

GUIDE

Organising an equipment pool

Sharing tools, measuring instruments and tech across an organisation

Workshop managers, stores, administration and club boards who hand out tools, machines, measuring instruments, laptops or event equipment to many people, for example in trades and construction, utilities, municipalities, clubs and schools.

As of October 2026



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Tuesday, 6:50. The rotary hammer is supposed to go to the site on Lindenstraße, but the shelf holds only the empty case. The note on the door says "SDS-Max, Jonas", with no date. Jonas went on holiday yesterday. Nobody knows whether the hammer is in his van, at the other site or with the colleague who borrowed it "for a minute".

An equipment pool saves money. Instead of buying every crew its own laser, its own core drill and its own thermal camera, the organisation shares a few good tools. The same goes for the projectors and laptops in the office, the measuring instruments at the utility and the sound system at the club. The pool only gets expensive when nobody knows where a tool is, what state it came back in and when it was last inspected.

This guide follows a tool through the pool: from the inventory list through the lending rules, issue and return, inspection intervals and damage to booking and the rollout. The first six chapters work with paper, a spreadsheet or any software. Each chapter ends with something to use: a checklist, a table or a plan. The guide is general information, not legal advice.

Where equipment pools go wrong

Tools rarely vanish. They are just somewhere else. This chapter shows where the organisation usually breaks down, and ten questions help you judge where you stand.

A missing vehicle is obvious: the parking space is empty. A missing tool only gets noticed when someone needs it. Until then it sits in a van, in the basement of the branch office or in the drawer of the colleague who needed it "just once more". That is why equipment pools are more fragile than fleets. There are more items, they are smaller, and they travel further.

Four places where it breaks

Nobody knows what there is. The inventory list is three years old or exists only in the storekeeper's head. Whoever needs a tool buys a new one to be safe, and at the end of the year three lasers sit on the shelf and none on site.

Nobody knows who has it. The note on the door, the tally sheet in the store or a shout across the yard records who took something, but rarely until when. If the tool is passed on along the way, the trail goes cold.

Nobody checks what comes back. The case comes back, the charger doesn't. The battery is flat, the cutting disc worn, the cable scorched. The next person finds out on site, and who caused the damage can no longer be established.

Nobody knows when an inspection is due. Electrical tools, ladders and many machines have to be inspected at fixed intervals. If that list is kept apart from the lending, the tool is out exactly when the electrician wants to test it, and in the end half of them are missing.

What a pool needs to hold together

- A list of all tools in which each one has its own number, and the number is stuck on the tool.
- One single place that shows who has which tool from when to when. What it says counts, even when a tool is passed on along the way.
- A short, fixed moment at issue and return: complete, working, damaged?
- Inspection dates in the same calendar as the lending, so the tool is there when the inspection is due.

If you already organise pool vehicles, you will recognise the pattern. Much of the pool vehicles guide (dispoly.net/guides/pool-vehicles) applies here too, just with more items and shorter trips.

Answer the ten questions with yes or no. Each "no" points to the chapter worth reading first.

Self-check: 10 questions

- ☐ Is there a current list of all tools in the pool, with inventory number and location? (chapter 2)
- ☐ Is the inventory number also on the tool itself, not just in the list? (chapter 2)
- ☐ Is it settled who may use which tool only after instruction? (chapter 3)
- ☐ Is it settled whether tools may be kept overnight or over the weekend? (chapter 3)
- ☐ Can you say for every tool who has it right now and until when? (chapters 4 and 7)
- ☐ Is it checked at return that accessories and batteries are complete? (chapter 4)
- ☐ Are laptops reset before they go to the next person? (chapter 4)
- ☐ Do you know for every electrical tool and every ladder when the next inspection is due? (chapter 5)
- ☐ Is there a fixed place for defective tools, so nobody takes one out again by mistake? (chapter 6)
- ☐ Can everyone see whether a tool is free before walking to the store? (chapter 7)

Inventory: what belongs in the pool

No list, no pool. This chapter covers which tools belong in the pool, how to label them and which columns the inventory list needs.

There is no general legal duty to keep a list of equipment. In Germany, merchants draw up an inventory for each financial year under § 240 of the Commercial Code (HGB), and low-value assets have their own tax registers, which you settle with your accounts department. For the equipment pool something else matters: without a list you can't organise either lending or inspections. DGUV Information 203-071, the statutory accident insurers' guidance on testing electrical equipment, explicitly names inventory lists and inventory numbers as the basis.

