Risk assessment and method statement (RAMS) for demolition contractors

Starting point: review and adapt it for your job. Part 1 is the risk assessment, with typical hazards for demolition contractors filled in. Part 2 is the method statement.

Client asking for RAMS on every job? The Site Book writes them from a short description of the work. Your first job is free: **thesitebook.co.uk/features/rams**

Company name _____ **Client** _____

Job and site address _____ **Start date and expected duration** _____

Prepared by _____ **Date** _____

Principal contractor (if there is one) _____ **Date of next review** _____

Description of the work

Describe the work this RAMS covers, where it happens and anything about the site that affects how it is done.

Description of the work

Part 1: Risk assessment

List the hazards on this job. For each one, decide who might be harmed and how, how likely it is and how serious it could be.

Can you get rid of the hazard altogether? If not, control the risk so that harm is unlikely. Give collective protective measures priority over individual ones such as PPE.

Typical hazards for demolition contractors, each with the key points from our toolbox talk on it. This is a starting point, not an assessment of your job. Mark which apply to this job, cross out any that do not, and add the hazards this job has that are not listed.

Hazard or topic	Key points and controls to consider	Applies to this job?	Notes for this job
Demolition Safety	• Demolition work must be planned and carried out to prevent danger, with the arrangements recorded in writing before work begins — this is a specific legal requirement under CDM 2015 Regulation 20 • A written demolition method statement must be prepared before work begins, detailing the sequence, plant, exclusion zones, and emergency procedures • A pre-demolition survey must identify all hazards including asbestos, structural condition, live services, and adjacent structures • All services (gas, electricity, water, telecoms) must be identified, isolated, and confirmed dead before demolition begins • Exclusion zones must be established and maintained to protect workers and the public from falling materials • Dust, noise, and vibration must be controlled — demolition generates significant quantities of all three • Asbestos-containing materials must be identified and, so far as reasonably practicable, removed before demolition begins — by a licensed contractor where the work is licensable		
Asbestos Awareness	• Asbestos was widely used in UK buildings constructed before 2000 — assume it may be present in any pre-2000 building • You CANNOT identify asbestos by looking at it — only laboratory analysis can confirm it • Common locations: insulation boards, ceiling tiles, floor tiles, pipe lagging, textured coatings (Artex), roof sheets, and soffits • If you suspect asbestos: STOP work immediately, keep people away, and report to your supervisor • Only licensed contractors may do licensable asbestos work — such as removing sprayed coatings or pipe lagging, and work on asbestos insulating board (AIB) that isn't short duration • The duty to manage asbestos applies to non-domestic premises and the common parts of multi-occupancy residential buildings. It does not apply inside individual domestic dwellings, including rented homes. Where asbestos is known or presumed to be present, the dutyholder must prepare and implement a written asbestos management plan and keep it under review. • Before intrusive refurbishment or demolition where asbestos may be present, ensure that a competent surveyor has completed an appropriate refurbishment or demolition survey covering the areas and materials affected by the planned work. A management survey alone is not sufficient for this purpose. • The domestic exception applies only to the premises duty to manage asbestos. Builders and other contractors must still identify and control asbestos risks before work that could disturb materials in a home.		

