

# PERFORMING

## WORKBOOK 4

### CHAPTER 1 IMPROVING YOUR SKILLS

- P6 What is it?
- P6 Why do I need to know about this?

P7 Project

Notes and guidance

- P11 Practice makes perfect
- P13 Where to get help
- P14 Example practice schedule
- P16 Case studies

Want to know more?

- P18 More information
- P20 More tasks

### CHAPTER 2 REHEARSING

- P24 What is it?
- P24 Why do I need to know about this?

P25 Project

Notes and guidance

- P29 What makes a good rehearsal?
- P30 Example rehearsal schedule
- P32 During the rehearsal
- P34 Example structure chart
- P36 What to work on?
- P37 The set
- P38 Tips DJ rehearsal and preparing a set
- P39 Evaluating your rehearsals
- P40 Case study

Want to know more?

- P42 More information
- P43 More tasks

### CHAPTER 3 PERFORMING

- P46 What is it?
- P46 Why do I need to know about this?

#### P47 Project

Notes and guidance

- P51 Preparing to perform
- P52 Equipment and transport
- P54 At the venue
- P56 The sound check
- P58 Pre gig focus
- P60 The performance
- P65 After the gig
- P66 Case studies

Want to know more?

- P69 More tasks  
For more information, look at P42.

### CHAPTER 4 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- P72 What is it?
- P72 Why do I need to know about this?

#### P73 Project

Notes and guidance

- P77 Health and safety
- P78 Risk assessment
- P82 Electrical safety
- P83 Noise
- P85 Lifting
- P85 Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI)
- P86 Occupational Hazards

Want to know more?

- P88 More information
- P90 More tasks

### CHAPTER 5 EQUIPMENT

- P94 What is it?
- P94 Why do I need to know about this?

#### P75 Project – combined with project for chapter 4

Notes and guidance

- P95 How to choose the right equipment / instrument
- P96 How good an instrument do you really need?  
How much will it cost?
- P98 Getting advice and support
- P99 Do you buy new or second-hand?
- P100 Keeping your instrument in good working order
- P104 Insurance

Want to know more?

- P106 More information  
For more tasks, look at P90.

 Chapters that are essential to this workbook.

 Chapters that are optional to this workbook.

Please note

Any details or photographs of equipment, software, manufacturers or suppliers do not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by DWP, but are intended to provide typical reference examples only.

HEALTH  
AND  
SAFETY



## **WHAT IS IT?**

This chapter tells you about things you need to do to keep yourself, the people you work with and your audience as safe as possible whilst you're working.

## **WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS?**

You need to know this for three reasons:

You need to work as safely as possible so you can have a long and successful career.

Whenever and wherever you work in music you have a legal responsibility to work within the Health and Safety laws. If you do anything that breaks these laws you could be prosecuted for a criminal offence.

Serious and life-threatening problems do happen – not only could you injure yourself, but you could also be liable for any injury caused to others, leaving you open to legal claims against you.

YOU MUST HAND IN YOUR WORK BY

TO

**HOW LONG**

should this assignment take?

Every person works at his / her own pace. As a guide, this should take you 3 hours to read and research and another 3 hours to write your answers and discuss them with your tutor.

**HOW**

will I be assessed?

Your tutor will assess your work. He / she will give you feedback on how you have done. If you have not completed the work, you will be given the chance to do further work to bring it "up to scratch". For more details, please refer to your MOLP's own guidance.

**WHAT**

do I do now?

What do I do now?

Read the **TASKS** below.

Then read the **NOTES AND GUIDANCE** section IN THIS CHAPTER AND IN THE CHAPTER ON EQUIPMENT

**TASKS HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTION**

Answer these questions

1 What are the two main pieces of legislation that cover Health and Safety at work?

1)

2)

2 Which employment category ( employer, employee, self-employed ) best describes what you do or are aiming to do in music?

3 What are the Health & Safety responsibilities for your employment category?

4 List 2 things you can do to minimise each of these risks :

**USING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT****LIFTING HEAVY OBJECTS****BEING EXPOSED TO LOUD NOISE****RSI**

5 List the 5 steps you take when doing a risk assessment.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6 Now carry out a risk assessment for a workplace that you (a) actually work or study at, or (b) can see yourself working at in future, using the following form.

