safe place for a minimum period of 3 years from the date of completion. In the event of a legal case, documentary evidence of equipment checks may be requested some years down the line. It is therefore vital you retain them.

Corrective action

If during the pre-use inspection the employee determines that there is a deficiency this must be corrected before use. If it is a minor issue that the employee can correct, then the equipment can be used. If the deficiency is of a nature that the employee cannot correct to make the equipment safe to use then the equipment must be taken out of service and the supervisor must be immediately contacted.

Top Tips

- Ensure anyone carrying out equipment checks is fully trained in how and when to conduct equipment checks and understands the importance of doing so. Ensure that checks are carried out by specialists where the check requires specialist technical knowledge.
- Ensure the equipment checks process is carefully overseen and frequently audited by Management.
- Always ensure that equipment is working at full potential when carrying out checks, and that it can cope with emergency events as well as normal circumstances.
- Maintain a log of all equipment on an inventory so that you know what needs to be checked and when. It is good practice to give all equipment a unique reference number (which you may then attach onto items of equipment) so that you are able to distinguish between individual items.
- Where equipment is required to be periodically tested and examined, ensure you organise this in good time so that you do not exceed the deadline by which it needs to be done.
- Ensure staff members have access to electronic systems/paper check sheets at all times so they are fully able to document their checks.
- Make sure that the process works. This does not mean to simply ensure that a checklist has been completed. Assurance means knowing that:
 - The equipment is safe; and/or
 - Hazards and faults have been reported; and/or
 - Unsafe equipment has been taken out of service.