What belongs in the pool and what doesn't

The pool is for things several people need, but not every day: rotary hammer, core drill, rotating laser, measuring instruments, ladders and scaffolding, generators, projectors, training laptops, the club's sound system or marquee. Personal tools that someone uses daily stay out, and so do consumables such as screws, cutting discs or batteries. Store consumables alongside, but don't book them.

A borderline case is equipment one person keeps permanently, such as a work laptop or a fitter's toolbox. It belongs in the inventory list, because it has to be inspected and handed back when someone leaves, but not in the lending.

Every tool on its own, cases as one unit

Identical tools still get their own numbers. "Cordless drill 1" to "Cordless drill 5" instead of "5 cordless drills", because it is always one particular tool that gets inspected, damaged and lent out. Anything that always goes out together is kept as one unit: the case with laser, tripod and receiver, the microphone set with four wireless channels. Stick a contents list inside the lid, and the return becomes a quick comparison instead of a search.

Labelling

The inventory number has to be on the tool, permanent and legible: engraved, as a sticker or as a cable-tie tag. A QR code next to it leads straight to the tool in your system, if you use one. Keep the number short and free of meaning, for example "G-0142". A number that encodes location or department is wrong after the first move.

For each tool, also decide who looks after it: one person who takes defect reports, keeps an eye on inspection dates and decides whether a tool is repaired or retired. With twenty tools one person can cover all of them. With two hundred it pays to split them by tool group.

Inventory list to copy

Inv. no.	Tool	Make, model, serial no.	Accessories / contents	Location	Responsible	Inspection type, interval	Next inspection
G-0001							
G-0002							
G-0003							
G-0004							
G-0005							
G-0006							
G-0007							
G-0008							
G-0009							
G-0010							
G-0011							
G-0012							

Lending rules

Who may take which tool, for how long and where to? This chapter collects the decisions you should make once, before someone makes them for you in day-to-day work.

Most disputes in an equipment pool come from missing rules, rarely from bad intent. The colleague who takes the laser home for the weekend because he drives straight to the site on Monday morning does nothing forbidden as long as nobody has said it is forbidden. The rules fit on one page and hang in the store or on the tool cabinet.

Who may use which tool

For employees in Germany, the Ordinance on Industrial Safety and Health (BetrSichV) applies. It calls tools, devices and machines work equipment (§ 2 BetrSichV) and requires a risk assessment before they are used (§ 3). A CE mark doesn't exempt you from it. The assessment tells you which tools may only be used after instruction or only by certain people, such as the core drill, the chainsaw or the generator. Record who has been instructed on these tools and only hand them to those people.

In a club run entirely by volunteers, the BetrSichV doesn't apply directly, because it is aimed at employers and employees. The question of who can handle the chainsaw still comes up. An instruction session and a short list of who has had it protect you there too.

The decisions that are yours to make

Duration. Do you lend for one job or one day only, or for a week too? A maximum duration stops a tool from quietly becoming someone's personal kit. Anything needed for longer gets booked again.

Taking it away. May a tool stay in the van overnight, go home or go straight to the next site? If so, the booking covers the whole period and the tool is blocked for others. Laptops with company data need a rule of their own, see chapter 4.

Passing it on. If Jonas hands the hammer straight to Lea, the pool knows nothing about it. Either that is forbidden and everything goes through the store, or it is allowed and the booking is moved. Both work. Doing it silently doesn't.

Private use. Taking the circular saw home for the weekend is common in many organisations and forbidden in many others. Decide it explicitly. If it is allowed: who is liable for damage, and which tools are excluded?

Condition at return. Clean, battery charged, accessories complete, worn parts reported. Anything that doesn't come back in this state is noted at return, not quietly fixed by the store.

Lending to outsiders

If you lend tools to members, neighbouring clubs or other organisations, the German Civil Code (BGB) comes in. Free of charge it is a loan for use (§ 598 BGB), against payment it is a rental (§ 535). In a loan for use, you as the lender are only liable for intent and gross negligence (§ 599), and for defects only if you fraudulently concealed them (§ 600). The borrower isn't responsible for normal wear from proper use (§ 602), but is liable for damage beyond that. They may only pass the tool on with your permission (§ 603). If no duration was agreed, you can ask for it back at any time (§ 604).