**RISK ASSESSMENT FOR :**

Company name :

Company address :

**STEP 1**

List significant hazards here :

**ASSESSOR :**

Name :

Date :

**STEP 2**

List the groups of people who are at risk from these hazards :

**ASSESSMENT REVIEW :**

Name :

Date :

**STEP 3**

List the existing precautions and any further action needed to minimise the risks:

**TASKS EQUIPMENT SECTION**

1 List 3 magazines which contain information about equipment you use regularly.

1)

2)

3)

2 Find the name, number and contact name for a local music shop that does repairs and maintenance for your equipment.

3 List 2 maintenance tasks you need to carry out on a regular basis to keep your instrument in good working order and 2 tasks that need to be carried out by a specialist.

**MAINTENANCE TASK - SELF**

1)

2)

**MAINTENANCE TASK - SPECIALIST**

1)

2)

4 Using magazines, books, the Internet, or someone to speak to, compare two items offered for sale. Use the following example or research a piece of equipment you need to buy yourself.

**TECHNICS TURNTABLE**

**ALTERNATIVE TURNTABLE**

How much is it?  
(including any delivery cost)

--	--

Where is it on sale?

--	--

Is this a reliable place to buy?  
Is there a guarantee?  
What is the after sales service like if you have a problem?

--	--

How reliable is it?  
(Look at reviews or ask people)

--	--

If it's second hand, what do you know about its history?  
(How old is it, how long did the last person have it for, why did they sell it?)

--	--

Now let's look at why you need this piece of equipment:

**TECHNICS TURNTABLE**

**ALTERNATIVE TURNTABLE**

What type of use will this equipment get?  
e.g. regular gigs or occasional use

--	--

Will you need any money for accessories?

--	--

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## THE LAW

Being safety conscious at work is not just a matter of common sense, it is actually a legal requirement. Health and safety at work is overseen by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and there are specific laws that govern what you must – and must not – do. There are also regulations that cover specific risks such as manual handling and noise.

In simple terms these laws say that everyone – employers, employees and people who are self-employed – have to take all reasonable steps to make sure that the working environment is as safe as possible for everyone concerned.

The first step is to decide if you are an employer, an employee or are self-employed.

An **employer** is someone who has people working for them, a boss. If you run a business that employs staff such as a nightclub or record shop you are classed as an employer, and as such must make proper arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of your staff and anyone else who might be affected by your work. This means doing things like identifying hazards, assessing risks, training staff and, if you have more than five paid or unpaid staff, preparing a written health & safety policy document.

An **employee** is someone who is paid a regular wage for doing their job. Most people in regular jobs such as office work or retail are employees, but some musicians – orchestral players and holiday entertainers for example – are also classed as employees. As an employee, you have to take care of yourself and other people who might be affected by your work and co-operate with the health & safety arrangements made by your employer.

**Self-employed** people (sometimes called **freelancers**) are paid a fee to provide a specific service and usually work in different places or for different customers. Much of the work in the music industry is done by self-employed people doing things like playing gigs in pubs, DJ-ing in clubs, producing records or giving music lessons. If you do any freelance music work – even if it isn't your full-time job – you have to observe the health & safety laws. Like an employee, you must take care of yourself and other people who might be affected by your work, and you must also do some things that are done for employees by their employer – for example you have to make sure that you get proper training and, importantly, you have to do your own risk assessments.

# RISK ASSESSMENT

## What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment is simply an examination of the things in your work that could cause harm. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill, by assessing whether the existing precautions are enough or if you need to do more. If you are an employer or self-employed you must, by law, do a risk assessment for every place you work in.

## How to assess the risks in your workplace

You are looking at hazards and risks.

A **hazard** is anything that can cause harm.

A **risk** is the chance, high or low, that someone will actually be harmed by the hazard.

For example, playing the electric guitar is hazardous because electricity can be harmful. As long as the equipment is set up and working properly, though, the actual risk of injury is very small.

To assess the risks in your workplace, follow the five steps in the diagram

## What to do if you have an accident at work

If someone has an accident or a “near-miss” at work, you should report it straight away to someone with responsibility for safety. If someone is injured they should always see a first-aider, and fill out an accident report form. If this isn’t available, make a written statement about what happened, sign and date it, and get a witness to sign it.

# ASSESSING RISKS

## STEP 1

### WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS?

Assessing hazards doesn’t need to be a complicated process, you just need to walk around your workplace (for example a venue, recording studio, rehearsal room or teaching room) and look for things that could cause harm. Ignore the trivial and concentrate on significant hazards that could cause serious harm or affect several people.

