



TOOLKIT 1 · SURGICAL SAFETY · TOOL 1 OF 5

Surgical Safety Checklist

Three pauses, nineteen questions, read aloud by one person. Sign In before anaesthesia · Time Out before skin incision · Sign Out before the patient leaves the theatre

SIGN IN

Before induction of anaesthesia — with at least nurse and anaesthetist

- ☐ Patient has confirmed identity, site, procedure and consent
- ☐ Site marked
or not applicable
- ☐ Anaesthesia safety check completed
- ☐ Pulse oximeter on patient and functioning
- ☐ Does the patient have a known allergy?
No / Yes
- ☐ Difficult airway or aspiration risk?
No / Yes, and equipment and assistance available
- ☐ Risk of >500 ml blood loss (7 ml/kg in children)?
No / Yes, and two IV or central access and fluids planned

TIME OUT

Before skin incision — with nurse, anaesthetist and surgeon

- ☐ Every team member has introduced themselves by name and role
- ☐ Surgeon, anaesthetist and nurse verbally confirm patient, site and procedure
- ☐ Anticipated critical events
Surgeon: critical or unexpected steps, operative duration, anticipated blood loss
Anaesthetist: patient-specific concerns
Nursing: sterility confirmed (indicator results), equipment issues or concerns
- ☐ Antibiotic prophylaxis given within the last 60 minutes?
Yes / Not applicable
- ☐ Essential imaging displayed?
Yes / Not applicable

SIGN OUT

Before the patient leaves the operating room — with nurse, anaesthetist and surgeon

- ☐ Nurse verbally confirms:
The name of the procedure
Completion of instrument, sponge and needle counts
Specimen labelling (read aloud, including patient name)
Whether there are any equipment problems to be addressed
- ☐ Surgeon, anaesthetist and nurse: key concerns for recovery and management of this patient

How to use it. One person — usually the circulating nurse — is the checklist coordinator and reads every item aloud. Nothing proceeds until the team has answered. The checklist is not a form to be filled in silently; it is a conversation. Adapt the wording to your theatre, but do not remove an item without the theatre committee agreeing why.

Patient (name, DOB, hospital no.)	Procedure	Date	Coordinator (name)
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Adapted from the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist (2009). The original may be reproduced and translated; this ASF edition keeps the nineteen items unchanged and adds the layout, guidance and evidence mapping.

ASF standards: Hospital Standard 4 — surgical safety · Universal Floor — identification, consent