One point matters in practice: claims for damage under a loan or rental become time-barred just six months after the return (§ 606 and § 548 BGB). If you only notice at the next event that the speaker has a crack, you are in a weak position. So check when you take things back and write down what you see. Municipalities that lend equipment to clubs often settle this in a usage regulation or bylaw. In that case it applies.

What the lending rules settle

- ☐ Which tools are in the pool and where they are issued
- ☐ Which tools may only be used after instruction, and who keeps the list of people instructed
- ☐ Who may book, and whether outsiders can borrow or rent tools
- ☐ The maximum lending period
- ☐ Whether keeping tools overnight, taking them home and private use are allowed
- ☐ Whether tools may be passed on along the way, and how that is recorded
- ☐ The condition tools come back in: clean, charged, complete
- ☐ Who receives reports of defects, loss and damage, with a deputy
- ☐ Who the contact person for the pool is

Issue and return

Issue and return decide whether you can later say when a part went missing. This chapter covers what to check at these two moments and how to keep it short.

Friday, 15:30. The laser comes back, the case is shut, and the colleague is already on his way to the car. On Monday the receiver is missing. Was it gone on Friday, or did someone take it off the shelf over the weekend? Without a quick look inside the case at return, there's no way to tell.

A look at the tool before every use

The BetrSichV requires work equipment to be checked for obvious defects before each use (§ 4 (5) BetrSichV). The employer has to make sure it happens, and in practice the person taking the tool does the looking. It takes a minute: housing intact, cable and plug undamaged, guards in place, inspection sticker not expired. If something is wrong, the tool stays in the store and goes into the defects box, see chapter 6.

What to record at issue

At issue, the tool, the name, the date and the planned return date are enough. If you need more detail, note the job or site. For machines with an hour meter the reading is worth taking, because service intervals often depend on operating hours. For cases and sets, checking against the contents list matters more than any signature.

What to check at return

The return is the more important half. Skip it and every defect lands on the next person. Four questions are enough: Is everything there? Does it work? Is anything damaged? Is anything used up or in need of a refill? Whatever stands out is noted at once, with name and date. A short line like "Charger missing, coming tomorrow" is worth more than a completed form nobody reads.

Every extra required field raises the chance that someone guesses instead of looking. So keep the return short and keep the known defects as one list per tool instead of copying them out at every return. For a few expensive tools or for lending to outsiders, a handover record with a signature fits. The handover form template (dispoly.net/templates/handover-form) has an "equipment" variant with an accessories list for this, and the handover checklist (dispoly.net/blog/handover-checklist-vehicles-equipment) explains the fields.

Laptops and tablets

With IT equipment, data protection comes in. Whoever returns a training laptop leaves downloads, browser history and signed-in accounts behind. The IT-Grundschutz of the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) (Edition 2023, module SYS.3.1, requirement A7) recommends a defined

handover and return for laptops that are used in turn: before the laptop goes to someone else, sensitive data is securely deleted, and the person receiving it gets a short information sheet. Under Art. 32 GDPR, encrypted storage is one of the measures that lower the risk.

That pays off when a device goes missing. A lost laptop with personal data can be a data breach that you have to report to the supervisory authority within 72 hours (Art. 33 GDPR). If the data was encrypted, you usually don't have to notify the people affected (Art. 34 (3)). So a loss is reported at once, not after the weekend.

Issue and return

- ☐ Tool: the inventory number, not just "the laser"
- ☐ Who: name of the person taking the tool and of the person bringing it back
- ☐ When: issue, planned return and actual return
- ☐ Before use: housing, cable, plug, guards, inspection sticker
- ☐ Complete: checked against the contents list in the case, batteries and charger counted
- ☐ Condition at return: working, new damage, worn parts, cleanliness
- ☐ Meter (for machines): operating hours at issue and return
- ☐ IT equipment: data deleted or device reset before it goes to the next person

Inspection intervals and maintenance

Electrical tools, ladders and many machines have to be inspected regularly. You set the intervals yourselves. This chapter covers what to base them on and how the inspection reaches the tool.

In an equipment pool, inspections are harder than for equipment fixed to one workstation. When the electrician comes once a year, half the drills are out on sites. They get tested "next time", and next time turns out to be two years later.