Hazard or topic	Key points and controls to consider	Applies to this job?	Notes for this job
Dust & Silica	• Respirable crystalline silica (RCS) is a very fine dust made when you cut, chase, drill, grind or break materials such as concrete, mortar, brick, block, tile, slate, sandstone and granite • Engineered stone, widely used for kitchen and bathroom worktops, can contain up to 95% crystalline silica. HSE says dry cutting it is unacceptable • The workplace exposure limit (WEL) for RCS is 0.1 mg/m³ (8-hour TWA) — this is a very small amount • Silicosis, lung cancer, and COPD are all linked to silica dust exposure • Control the dust at source first: use on-tool water suppression or on-tool extraction (with an M or H class extraction unit) when you cut, chase, grind or drill these materials. Engineered stone must be cut with on-tool water suppression: extraction on its own is not an alternative • Never dry sweep or use compressed air to clean up dust — use an M or H class vacuum or damp down • RPE is worn on top of water or extraction, not instead of them, because extraction does not capture all the silica. For tasks like chasing, HSE advises RPE with an assigned protection factor (APF) of 20, such as an FFP3 disposable mask or a half mask with a P3 filter • A tight-fitting mask only protects you if it has been face-fit tested to you and you are clean-shaven where it seals against your face • Employers must provide health surveillance where there is a reasonable likelihood of silicosis. Take part when it is offered		
Noise at Work	• Noise-induced hearing loss develops gradually and is permanent — you will not get your hearing back • The lower exposure action value is 80 dB(A) daily — hearing protection must be made available • The upper exposure action value is 85 dB(A) daily — hearing protection must be worn and hearing protection zones designated • A rough guide: if you have to shout to be heard by someone 2 metres away, the noise level is probably above 85 dB(A) • Reduce noise at source first — use quieter equipment, damping, enclosures, or barriers • Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) is an early warning sign of hearing damage — report it		
Hand Arm Vibration (HAVS)	• HAVS is caused by regular, frequent use of vibrating hand-held tools such as breakers, grinders, hammer drills, and compactors • Symptoms include tingling, numbness, loss of grip strength, and fingers turning white in cold weather • The Exposure Action Value (EAV) is 2.5 m/s² A(8) — at this point the employer must take action to reduce exposure • The Exposure Limit Value (ELV) is 5 m/s² A(8) — this must not be exceeded • Tool selection matters — low-vibration tools and anti-vibration mounts can dramatically reduce exposure • Early reporting of symptoms is critical — damage is permanent once established		

Hazard or topic	Key points and controls to consider	Applies to this job?	Notes for this job
Mobile Plant & Vehicles	• Segregate pedestrians and vehicles wherever possible — use physical barriers, not just signs • All plant operators must be trained, competent and authorised for the machine they are operating — usually shown by a valid CPCS or NPORS card • Avoid reversing where you can and keep people clear. If a vehicle must reverse near people or into a blind spot, use a trained, authorised banksman • Never walk behind or close to moving plant — assume the operator cannot see you • Wear high-visibility clothing at all times in areas where vehicles operate • Mobile plant must be fitted with appropriate safety devices: FOPS, ROPS, mirrors, and reversing aids		

Record each hazard that applies to this job in the table below, with the controls you will put in place.

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Controls in place	Further action needed	Who	When	Done

Part 2: Method statement

Sequence of work

List the steps in the order the work will be done, from setting up to clearing away. Put the controls for each step next to it.

Step	What will be done	Who	Plant, equipment and materials	Controls for this step
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

People and competence

List who will do the work. Each person needs the skills, knowledge, training and experience for their tasks, or must be in the process of getting them.

Name	Role or trade	Relevant training, qualifications or cards

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE	Needed for which steps

Emergencies

Record the arrangements for any foreseeable emergency, including how to evacuate the site.

First aider _____ **First aid kit location** _____

Nearest A&E (name and address) _____ **Assembly point** _____

How to raise the alarm _____ **Site contact and phone number** _____

If there is serious and imminent danger, workers should stop work immediately, report it and go to a place of safety.

Who workers report danger to _____

Briefing record

Brief everyone doing the work on this RAMS before the work begins. Each person signs to confirm.

Name	Company	Signature	Date

Approval

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by			
Approved by			

Based on: HSE's five steps to managing risk; the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, regulation 3 and Schedule 1; CDM 2015, regulations 15 and 30; HSE guidance L153. The typical hazards and key points are from The Site Book's toolbox talks on each topic, at thesitebook.co.uk/toolbox-talks.

- HSE, Managing risks and risk assessment at work: steps needed to manage risk: https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/steps-needed-to-manage-risk.htm
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, regulation 3: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/regulation/3
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Schedule 1: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/schedule/1
- CDM 2015, regulation 15: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/51/regulation/15
- CDM 2015, regulation 30: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/51/regulation/30
- HSE, Managing health and safety in construction (L153): https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l153.htm

Starting-point template from The Site Book, October 2026. Review and adapt it for the actual job and site before anyone works to it.