

## A Duty Holder's Guide to PUWER 1998

What the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 require of you, in plain English.

### What it is

PUWER covers virtually all equipment used at work, from hand tools and ladders to machinery, conveyors and vehicles. It works alongside LOLER (which adds extra rules for lifting equipment) and exists to make sure work equipment is suitable, safe and properly maintained.

### Who the duty holder is

The duty holder is the employer or person in control of the work equipment and how it is used. If your people use it to do their job, the duties fall on you.

### What it requires of you

- Make sure equipment is suitable for the task, the place and the conditions it is used in.
- Keep it maintained in efficient working order and in good repair, with a maintenance log where appropriate.
- Inspect equipment where safety depends on the installation or conditions, after installation and at suitable intervals.
- Control risks with guards, protection devices, markings and warnings, and safe systems of work.
- Make sure only people with adequate information, instruction and training use or maintain it.

### How often

Inspection of work equipment	Risk-based intervals set by the duty holder, plus after installation and exceptional events
Maintenance	At intervals appropriate to the equipment and its use

### What happens if you don't

Unsafe or poorly maintained work equipment breaches PUWER and can lead to enforcement, prosecution and unlimited fines under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, as well as serious injury.

Sources: [PUWER 1998](#), [PUWER: HSE guidance](#)

This guide is general guidance, not legal advice, and is a summary only. Duties and intervals can change and depend on your circumstances. Always check the current regulation and take competent-person advice. Last reviewed June 2026.