

Equipment

The equipment used as part of your activity must be appropriate and in good condition to ensure the safety of staff and participants.


Activity equipment can include:

- Participants' clothing and equipment – what they need to bring with them.
- Staff clothing and equipment – what they need themselves, plus what they should have as a leader/instructor/guide.
- Group gear and equipment – what the group needs to have, eg tents and cooking equipment for an overnight.
- Technical equipment – eg ropes, harnesses, kayaks, paddles.
- Safety equipment – carried in case of an emergency or if a rescue is required.
- Facility equipment – may include anchors, and structures.
- equipment provided by a 3rd party (hired)
- Vehicles and transport – either as a direct or an ancillary part of the activity.

Equipment selection

When deciding what equipment to use, you should:

- Make sure the right staff are involved in the process.
- Check what industry standards exist, such as [Activity Safety Guidelines](#).
- Consult a Technical Advisor.
- Consider the manufacturer's instructions.

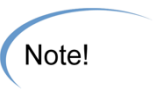
 **Note!** Consider activity set-up and operation, all your identified emergency scenarios, and build in contingency for broken equipment. Purchase sufficient quantity and, where relevant, a range of sizes is important.

Equipment use and care

Correct use and care of equipment will help ensure that it remains safe to use.

You must ensure that your SOPs specify what equipment is required for each activity.

Train staff in the use of standard and emergency equipment – supervise staff until they're able to use equipment safely

 **Note!** Correct storage and good everyday equipment care are key factors. Use your induction processes to set your expectations, and constant reinforcement to keep your standards alive.

Regular checks, inspection and maintenance

You should develop and document a system of regularly checking, and thoroughly inspecting and maintaining all your equipment. Develop a schedule for inspections and maintenance, and record them using tools such as equipment logs.

Before-use checks

- To ensure that everything is in safe working condition – include checking any hired equipment and participants' own equipment.
- Ensuring that staff know how to undertake checks, and understand the importance of doing so, and of raising their concern if unsure.
- Use sign out/in forms to encourage checks.
- Clear instruction not to use equipment that is damaged or unsuitable, and a method to mark and isolate it, once it has been removed from use, eg tagged as 'not safe for use' or put in a known 'out of service' area.
- A method of reporting damage or missing items so that repair or replacement is prompted.

Scheduled in-depth inspections

- These should include a check of equipment logs for any notes/concerns, and result in updated equipment records, including what is due for replacement.
- Appoint someone with appropriate technical expertise to take responsibility for equipment inspections. This could include using an engineer for structural inspections.

Maintenance

Carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Make sure that you'll know if equipment that you use will be recalled by the manufacturer.

Retirement

Develop clear processes for when and how equipment is retired from use. You should:

- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on retirement requirements.
- Check with other operators, national organisations or the regulator if a manufacturer's guidelines aren't clear.
- Monitor levels and conditions of equipment use and storage, all of which may influence retirement dates.



Note!

Be clear about what happens to retired equipment. Some safety equipment may need to be destroyed or altered to prevent future use, eg if you're going to use a retired climbing rope for trailer tie-downs, cut it into lengths that are unusable for climbing.

Staff equipment

Where staff are required to wear or use safety equipment, they must be provided with suitable equipment.

Staff can choose to supply their own clothing and equipment for reasons of comfort and/or convenience, but an employer can't require this. Where staff choose to supply their own, you must ensure that it's in suitable condition and meets industry good practice standards. You should record your staff equipment checks.

Record keeping

Recording the purchase, use and maintenance of equipment helps you to monitor its life-cycle and prepare for replacement.

When establishing a record-keeping system ensure that you record details such as:

- Equipment type.
- Number.
- Date purchased.
- Any identifying markings.
- Intended usage and usage restrictions.
- Retirement information.

A variety of systems can be used to record and track equipment information including:

- Labelling with the company name and purchase date.
- Individual identifiers such as coloured tags.
- A batching approach (record the number of items in the batch and inspect them all on the same cycle).
- Keeping detailed equipment logs and retirement schedules.
- Keeping registers/log books for each vehicle and include details of inspections, damage, repairs. and maintenance.

Our app based equipment monitoring system means that daily braking system checks are completed using guides own phones, but recorded on our central system.

For monthly inspections, we use 'https://safetyculture.com' on a tablet in the field. We can add photographs, compare results from previous inspections, assign maintenance tasks and set reminders, plus all the records are stored for us.

