

PREVENTING Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, Trips and Falls = Injuries

Approximately 300,000 people suffer injuries from slips, trips or falls each year. Fall injuries alone account for about 20 percent of all workers' compensation costs. Here at UNCG about 15 employees each year are injured by falling.

Slips and trips are caused by different motions and both result in falls.



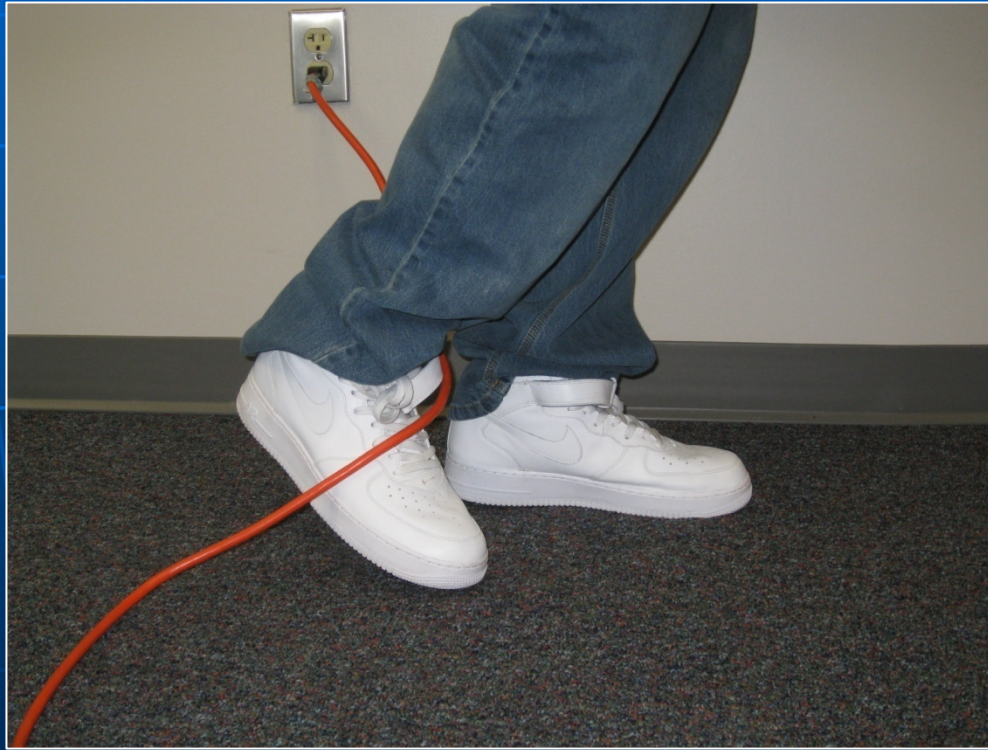
SLIPS

- *happen when there is too little friction or traction between the footwear and the walking surface. A wet surface is usually involved causing the feet to move forward quickly, and the person falls backward.*



TRIPS

happen when the foot hits an object causing an abrupt stop. This causes the person to lose balance, often falling in a forward motion.



FALLS

Both slips and trips often result in two types of falls.

- 1) *Falls can occur on the same elevation, for example if you fall on the sidewalk, or*
- 2) *Falls can occur from heights such as from atop ladders or buildings, which often result in serious injuries or deaths.*



Slips, trips and falls can be prevented

A majority of these injuries can be prevented by making a few small changes. Such actions can prevent a back injury or broken bones to an employee and save the employer thousands of dollars each year.

Inspect your work area daily

for items that could cause you or others visiting your work area to trip.

- 1) Do not store equipment and furniture in hallways and staircases.
- 2) Close desk and file drawers.
- 3) Keep computer cable, power strips and power cords behind furniture, not in walking pathways.
- 4) Wipe up spills immediately.

Pay attention while you're walking

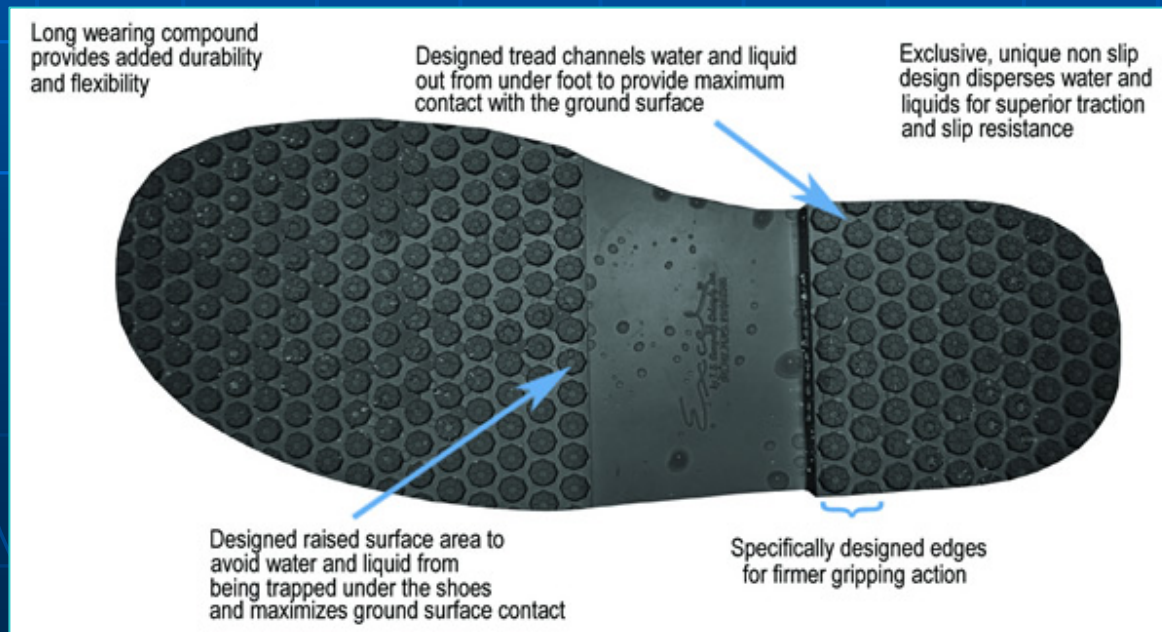
It sounds simple, but investigations show that many falls are caused by failing to pay attention to the changes in walking surfaces.



Choose Shoes Wisely

High heels and sandals, though fashionable are not designed to move safely through changing surface conditions. If you know you may need to walk longer distances during your work day, keep an extra pair of shoes in your work station that have:

- Slip-resistant heels and toes,
- Good ankle support, and
- Adequate arch support



Be Careful on Stairs

Many falls occur on stairs. People often miss steps or slip when descending and most often trip against the stair riser when climbing. Stairs demand your extra attention.

In addition, you can reduce your risk of injury on stairs by:

- Use the handrail when ascending or descending flights of stairs.
- Check to see that stairs are not slippery or wet.
- Make sure there is sufficient lighting.
- Report broken stair surfaces, or other stair hazards so they can be repaired.



Weather Changes

Rain and ice on walking surfaces result in many injuries each year on the UNC Greensboro campus.

Foyers become especially slick on rainy days, and icy conditions can turn parking lots and sidewalks to danger zones in the winter. Pay particular attention in these areas when rain or icy conditions occur.



Signs

Facility Services and Housing and Residence Life employees place signs on wet floor areas to remind students, visitors and other employees that the floor can be slippery when wet.

When you see the wet floor sign, choose another route

or

Walk with caution.



Report Fall Hazards

If you see a slip, trip or fall hazard. Report it by calling the Office of Safety. Your action may prevent someone else's injury.

334-4357

