

Young people in the workplace

Involving young people (generally, under 15 years) in the workplace is a great way to provide them with experience, however, there may be new or different risks that you will need to manage. There are certain work areas and types of work that young people must not be around or do.

Work areas

There are certain work areas young people must not be in. Some exceptions apply.

⊗ CAN'T BE IN:	✔ CAN BE IN:
Areas where goods are being prepared or made for trade or sale.	Young people can be in the areas listed on the left if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - under direct and active adult supervision that is appropriate for the age and nature of the work - on a guided tour - in retail areas - in public areas.
Areas where there is construction work.	
Areas where there is logging or tree-felling.	
Areas where hazardous substances are being made or used.	
Any area where the work is likely to cause harm to a young person.	

Example: A young person can ride in the cab of a truck as a worker is delivering goods, provided the supervising worker has assessed the risk and taken steps to reduce the likelihood of that risk causing harm (eg removing car keys when getting out of the car to deliver a package).

Work and tasks

Young workers don't have the skills or physical ability to do certain work. Work and tasks should be age appropriate, scheduled during appropriate hours and supervised where needed. Some exceptions apply.

⊗ CAN'T DO:	✔ CAN DO:
Lift any weight or perform any task likely to harm their health.	Work and tasks suitable for their age, skill, and ability.
Construction work.	
Logging or tree-felling.	
Manufacture or prepare goods.	
Make or use hazardous substances.	
Work or assist with (or at) any machinery.	Young people can do administrative or retail work for businesses carrying out the work listed on the left.
Drive a vehicle.	
Ride on a vehicle with attachments (eg trailer) connected, or ride on the attachments.	
Work between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am (for workers under 16 years).	Workers 12 years or older can drive or ride on a tractor for agriculture work if trained.
	The worker under 16 years can work between 10 pm and 6 am if the work complies with an approved code of practice for that work by a young person during those hours.

Example: A young worker can work in the office for a newspaper company, assisting with paperwork, filing and newspaper runs. They can observe the daily operations of the business and other workers, but should not work with the printing press machinery.

Health and safety for young workers is not about excluding young people from the industry; it's about identifying risk, assessing how likely that risk is to occur and managing it effectively.

