



Basic Safety and Security Measures

Studio

- Look at your venue with a fresh pair of eyes. Check all obvious tripping points and obstacles. Remove those obstacles you can and highlight those you can't with signs and bright colours (or striped 'hazard' tape). Don't forget awkward tables, shelves or steps.
- Check your premises and working methods during the event, check for unnecessarily hazardous things and take action to minimise the likelihood of accidental injury or damage.
- If your studio is at home, block off areas that are not to be entered by your guests. Use 'private' signs on doors not to be opened, ropes across stairs and directional arrows.
- Clear up clutter. It will help your venue look more spacious and inviting as well as getting possibly dangerous substances, tools and equipment out of the way.
- Don't leave fragile objects where people can easily handle (or mishandle) them.
- If you have indicated that visitors may bring dogs, plan ahead as to how you intend to deal with both the dogs and their owners.
- Plan methods to keep your own children or pets safe and supervised.
- Make provision to keep your cash box and items like mobile phones and laptops secure if you have to leave the room or are tied up with a customer while others are browsing.
- You can insist that breakages must be paid for, but make sure that you don't leave things in places where they could be easily knocked over.
- Protect yourself – it's extremely unlikely that there will be any problems, but it's always wise to have more than one way out of your studio in case of emergency.
- If you can persuade a friend to help mind your studio with you, it's not only safer but more fun!

How can I keep myself safe?

Very rarely have participants said they had felt uncomfortable and vulnerable with a visitor, however, it is advisable that you have certain safety measures in place to ensure your personal safety and peace of mind.

We have listed the following points for you to consider, especially if you are doing open studios by yourself.

- Ask a family member or friend to be around in the house or with you in the studio. This also helps with lunch and toilet breaks.
- If this is not possible, keep your mobile phone with you and make sure it's charged up.
- Have the phone numbers of a couple of people you can call for assistance on speed dial in case you feel uncomfortable with any of your visitors.
- Let a partner / friend / neighbour know that you are doing Open Studios and arrange to call at end of day to let them know all is okay.
- Keep your takings separate from a small kitty and preferably in a locked place.
- It may be advisable to keep small valuable items, i.e., jewellery, in lockable display cases. Keep all handbags, keys and cashbox out of sight.
- Areas off-limits should be clearly marked.
- You are not obliged to let people use your toilet, especially if you are concerned that they seem unnaturally interested in your security and house contents.
- We sometimes have visitors who are lonely, have mental health issues or non-visible disabilities. The majority of these individuals are not a concern but may need a little more patience. If you feel the conversation is going on too long, excuse yourself and say, for example, you need to talk to another visitor, or if by yourself, that you need to make a phone call.
- If you feel uncomfortable with any visitor, call someone in to be with you. If you feel in any danger, call the emergency services on 999.

Public Liability Insurance

We strongly encourage all participants to have adequate PLI insurance for your premises and it is essential for anyone putting up the yellow direction arrows. You may find that your usual household policy will not cover members of the public coming onto your property when you are, in essence, conducting a business. A good starting place for artists' insurance is <https://www.a-n.co.uk/about/insurance> where PLI is included in the annual membership fee.

We don't always want to think about 'Health & Safety' but do have a look at your premises with the eyes of a visitor. It might help if you do a paper risk assessment, which identifies certain risks in your studio and how you can mitigate them. Various risk assessment forms can be found online.