Who sets the intervals

The law doesn't prescribe fixed intervals for all equipment. Under § 3 (6) BetrSichV the employer determines the type, scope and intervals of inspections as part of the risk assessment. The intervals have to be set so the tool can be used safely until the next inspection. Inspections are carried out by a person qualified to inspect (§ 2 (6) and § 14), meaning someone with suitable training, experience and recent practice. § 14 (3) also requires an inspection after exceptional events, such as an accident, a fall or a long period without use.

And a tool that is subject to inspection may only be used if the inspection has been carried out and documented (§ 4 (4)). A tool with an overdue inspection therefore stays out of circulation.

Electrical tools

Portable electrical equipment, meaning anything with a plug plus extension leads and cable reels, falls under DGUV Vorschrift 3, the accident insurers' regulation on electrical installations and equipment. In the public sector the identical DGUV Vorschrift 4 applies. Its implementation notes give guide values in Table 1B: six months, three months on construction sites. If the failure rate at inspections stays below 2%, the interval may be extended, to at most one year in workshops, production and on sites and two years in offices. Testing is done by a qualified electrician or, with suitable test equipment, an electrically instructed person.

On construction sites, BG BAU, the construction industry's accident insurer, goes by the level of strain: weekly for very high strain such as metal grinding, every three months for high strain such as core drilling, every six months in normal site use and yearly for very rare use (module B 172). DGUV Information 203-071 stresses that these are guide values, not intervals to pick as you like: if you deviate, give your reasons.

Ladders and step stools

Ladders are checked visually for obvious defects before each use (Technical Rules for Operational Safety, TRBS 2121 Part 2). On top of that comes a recurring inspection by a qualified person.

DGUV Information 208-016 recommends inspecting at least once a year, numbering the ladders and keeping the inspections together in a log book. A sample inspection sheet is in its Annex 2.

Documenting and labelling

Every inspection is recorded and kept at least until the next one (§ 14 (7) BetrSichV): type and scope of the inspection, result, name and signature of the inspector. Electronic records are allowed. One sentence in the same provision matters for an equipment pool: if a tool is used at changing locations, proof of the last inspection has to be available where it is used. An inspection sticker showing the next date is the simplest way to do that. The sticker isn't mandatory, but it lets everyone see before use whether the tool is still within its inspection date.

Inspection dates in the calendar

For a tool to be in the store on its inspection date, the date belongs in the same calendar as the lending. Enter it as a blocked period, then nobody books the tool for those days, and anyone who tries sees the reason. If you inspect everything on one day, block the whole pool for that day. If you stagger inspections, each tool gets its own date. How recurring blocked periods work is covered in [Recurring blocked periods \(dispoly.net/blog/recurring-blocked-periods\)](https://dispoly.net/blog/recurring-blocked-periods).

Inspection intervals as a guide

Equipment	Guide value	Basis	Who inspects
Portable electrical equipment, extension leads, cable reels	6 months; with a failure rate below 2% up to 1 year (workshop) or 2 years (office)	DGUV Vorschrift 3/4, Table 1B	Qualified electrician, or electrically instructed person with test equipment
The same equipment on construction sites	3 months; BG BAU weekly to yearly depending on strain, at most 1 year	DGUV Vorschrift 3, Table 1B; BG BAU B 172	as above
Residual current devices (RCDs) in non-stationary installations, such as site distribution boards	Test button every working day by the user	DGUV Vorschrift 3, Table 1A	instructed person
Ladders and step stools	visual check before each use; recurring inspection at least yearly recommended	TRBS 2121-2; DGUV Information 208-016	qualified person
All work equipment after an accident, fall, damage or long period without use	extraordinary, before the next use	§ 14 (3) BetrSichV	qualified person

Equipment	Guide value	Basis	Who inspects
Machines and tools with manufacturer's instructions	as per the operating manual, often by operating hours	Operating manual, risk assessment	as specified

The intervals in the table are guide values. What is binding is what you set and justify in your risk assessment. If in doubt, ask your accident insurer (Berufsgenossenschaft or Unfallkasse) and your occupational safety specialist.

Defects, loss and damage

A defective tool on the shelf is more dangerous than a missing one. This chapter covers how to take defects out of circulation, trace damage to the right loan and who pays in the end.

The angle grinder with the scorched cable is back on the shelf. Whoever returned it didn't mean any harm, he just had no time to report it. The next morning the apprentice takes it.

