

# Occupations and Workplaces

## Retail Sales and Service - General

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### What are the general duties of someone who works in retail sales and service or in a similar job that involves working with the public?

Some of the main duties of sales and service personnel in stores, hotels and other locations are to:

- Greet customers and discuss details of the transaction.
  - Provide information to customers about products and services.
  - Determine method of payment, and prepare bills, invoices and other documents.
  - Assemble displays of merchandise.
  - Maintain inventory of merchandise.
  - Maintain internal record-keeping systems.
  - Working with computers, bar readers, payment machines, and other electronic devices.
  - Clean or sanitize work spaces.
  - Be aware of customer actions while on the premises (e.g., be alert to potential issues or acts of theft).
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## What are some health and safety issues for retail sales and service personnel?

- [Standing](#) for long hours.
- Exposure to various [chemicals](#) and materials, which may include paints, solvents, [pesticides](#), fertilizers, [perfumes](#), or [cleaning products](#).
- [Indoor air quality](#).
- [Repetitive manual tasks](#) or working in [awkward positions](#).
- Risk of back injury from [pushing, pulling](#) or [lifting](#) objects.
- Injuries from [sharp objects, knives, scissors, box cutters](#), etc.
- Exposure to [extreme temperatures](#).
- [Slips, trips and falls](#).
- Risk of overhead materials falling.
- Working on [ladders](#) or other potentially unstable structures.
- Risk of [bullying, harassment, or violence](#).
- [Working alone](#).
- [Handling money](#).
- [Stress](#).
- Fire.
- [Fatigue](#) or other health effects of [shift work](#) or [extended work days](#).
- Exposure to common viruses such as [colds](#) and [seasonal influenza](#).

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## What are some preventive measures for retail sales and service personnel?

- Learn safe [lifting](#) procedures.
- Learn [fire safety](#) and emergency evacuation procedures, including using [fire extinguishers](#) and knowing how to assist customers when evacuating.
- Learn how to use equipment and tools safely.
- Avoid or take frequent breaks from awkward body positions.
- Wear appropriate [footwear](#) and other personal protective equipment when needed, such as [eye and face protectors](#), [gloves](#), [respirators](#), or [high-visibility safety apparel](#).
- Keep all work areas clear of clutter and equipment.

- Establish [good housekeeping](#) practices.
  - Learn safe handling and storage procedures before working with [hazardous products](#) or [consumer chemical products](#).
  - Know how to react in a [negative or violent situation](#).
  - Know how to stay safe when working alone. For example, have a reporting system that includes a mobile phone or other alternative means to contact a designated person when working alone.
  - Do not exceed the capacity of the shelves when storing merchandise.
  - Do not block fire exits and fire extinguishers.
  - Keep a [first-aid](#) kit within easy access.
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## What are some good general safe work practices?

- Practice safe [lifting](#).
  - Find ways to minimize [musculoskeletal disorders](#) on the job.
  - Take all safety precautions when working on [ladders](#).
  - Follow or establish safety procedures for [working alone](#) or for avoiding working alone wherever possible.
  - Follow company safety rules.
  - Learn about chemical safety, [WHMIS](#) and [SDSs](#).
  - Know how to [report a hazard and near miss](#).
  - Follow [good housekeeping](#) and [cleaning and sanitation](#) procedures.
  - Use [hand washing](#) to reduce the risk of common infections.
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Fact sheet last revised: 2025-02-27

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