



## Which First Aid Kit do I Need?

A ready stocked first aid kit won't cost too much and should be an essential investment in all workplaces and homes.

The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require employers to provide adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to ensure that employees receive immediate attention if they are injured or taken ill at work. These regulations apply to all workplaces including those with fewer than five employees and to the self-employed.

The kit could help save a life and definitely ease someone's pain in time of need.

Ideally the best kit should cover all the basic categories e.g. antiseptics, injury treatment, bandages and basic instruments. As the kit is only used in certain times of need, it should be well organized and clearly labelled (noting the shelf life of products) with quality components. Also remember to replace items as they are used.

## What is a first aid kit?

A collection of supplies and equipment such as bandages, plasters and antiseptic wipes that is used to give medical treatment to a sick or injured person until full medical treatment is available.

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All kits should be in a clean and waterproof container to keep the contents safe and aseptic.

## The type of first aid facilities required in a work environment are determined by factors such as:-

- the laws and regulation of the state or territory in which it is located;
- the type of industry concerned; for example, industries such as mining may have specific industry regulations detailing specialised instructions;
- the type of hazards present in the workplace;
- the number of employees in the workplace;
- the number of different locations that the workplace is spread over;
- the proximity to local services (doctors, hospital, ambulance)

## Common kits include:-

- Alcohol or non alcohol antiseptic wipes
- Bandages
- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Gauze
- Saline
- Dressings
- Eye wash
- Plasters
- Cotton Balls
- Cotton Swabs
- Iodine

**Trauma injuries** like burns, bleeding and bone fractures are considered the main focus of most first aid kits. Can include the following:

- Adhesive bandages
- Dressings (sterile eye pads)
- Bandages (including triangular for arm sling)
- Butterfly closure strips – used like stitches to close wounds
- Saline – used for cleaning wounds
- Soap
- Antiseptic wipes or sprays
- Burn dressing
- Adhesive tape

**Protective equipment can include:**

- Gloves
- Goggles
- Surgical mask
- Apron

**Instruments can include:**

- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Torch
- Thermometer
- Cotton swab
- Safety pins

**The following table can help as a guide in deciding which size kit is required.**

- Low hazard environments include shops, offices, libraries
- High hazard environments include warehousing, factories, construction sites

<u>Category of hazard</u>	<u>Persons Served</u>	<u>Size of first aid kit</u>
Low hazard	Less than 25	Small size kit
	25-100	Medium size kit
	More than 100	1 large kit per 100 employees
High hazard	Less than 5	Small size kit
	5-25	Medium size kit
	More than 25	1 large kit per 25 employees