Take defects out of circulation at once

A tool that fails a check or inspection is clearly marked and taken out of use, as DGUV Information 203-071 also says. In practice that means a fixed place for defective tools, a red box or a locked compartment, and a tag with date, name and fault. Whoever finds a defective tool puts it there and reports it. In the calendar it stays blocked until it is repaired or retired. Expired inspection stickers are removed.

Tracing damage to the right loan

Who caused damage can rarely be proven. When it happened usually can: between the last return where it wasn't noted and the first one where it was. The more reliably someone looks at every return, the narrower that window gets. Anyone who takes a tool with a defect notes it before using it, otherwise the damage is theirs on paper.

Who pays when employees cause damage

For damage employees cause at work, German law applies the principles of internal loss sharing (Federal Labour Court, BAG, Grand Senate, order of 27 September 1994, GS 1/89). They apply to any work-related activity, so also to the tool that falls off the scaffold on site.

Fault	Example	Who bears the damage
Slight negligence	the laser slips off the tripod during setup, as could happen to anyone	the organisation
Ordinary negligence	the tool is left unlocked on site overnight	usually shared, weighed case by case
Gross negligence, intent	the tool misused despite a warning, operated after drinking	usually the person, limited if grossly out of proportion to pay

The burden of proof is on the employer. Under § 619a BGB an employee is only liable if they are responsible for the breach of duty, and the employer has to show that. If you can't establish during which loan the charger disappeared, the loss stays with the organisation. A shortfall agreement

(Mankoabrede), under which someone is liable for missing stock, is only valid if there is equivalent compensation for it, such as a shortfall allowance, and it is limited to that compensation (BAG, judgment of 17 September 1998, 8 AZR 175/97). For a pool that many people use, that hardly fits.

Simply deducting damage from wages is only possible from the part of the wage that can be garnished (§ 394 BGB). Asking employees for a deposit on tools is legally risky. For specific cases, ask a specialist employment lawyer.

Volunteers and outsiders

In a German club, members carrying out club duties under the statutes are only liable to the club for intent and gross negligence if they work unpaid or receive at most €3,300 a year (§ 31b BGB, for board members § 31a; the limit applies since 1 January 2026). So whoever sets up the sound system at the club party is protected. If a member borrows the system for a private birthday party, that isn't a club duty, and the loan rules from chapter 3 apply. Outsiders are liable under the rules on loans or rentals for damage beyond normal wear. Remember the six-month limitation period from the return.

One report per defect or loss. It works as a tag on the tool, as a sheet in the store folder or as a template in an email to the person responsible.

Defect and loss report to copy

Field	Entry
Tool (inventory number)	
Date and time the defect was found	
Found by	
Found at	issue / return / use / inspection / stocktake
What happened?	defective / damaged / part missing / tool missing
Description	e.g. cable damaged at the strain relief
Last loan (name, period)	
Tool blocked and taken out of use?	yes, since / no
Personal data affected? (IT equipment only)	yes / no, if yes: tell data protection at once
Reported to, on	
Closed (repair, replacement, retirement, resolved)	

Booking without double bookings

If you can see whether a tool is free before walking to the store, you save the walk and the argument. This chapter covers the rules for that, compares the usual tools and looks at what it costs.

An equipment pool has two kinds of double booking. The obvious one: two crews plan the same laser for the same day. And the hidden one: the laser is free, but it isn't there, because it never came back from the last loan. The same things help against both.

1. There is exactly one place where bookings are made. A note on the door, a spreadsheet and a chat side by side mean none of them is reliable.
2. Book in advance, not when taking the tool. If you know you'll need the core drill on Thursday, book it on Monday. If you need something at short notice, you see at once whether it is free.
3. The software checks for conflicts, not the storekeeper. Overlapping bookings are rejected before they land in the calendar.
4. Inspection dates, repairs and stocktakes go into the calendar as blocked periods.
5. Returns are recorded, and anyone who runs over gets a reminder. Otherwise the calendar is blind to the hidden double booking.

To see how many overlaps your current list already has, use the free booking check (dispoly.net/tools/booking-check). The rules in detail are in [Avoiding double bookings \(dispoly.net/blog/avoid-double-bookings\)](https://dispoly.net/blog/avoid-double-bookings).

