

# International Hazard Datasheets on Occupation



## Upholsterer, automobile

### What is a Hazard Datasheet on Occupation?

This datasheet is one of the International Datasheets on Occupations. It is intended for those professionally concerned with health and safety at work: occupational physicians and nurses, safety engineers, hygienists, education and Information specialists, inspectors, employers' representatives, workers' representatives, safety officers and other competent persons.

This datasheet lists, in a standard format, different hazards to which upholsterer, automobiles may be exposed in the course of their normal work. This datasheet is a source of information rather than advice. With the knowledge of what causes injuries and diseases, it is easier to design and implement suitable measures towards prevention.

This datasheet consists of four pages:

- Page 1: Information on the most relevant hazards related to the occupation.
- Page 2: A more detailed and systematized presentation on the **different hazards** related to the job with indicators for preventive measures (marked as numbered shields and explained on the third page).
- Page 3: Suggestions for **preventive measures** for selected hazards.
- Page 4: **Specialized information**, relevant primarily to occupational safety and health professionals and including information such as a brief job description, a list of tasks, notes and references.

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### Who is an automobile upholsterer?






A worker who installs, repairs, or replaces upholstery in automobiles, buses or trucks.

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### What is dangerous about this job?

- Automobile upholsterers often use hot glues and may get burned or have their fingers bound.
- The work of automobile upholsterers usually requires an extensive use of solvents which may be a source of acute or chronic poisoning or other health problems. Solvents may also pose a serious fire hazard.
- Automobile upholsterers may need to handle heavy loads, do continuous repetitive movements and work in uncomfortable postures which may lead to trauma and chronic back, arm, hand, and leg pain.

**Hazards related to this job**

<b>Accident hazards</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burns caused by contact with hot glue/glue guns</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electric shock caused by contact with defective or unearthed electrical equipment</li> </ul>	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cuts and punctures caused by sharp edges of tools, springs, etc.</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injury of the eyes caused by splashing glue, cleaners, etc.</li> </ul>	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slips, trips, falls (on slippery surfaces, stairs, etc.)</li> </ul>	4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Struck by falling objects during handling</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Struck by/striking against/caught in moving objects when working on mechanical assembly lines</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trauma resulting from overexertion from handling/lifting heavy objects</li> </ul>	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poisoning by phosgene (see Note 1)</li> </ul>	6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bonding of fingers (see Note 2)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High risk of fire and explosion due to the presence of flammable solvents/glues and other flammable material (fabric, foam, wood, etc.) and the accumulation of solvent vapors, particularly in small, unventilated areas</li> </ul>	7 8	
<b>Physical hazards</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure to excessive noise, especially when working on mechanical assembly lines</li> </ul>	9
<b>Chemical hazards</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respiratory tract irritation, depression of the central nervous system with possible headaches, dizziness, incoordination, stupor, and coma, and eye irritation caused by inhalation of solvent vapors</li> </ul>	8
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pneumoconiosis from exposure to fibers of certain fabrics or padding materials</li> </ul>	10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of spontaneous abortion or damage to the fetus in pregnant women exposed to organohalogen solvents</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of carcinogenicity from chronic exposure to a number of solvents present in glues</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allergies due to contact with formaldehyde and other allergenic substances</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Polyurethane foam, when ignited, produces large amounts of carbon dioxide and hydrogen cyanide</li> </ul>		
<b>Biological hazards</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure to pathogenic microorganisms that may grow in certain types of glues, fabrics, or padding materials</li> </ul>	
<b>Ergonomic, psychosocial and organizational factors</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cumulative trauma disorders as a result of continuous repetitive movements, awkward postures, and excessive efforts</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tiredness, particularly leg fatigue from continuously working in a standing position</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strains and sprains caused by lifting heavy objects</li> </ul>	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure to offensive smells, particularly from glues and solvents</li> </ul>	

### Preventive measures

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- 1** Check electrical equipment for safety before use. Take faulty or suspect electrical equipment to a qualified electrician for testing and repair
  - 2** Use metal-mesh or other cut- or puncture-resistant gloves in all work with sharp knives or other sharp tools
  - 3** Wear appropriate eye protection; consult a safety supervisor or a supplier
  - 4** Wear safety shoes with non-skid soles
  - 5** Learn and use safe lifting and moving techniques for heavy or awkward loads; use mechanical aids to assist in lifting
  - 6** Do not work near open flames with glues containing chlorinated solvents; do not smoke when working with such solvents
  - 7** Replace glues with flammable solvents with substitutes (e.g., hot-melt glues or water-based ones)
  - 8** Install effective exhaust ventilation to prevent air contamination; add local exhaust ventilation if necessary
  - 9** Wear hearing protection appropriate for the noise levels and type of noise - consult the supplier or an expert
  - 10** Wear a respirator to avoid inhalation of dust or aerosols
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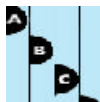
**Specialized information**


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**Synonyms** Automobile upholsterer (automotive service); passenger-car upholsterer; upholsterer

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**Definitions and/or description** Repairs or replaces upholstery in automobiles, buses, and trucks: Removes old upholstery from seats and door panels of vehicle. Measures new padding and covering materials, and cuts them to required dimensions. Adjusts or replaces seat springs and ties them in place. Sews covering material together. Fits covering to seat frame and secures it with tacks and glue. Repairs or replaces convertible tops. Refurbishes interiors of streetcars and buses by replacing cushions, drapes, and floor coverings. May be designated according to specialty



**Related and specific occupations** Body trimmer (automotive service); bus upholsterer (automotive service); top installer (automotive service); automobile-upholsterer apprentice (automotive service); passenger-car upholsterer apprentice; upholsterer apprentice; upholsterer (furniture)

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**Tasks** Affixing; applying (adhesive); assembling; attaching; bonding; brushing; carpeting; cementing; clamping; cleaning and conditioning; coating; covering; cutting; dispensing (glue); disposing (of waste, debris, etc.); drying; fitting; gluing; heating (glue); inspecting; insulating; joining; laminating (panels, etc.); mixing (two-part glues); mounting; opening (containers); operating (power tools, etc.); packing and unpacking; positioning; pouring; pressing; repairing; sealing; securing; setting; sewing; smoothing (surfaces); spreading; squeezing; taping; testing; transporting; trimming; unclogging (nozzles); upholstering; washing (equipment); wiping

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**Primary equipment used** Hammer; tack hammer; staple gun; scissors/shears; knife; sewing machine; pliers; screwdrivers; hand brushes; hand-held rollers; hot melt glue guns; drop dispensers; squeeze dispensers; punch; measuring tape

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**Workplaces where the occupation is common** Automotive services; automobile manufacturing; automobile repair; automobile detailing

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- Notes**
1. Severe and even fatal poisonings by phosgene have been reported for gluers who smoked during work with glues containing organohalogen solvents. When inhaled through a burning cigarette, such solvents are decomposed and partially converted into phosgene. Phosgene may also form if organohalogen solvents are used near open flame, electric arc, and very hot surface
  2. A hazard particular to the use of glues is the possibility of bonding finger-to-finger, or finger-to-surface, particularly when working with cyanoacrylate and some epoxy glues
  3. For additional information on hazards related to gluing operations, see Hazard Datasheet B18 Gluer.



**References** Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety, 3rd Ed., ILO, Geneva, 1983, Vol. 1, p. 60 - 61, 897 - 898, Vol. 2, p. 1209 - 1210.



This information has been compiled by the Israel Institute for Occupational Safety and Hygiene jointly with the BIA (Germany).

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