



5s



What is it?

The 5S is a process that provides a simple and effective way to improve the workplace environment by improving housekeeping and reducing waste.

What can it be used for?

It helps to lock out waste by ensuring that we have in the area only those items needed to do the required work. Furthermore, by getting close to the process we can more easily identify opportunities for improvement. When carried out correctly it can be the bedrock of all improvements, by creating a safer environment, removing waste, facilitating visual control and supporting teamworking and empowerment.

How to do it:

The process has five steps:

1. Sort - Look at your work environment and identify what tools/materials/ jigs/equipment/storage are actually required in the workplace. All unnecessary items are then removed. Red tagging (see separate kitbag) is often used for this activity.

2. Straighten - Having identified the necessary items, this step is about agreeing the right place for them. The sort of things to take into consideration are: appropriate storage media, shadow boards, visual identification, storage based on first in – first out.
3. Sweep - This step is about ensuring the correct cleaning and maintenance routines are in place to support the redesigned area.
4. Standardise - Re-do Steps 1-3 on a regular basis to ensure there is no build up of unnecessary items in the work area.
5. Sustain - Review regularly to monitor process.

Tips and guidelines

- Ensure everyone is involved in the process and they are part of the feedback.
- Put visual displays in place to broadcast progress.