## STEP 2

### WHO MIGHT BE HARMED?

You don’t need to list people by name, just think about the different groups of people who may be affected, such as:

Yourself and your co-workers.

Your audience, students or clients.

Other people who work there, such as road crew, technicians, bar staff, etc.

### STEP 3 IS MORE NEEDED TO CONTROL THE RISK?

How likely is it that someone could actually be harmed by each hazard? You must decide whether or not you need to do more to reduce the risk, or if the existing precautions are good enough. It's usually impossible to make things a hundred percent safe and even after precautions have been taken there is usually some risk remaining, so what you have to decide for each hazard is whether the **remaining risk is high, medium or low**.

The aim is to take whatever action is necessary to make all risks **low**.

To do this you need to ask yourself these questions:

Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?  
If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

If you can't get rid of the hazard completely try to apply the following principles:

- 1 Try a less risky option
- 2 Prevent access to the hazard  
e.g. – cordon off the area around electrical equipment.
- 3 Organise the work to reduce access to the hazard  
e.g. – stay in the dressing room when not performing to reduce your exposure to loud music.
- 4 Use protective equipment  
e.g. earplugs.
- 5 Provide welfare facilities  
e.g. a chill-out area or washing & first-aid facilities.
- 6 Thinking about the risks in this way will also help to make you more safety conscious generally, so if something does go wrong you will be better prepared to deal with it.

### STEP 4 RECORD YOUR FINDINGS

If there are more than five employees involved you must write down the main findings of your assessment. Even if there are less than five employees involved it may still be useful to write down what you've done.

You need to show that:

- 1 A proper check was made.
- 2 You asked who might be affected.
- 3 You dealt with the obvious main hazards and took extra precautions where necessary.
- 4 The remaining risk is low.

An example from a typical gig might be:

"Danger of trip hazard to performers due to trailing power cables in walkway from dressing room to stage. Cables taped down and covered with anti-slip mat".

### STEP 5 REVIEW YOUR ASSESSMENT AND REVISE IT IF NECESSARY

Over time your working methods and equipment will probably change, so it is important to go back and review your assessment every so often to make sure it's still relevant.

### COMMON RISKS FOR MUSICIANS

Danger of electrocution from unsafe electrical equipment.  
Hearing problems from listening to loud music.  
Back injuries from poor lifting technique or bad posture.  
Repetitive strain injury (RSI).  
Specific hazards that relate to singers and specific instruments.  
Tripping up  
Fire risks  
Crowd control

This isn't a complete list. You will no doubt think of other things you could add. The important thing is to stay switched-on about safety and be constantly on the lookout for things that could go wrong – especially if you are working with different people in lots of different venues.

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Electricity is dangerous, and musicians have been injured or even killed from electric shocks whilst practising or performing. You don't need a lot to kill you, either: a current as small as 50 milliamps is enough (a 40 watt light bulb takes about 150 milliamps) and the bigger the current, the quicker and more dangerous its effects.

It's not all bad news, though: good quality equipment is perfectly safe if it's set up and maintained properly. The HSE's pamphlet Electrical safety for entertainers ([www.hse.org.uk](http://www.hse.org.uk)) will tell you everything you need to know, but the main points are as follows:

- Have all your equipment tested regularly by a qualified electrician.
- Regularly check all your mains plugs and cables for damage, cuts, bare wires, loose connections, etc.
- Remember that even gear that isn't plugged directly into the mains can be dangerous. Anything connected by a cable, such as a guitar or a speaker carries a potentially lethal current, and you should avoid touching one piece of gear whilst you're holding another.
- Always use an RCD (residual current device, or circuit breaker) on the wall-socket that feeds your plug boards; it will shut the power off if there's a problem. They are sold in most electrical shops, and if it saves your life it will be the best £30 you've ever spent.
- Don't overload plug boards by using multi-way adapter plugs. Buy more boards – they're safer and more reliable. Never 'daisy chain' plug boards i.e. plug them into each other in a line.
- Always use the correct fuse for the job, and never be tempted to substitute ordinary wire or silver paper. Even with the right fuse you still need an RCD.
- Don't assume that someone else's gear is safe. Always have it checked before you use it, and if in you have any doubts don't use it. If a piece of gear starts to overheat or catch fire, unplug it from the mains before you use an extinguisher on it.
- Secure leads and cables with gaffa-tape and keep drinks away from anything electrical. Finally, if someone does get a shock, shut off the power immediately – but don't touch them without insulating yourself first – and call an ambulance.

