

Guidelines for Safety in the Science Laboratory

(Not all of these rules will apply to every experiment.)

Before the Investigation

1. Listen carefully to your teacher's instructions and other directions. If anything is unclear or you don't understand, ask!
2. Read ALL procedures before starting.
3. Look for and understand safety symbols before starting.
4. Use only those materials or chemicals needed in the investigation.
5. Know the location of emergency equipment such as a fire extinguisher and eye wash station/sinks, etc. Understand first-aid procedures.
6. Tie back hair or remove dangling items, such as jewelry and sleeves.
7. Make sure electric cords are untangled and out of the way.
8. Let your teacher know if you have any medical condition that may affect your ability to perform the lab such as an allergy or injury.

During the Investigation

9. Follow ALL instructions (spoken and written) EXACTLY. Do not rush through the steps.
10. Never try to experiment on your own without first getting teachers approval and permission.
11. Don't engage in horseplay (pushing, running, squirting each other with water, etc.) in the lab area. Move slowly and carefully. Be aware of your surroundings.
12. Show respect and courtesy to your teacher, classmates, and lab equipment.
13. Keep work area clean and organized.
14. Don't eat, drink, chew gum, or apply cosmetics in the lab area.
15. Use a lab apron to protect your clothes.
16. Wear heat resistant gloves when handling hot objects.
17. Wear appropriate protective gloves (plastic, latex, etc.) when handling chemicals or microbes. Keep your hands away from your face and hair.
18. Wear close-toed shoes while working in the lab.
19. Handle sharp instruments with care. Do not cut toward your body. Be aware of other scientists around you.
20. Handle live plants and animals with care. Treat them with respect.
21. Never touch, taste, or smell chemicals unless you are directed to do so.
22. Never eat or drink from lab equipment or glassware.

23. Wear safety goggles for any investigation that uses chemicals, flames or heat.
24. Read all labels on chemical bottles before using. If you put chemicals in a separate container be sure to label the container.
25. Keep all containers closed when chemicals are not being used.
26. Only mix chemicals as directed. Never mix chemicals just for “the fun of it.”
27. Only use the amount of chemicals you need so you do not waste materials.
28. Unplug equipment when not in use. Do not use electrical equipment around water, when your hands are wet, or if equipment gets wet.
29. Report any accidents to your teacher immediately, even if it is a minor one.
30. Listen to teacher’s directions and carry them out quickly.
31. If glassware breaks, tell the teacher. Do not touch the broken glass.

After the Investigation

32. Clean up work area. Turn off, unplug, and return equipment to proper place. This could include washing trays, glassware or other equipment and replacing bottle caps securely.
33. Dispose of all materials as instructed by your teacher.
34. Wash your hands with soap and warm water thoroughly after every experiment.

