



Laboratory Best Practice

Module 1



Health & Safety
Essentials

Registered charity number 207890

General rules

This module describes the general best practices that should be followed in the laboratory to ensure the health and safety of those who work within the laboratory, and all those who may be affected by any operations within it, such as laboratory chemists, contractors, visitors, maintenance staff or visitors to the area.

The laboratory is a workplace just like any other, so there are a number of issues that are not solely related to chemical safety to address. This module looks at the general issues that should be addressed for best practice within a laboratory, grouping these into *Chemical, Equipment and Environment*.

General rules for a laboratory

- Always wear eye protection.
- Always wear a laboratory coat.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Keep your work area clear and tidy.
- Never eat or drink in the laboratory.
- Carry out a risk assessment before starting work.
- Clean up all spillages immediately.
- Keep long hair tied back.
- Wear appropriate clothing that does not leave skin exposed (e.g. shorts, skirts, sandals).
- Label bottles and other containers clearly and correctly. Do not write directly on to bottles where the ink can run or be easily removed, e.g. by solvent.
- Keep walkways clear.
- Check glassware for damage, cracks and broken edges before use.
- Make sure all equipment is in good working order and fit for use.
- Check your local rules for use of mobile phones in the laboratory.
- Do not smoke in the laboratory.