# NOISE

Working with loud noise is often seen as a natural part of a musician's life but prolonged exposure to even relatively modest sound levels can cause irreparable hearing damage. The risk depends on two things:

- How loud the sound is.**
- How long you are exposed to it.**

Sound levels are measured in decibels (dB), and the following table shows some typical comparable levels.

<b>140</b>	Jet taking off from 25m
<b>125</b>	Rock band / club sound system
<b>100</b>	Chainsaw
<b>96</b>	Symphony orchestra
<b>85</b>	<b>Hearing protection must be worn (Noise at Work Regulations 1989)</b>
<b>80</b>	Heavy lorry from 5m
<b>60</b>	Busy street
<b>40</b>	Office
<b>20</b>	TV / radio at home
<b>0</b>	Faintest audible sounds



As you can see, in regular working environments, such as factories and warehouses hearing protection must be worn at levels above 85dB, but sound levels at live gigs and dance events often exceed 125dB, and rehearsals, small gigs and even orchestral concerts can reach danger levels. Hearing damage can occur if you're repeatedly exposed to levels as low as 80dB – about the level of a wagon driving past – and the risk increases as the volume goes up.

### What you need to do to reduce the risk:

- Turn it down! Rehearsals, especially, don't need to be ear-shatteringly loud. A reasonable level for a three-hour session is about 85dB. If you're not sure what this sounds like, borrow a soundmeter and check your volume.
- Use earplugs. Specially designed musician's plugs cut the volume without altering the tone.
- Don't stand too close to your speakers. If you have problems hearing your monitor when you play live, raise it closer to ear level and turn down the backline or move it back a bit. If you have the choice always use the newer type of in-ear monitors – they work at a much lower volume.
- High frequencies are particularly dangerous, so beware of feedback and raise the drum kit so the cymbal frequencies aren't right in your ears.
- If you work in a recording studio keep the monitor level as low as possible.

Finally, your ears are your livelihood so look after them. Walk away from the sound sometimes to give yourself a break. If you do have a problem, see a doctor, get some information and get protected.

TIP

For more info see the Musicians' Union information sheet NOISE AWARENESS FOR MUSICIANS  
[www.musiciansunion.org.uk](http://www.musiciansunion.org.uk)

## LIFTING

Over a quarter of all injuries at work are back strains caused by poor lifting technique. Musicians are often involved in heavy lifting, so try to follow these guidelines:

- Try not to lift at all. Use a mechanical aid such as a trolley or hoist wherever possible, or better still, let someone else do the lifting.
- If you have to lift, check the weight beforehand and ask for help if you think it's too heavy.
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Grip the load securely, and keeping your back straight, lift the load letting your legs take the strain.
- Take care not to twist your body. If you need to change direction, keep your body straight and move your feet.
- Finally, lay the load down gently by bending your knees and keeping your back straight.

## REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURY (RSI)

Repetitive Strain Injury is an umbrella term that covers a range of musculoskeletal conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome, tenosynovitis, cramp and tendonitis. RSI can affect the spine and both the upper and lower limbs, causing symptoms such as numbness, tingling, sharp pain, dull ache, weakness, loss of grip and restricted movement of limbs.

These symptoms could clearly be disastrous for a working musician so it is important to treat RSI as a serious risk. The following might help:

- Each instrument has its own risks – be sure you know what yours are.
- Devise a warm-up and stretching routine, including a warm up with your instrument, and do it before you play.
- Cool down and stretch after you play.
- Vary your playing technique and posture.
- Take regular breaks during practice and rehearsal sessions.
- If you sit down to play make sure your seat is the right height and that it allows for movement and rest.

# OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS

This section contains some tips and hints on good practice.

## SINGERS

Straining to be heard over loud music can cause scars called 'nodes' on your vocal chords, which can be permanent. To avoid this, warm up properly before gigs by doing vocal and physical exercises. Avoid, or humidify, dry centrally heated atmospheres as much as possible as they dehydrate your air-passages - a throat spray can help. Smoking and alcohol are bad for your throat. If you have repeated problems with your voice, get medical advice, there may be a more serious problem which needs looking at. Always have some water at your side and consider getting vocal training to help strengthen your voice.

## KEYBOARD PLAYERS AND MUSIC TECHNOLOGISTS

The main problem is back pain from hunching over the keyboard - improved posture is the only real answer. Many suffer from strained tendons from hitting the keys too hard – better technique will help. If RSI is a problem, make sure you warm up properly before you play and take regular breaks during practice. Massage and relaxation exercises can also help. Long hours in front of a computer can be bad for your eyesight, so take regular breaks, relax, exercise and use a comfortable 'ergonomic' chair with a proper backrest.

