

# EOTC Risk Assessment Guide

This resource is adapted from the **Plan and Prepare** section of the **EOTC Safety Management Plan** (Education Outdoors New Zealand). The risk rating and risk assessment matrices help identify the level of risk associated with potential hazards.

Assessing risk is not an absolute science:

- Multiple sources of information help determine an estimate of risk.
- Risk is best considered using a team approach to achieve consensus.
- Risk assessment must continue during an activity/event as a dynamic and ongoing process.

## Risk rating

Once identified, hazards should be assessed for potential severity of the consequences (the degree of harm) and likelihood of occurrence to identify which ones to focus on.

### Assessing likelihood

Likelihood levels	Description
Almost certain	Expected to occur at least once during the task or activity.
Likely	Could occur during the task or activity.
Possible	It's conceivable it could occur, but only expected infrequently.
Unlikely	It's conceivable that this could happen, although only in unusual circumstances.
Rare	It's only conceivable that this could happen in exceptional circumstances.

### Assessing severity

Severity levels	Description
Insignificant	No injury or very minor injury or illness that does not require first aid. Temporary stress or embarrassment.
Minor	Injury or illness requiring only first aid. Stressed beyond comfort level. Wants to leave the activity.
Moderate	Injury or illness that requires medical treatment or hospitalisation (with no permanent disability). Very distressed. Requires on-site support. Does not want to participate in activities.
Major	Serious injury or illness to one or more people, resulting in hospitalisation and possible permanent disability. Therapy or counselling by a professional may be required.
Critical	One or more fatalities. Post-traumatic stress disorder. Long term counselling is likely to be required.

## Risk assessment matrix

		Severity of injury/harm				
Likelihood of injury/harm		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Critical
		No injuries / Minor injuries	First aid	Medical treatment	Extensive injuries	Fatalities
Almost certain	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme	
Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Extreme	
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High	
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High	

## Risk levels

Risk levels	Actions
Extreme	<p><b>Stop, look for alternatives!</b></p> <p>Unacceptable level of risk – don't do it.</p> <p>A considerable potential for fatalities, serious injuries or illness, post-traumatic stress.</p>
High	<p><b>Control to eliminate risk where possible.</b></p> <p>We need to do something to eliminate or minimise risk. There is moderate potential for injuries, illness, or stress requiring hospitalisation, therapy, or counselling.</p>
Medium	<p><b>Control to minimise risk as far as reasonably practicable.</b></p> <p>We need to do something to eliminate or minimise risk. There is some potential for injuries, illness or stress requiring medical treatment and support.</p>
Low	<p><b>Continue</b></p> <p>Can retain the risk but need to be vigilant that the risk level does not rise.</p> <p>Minimal potential for injuries or illness (above those requiring simple first aid), stress or embarrassment.</p>

**Note:** The focus of this guide/resource is on risk to **people**. However, risk assessment can also include the loss of or damage to **facilities, equipment, the environment, reputation, and finances**.