

Construction

**Entry Level 3: Developing home improvement skills
(A/502/3683)**

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Introduction

Our Skilled for Life resources are designed to provide you with ideas for delivering the unit content and engaging tasks and activities that will help learners work towards assessment.

The materials consist of standalone sheets that can be used in a range of ways to suit most situations. Whether you are working in a classroom or a less formal learning environment, with individual learners or with groups, it is hoped that you will find these sheets and the accompanying tutor guidance notes useful.

The sheets are in pdf format; they are downloadable and may be photocopied for use only within your institution. Alternatively, learners can access them on-screen – the write-in sections are interactive so that answers to activities can be recorded electronically.

Each sheet addresses one or more of the assessment criteria in the unit (ACs are clearly marked at the top of each page). Page 1 of each sheet provides a starter stimulus or introductory idea based around the suggested unit content in the specification; it can be used to explain key concepts, or as the basis for a discussion. You could use the stimulus to draw together key learning points and encourage learners to engage with the topic or concept from the outset. There is plenty of scope for you to introduce your own content or ideas as well.

Page 2 of each sheet includes tasks that will consolidate learners' knowledge and understanding and, in some cases, may provide evidence for assessment.

This tutor guidance document provides detailed suggestions for how to use each of the resource sheets in the unit, and includes tips and advice together with suggested extension activities, alternative ideas and useful reference sources.

Guidance for tutors

Unit overview

This unit is about encouraging learners to practise home improvements skills and there is a natural progression onto the Level 1: Developing building maintenance skills.

For this unit, learners will use the hand tools, materials, components, fixings and PPE for simple home improvement tasks and will be offered the opportunity to develop those skills. Suitable tasks include:

- Fix shelving, curtain rails, coat hooks and picture fixings to traditional and lightweight walls.
- Fix hinges to doors; point brickwork; make good plasterwork.
- Change washers and ball valves; remove air-locks and balance radiator systems.
- Seal round a bath or shower; tile to splashback.
- Install draught exclusion and/or loft insulation; lag pipes and cisterns.

NOTE: These resource sheets suggest activities that enable learners to prepare for the practical tasks they will need to undertake in this unit. However, the tutor will need to ensure that the assignment chosen will generate suitable evidence to fully meet the assessment criteria. This evidence may be in the form of photographs (of the process and the finished product), observation records, or witness statements.

Learning and teaching activities in this unit

Resource sheet 1 - *How could you fix these?*

Use this starter stimulus to introduce different maintenance and repair jobs around the home. To encourage engagement, ask learners to identify any work that might need doing in the classroom, or workshop, that you currently occupy. Ask them how long they think these repairs would take. If it is a complicated task, what might they need to do before starting the job?

Ask the learners to think about the consequences of not fixing the problems as shown in the examples (problems could include wasting water, escalation of the problem in the future etc.). You could then start a group discussion on the general issue of not maintaining properties, such as health problems from mould and damp. Ask the learners to identify the benefits of home improvements (energy efficiency, improved market value, etc.). Emphasise the notion that attempting simple jobs around

the home is a good opportunity to learn new skills and for learners to increase their self-confidence.

This activity should both stimulate the learners' motivation and also provide learner responses which can be used to inform your decision about any subsequent tasks or projects the learner undertakes. For instance, you may need to simplify your planned activities and concentrate on the correct use of a power-drill. Or, alternatively, you may need to develop complex projects in order to challenge more experienced or confident learners.

Activity 1 - Fixing problems

This activity encourages the learners to identify the correct name for each tool and realise the significance of different types of tools, e.g. an adjustable spanner compared to a set of spanners. Ask learners to contrast the benefits of choosing a particular type, e.g. what are the different wall-plugs used for, and why? You may need to source some more images, particularly if you want the students to use graphic organisers, which would be a good strategy for visual learners.

Learners can share their answers and debate any differences of opinion they may have.

For kinaesthetic learners, it may be appropriate to bring in a range of tools. For audio learners, there are websites where you can download sound files to compare and contrast different tools and equipment used in construction.

Resource sheet 2 - Watch out!

Learners often like this kind of activity, so use it as an energiser to introduce topics such as:

- appropriate PPE
- safe use of hand tools
- using materials according to instructions.

You could run a quiz, or team competition, to see who can identify all the faults in a given time. During the group's feedback, ask individual learners to identify one different fault each.



Stretch activity

To challenge learners, ask them to clarify why the fault they have identified is wrong and what the safe practices that should have been followed could be. You may want to encourage the work ethic of 'good

preparation' and its benefit in the long term, compared to the cost of replacing all the furniture.

Activity 2 - Doing the job right

Use this checklist to identify any knowledge gaps your learners may have and let their responses inform your decisions about future tasks or activities. There may be some learners with low levels of literacy. Therefore, a possible future activity could be to ask them to explain the symbols for COSHH.

For more competent learners, choose appropriate manufacturers' information, so that they can discuss its meaning and purpose. In all cases, try to elicit the learners' understanding and promote the practical application of their knowledge in the workplace. To promote engagement, you could ask learners:

- What are the consequences of not doing these things? or;
- Why is it better to do these things before you start work, instead of after?

Encouraging learners to communicate what they think makes their knowledge more tangible, enabling you to scrutinise their understanding more effectively.

Resource sheet 3 - Here to help

This short case study can be used to illustrate the behaviour and attitudes required in the world of work. For learners with low levels of literacy, you may need to read the statement aloud. Alternatively, engage the learners in a question and answer session, based solely on the photograph. You could promote engagement by asking the following questions:

- What is he doing?
- Why isn't he wearing any PPE?
- What can you tell about his attire or mannerisms?

The purpose of this task is to develop the learners' awareness of their own 'work-readiness', particularly with reference to good communication skills with clients. This can be both verbal and physical.

Activity 3 - Working in someone's home

In the activity, some of the statements are purposefully ambiguous. The intention is to generate a debate, instead of simple yes/no answers. Learners need to understand how 'appropriate behaviour' can change according to the context and how the behaviour we display may influence future work prospects. Encourage the learners to critically examine each

statement and see if they can identify what is both right and wrong within each individual phrase. Ask them: What are the extreme positions, and what is the acceptable range of behaviour, and why?



Stretch activity

If appropriate, it may be possible to run a small role-playing exercise, with learners portraying opposing tendencies. For example one learner displays 'being arrogant, or trying too hard to impress' while another takes on 'over-familiar and almost disrespectful'.

This might also be an ideal opportunity to bring in some issues from equal opportunities and diversity, and to examine how prejudices are created and manifest in all areas of life.

Useful resources

Books

Reader's Digest – *Readers Digest DIY Manual with CD Rom* (Reader's Digest; Vinyl Ed edition 2007) ISBN 9780276442315

Barnard N, Schept K. – *You Can Do It: The Complete B&Q Step-by-Step Book of Home Improvement* (Thames and Hudson, 2007) ISBN 9780500513590

Jackson A, Day D – *Collins Complete DIY Manual* (HarperCollins 2007) ISBN 9780007252602

Topliss S, Murray-Smith J – *BTEC Entry 3/Level 1 Construction Student Book* (Pearson 2010) ISBN 9781846909207

Websites

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

Teaching and learning resources for construction, particularly good for embedding numeracy and literacy skills within a vocational context

<http://www.mediacollege.com/downloads/sound-effects/>

Free sound files to download