## GUITAR AND BASSISTS

Wear a broad strap to avoid shoulder trouble, and for wrist, tendon and RSI problems, see above. Warm up with gentle wrist and finger exercises before gigs and practice, and stretch to cool down afterwards. "There are a number of guitars on the market now that have been designed to be light and therefore aid musicians with back problems." Mark Singleton

## DRUMMERS AND PERCUSSIONISTS

As with keyboard players, bad posture can cause back problems. Get a better drum-seat, preferably with a backrest and work on keeping your back straight. Sticks can cause blisters, especially when your hands are sweaty. If you can get away with it, wear gloves, but always try to keep cool – use an electric fan if necessary. Better stick technique is the best bet, though. Wrist, tendon and RSI problems are very common so deal with these as above. The most important thing to remember is that drumming is very physical activity, and you should always warm up slowly before you play.

## ORCHESTRAL PLAYERS

For orchestral and band musicians the main problems are back problems from bad posture and RSI. Long, regular rehearsals and gruelling concert schedules can take their toll, so proper warm-ups, regular breaks and relaxation and massage are more or less essential. Many find yoga or Alexander Technique particularly helpful.

## DJS

RSI can be a problem, - see above. Watch your eyes – if you're working in dark environments, try to use an overhead light. Make sure you have your phones set at an appropriate level.

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

### LINKS

New Deal for Musicians has no responsibility for or control of the following sites. The inclusion of any site does not necessarily imply New Deal for Musicians approval of the site. To access any of the sites please type in the address into a browser or search using keywords from the name of the link.

[www.dfes.gov.uk/ukonlinecentres](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ukonlinecentres) Find Internet access that's close to you.

Look at the weblinks in other chapters, particularly those focusing on your chosen instrument.

**[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)**  
Health & Safety Executive (HSE) website, the primary source of good quality Health and Safety information

**[www.musiciansunion.org.uk](http://www.musiciansunion.org.uk)**  
The Musicians' Union (MU) website also has a number of leaflets available on Health and Safety issues, free to members.

**[www.fim-health.org](http://www.fim-health.org)**  
The International Federation of Musicians - health information with links to many health related sites.

**[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)**  
Government organisation set up to help people starting up in business. Health and Safety section on the website.

**[www.parkerguitars.com](http://www.parkerguitars.com)**  
Guitar manufacturer specialising in lightweight guitars

**[www.alexandertechnique.com](http://www.alexandertechnique.com)**  
The Alexander technique is taught at many performing arts, drama and dance centres and is a way of training your body to release unnecessary tension. It can help with conditions such as RSI and stiffness in your body or back.

### BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

Health and Safety Executive publications  
tel : 01787 881 165  
[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

Most books on DJing, performing and recording and production have information about health and safety issues.

## MORE TASKS

### 1 Safety checklist

Because you're likely to be working in lots of different places, it's a good idea to have a safety checklist to take with you. Use the following check list as an example and prepare one for a local venue / forthcoming gig.

Who is the person responsible for safety?

Are there any special risks you should know about?

Where are the fire exits?

Where do you go in an emergency? (assembly points)

Where are the fire alarm call points? (break-glass)

What does the fire alarm sound like?

Where are the fire extinguishers?

Where is the emergency power off switch?

Who is responsible for first aid and where is the first aid kit kept?

Are the electrics safe?

What are the rules about noise levels?

Who is responsible for security?

Where do you report any faults or accidents?

### 2 Find out more about the Alexander technique and where your local classes are.

### 3 Investigate standard health and safety procedures for crowd control at a small, local venue and a large national venue. What procedures do they have for ensuring:

Only the maximum number of public permitted under regulations are admitted.

Against risks of crowd surges, crowd management and security issues

Premises can be cleared quickly and safely in the event of an emergency

### 4 Look at entertainment licensing laws and the way that licenses are applied for and granted – what do they provide for in terms of

What electrical safety provisions a venue must put into place if it holds live music events

How many musicians are able to play / restrictions on different types of public performances

The costs and procedures involved in applying for one-off licences and permanent licences for a venue

### 5 Find reviews for the following items of music equipment – what are recommended as the best buys?

DJ mixer

Virtual Studio software

Beginner electric guitar package (guitar, case, practice amp)

Vocal performance microphone