The tools compared

	Notes and shouting	Spreadsheet	Shared calendar	Booking software
Prevents double bookings	no, whoever reaches the store first takes it	no, conflicts show up as an empty shelf	no, duplicate entries sit side by side	yes, overlapping bookings are rejected
Who can book	whoever happens to be there	whoever has access to the drive	whoever has write access	depends on the system, often also without an account via link or QR code
Return and condition	a tick on the note	a separate column, often filled in later	no	depends on the system, with a reminder when overdue

	Notes and shouting	Spreadsheet	Shared calendar	Booking software
Inspection dates	separate list	separate column	as an appointment, without blocking	depends on the system, as a blocked period
Cost	no licence, but time spent searching	no licence, but up-keep	no extra licence	software, see below

With software, look at what is counted. If you pay per item, a pool of 80 items gets expensive fast. If you pay per user, you pay for everyone who needs a ladder once a year. Also ask whether people without an account can book and whether your data comes back out as CSV or Excel.

In Dispoly

In Dispoly every tool is its own resource, so you create identical tools as numbered items. Dispoly rejects a second booking for an occupied slot, and also bookings inside a blocked period. Blocked periods can be one-off, all-day, or repeat daily or weekly, for example for an inspection day. New categories require approval. For each tool you set under "Approval Required" whether that stays or whether "Auto-approve" applies, for example for the ladders, while the core drill only goes out once approved.

Members book with their account. Anyone without one books through a booking page with name and email. For the booking page there is a QR sheet with up to 12 codes per page, one per tool, to stick on the shelf or the case.

For issue and return you set up "Pickup & return" per tool: fields of type text, number or select, such as "Accessories complete?" or "Damage / remarks", and an operating hours meter if you want one. Each field is asked at pickup, at return or both, and can be required. A QR sign on the tool lets people without a login record pickup and return. With the "Remind" setting, the person who booked gets an email two hours after the booking ends if the return is missing. With "Enforce", the tool's contact person is also notified after three days. Who had a tool when is in the logbook, which you can export per tool.

Dispoly charges a flat plan, not per item or per user: Starter €19 a month (25 resources, 1 location, 50 members), Team €49 (50 resources, 5 locations, 200 members), Business €99 (250 resources, 25 locations, 1,000 members). People who book through the booking page don't count as members. Because every tool is a resource, an equipment pool reaches 25 faster than a fleet. All plans are on the pricing page (dispoly.net/pricing).

What Dispoly can't do here:

- No quantities and no sets. Five identical tools are five resources, and the case with accessories is one resource. Several tools for one job are several bookings.

- No inspection intervals and no inspection reminders. Blocked periods repeat weekly at most, so you enter a yearly inspection again every year. Keep the inspection records separately as before.
- No "defective" status. Damage noted at return doesn't block the tool. You do that with a blocked period.
- No photos, signatures or checkboxes at return, only text, number and select fields.
- No booking rights per group. Every member can request every tool, and approval is the control. Whether someone without instruction gets the tool is decided by the person who approves.

Rolling it out in four weeks

Tools are quicker to set up than habits are to change. For people to still book through the system after four weeks, the rollout needs a plan.

The most common mistake is doing everything at once: set up 300 tools, send one email to everyone, done. Two weeks later the note is back on the door, because setting up the cordless drills took longer than the colleagues' patience lasted.

Start with the tools people argue about

Start with the five to ten tools that are asked for most often or go missing most often. Usually those are the expensive specialist tools: laser, core drill, measuring instruments, projector, the good sound system. That's where everyone notices at once that something has changed. The everyday tools follow later, once the principle has stuck.

Talk to the people in the store

The storekeeper, the caretaker or the club's equipment manager know where every tool is and who likes to hang on to one. Talk to them before you announce anything. They keep their role, they just no longer have to answer every question themselves. Agree with them who approves requests, how quickly, and who steps in during holidays.

Stocktake, labels, link

The rollout is the best reason for a stocktake. Anything you can't find gets searched for before it gets entered. Anything defective goes into the defects box. Every tool gets its inventory number and, if you use software, its QR code. Enter inspection dates you already know as blocked periods before the first bookings come in.

Put the booking link where people used to ask: in the team chat, on the store door and on the tools. If someone still asks whether the laser is free on Thursday, reply with the link instead of "yes". The full process is in Rolling out a booking system (dispoly.net/blog/rolling-out-a-booking-system).

In Dispoly

Import the inventory list from chapter 2 as CSV or Excel under "Import resources", up to 2,000 rows at a time. The import creates missing categories, locations and contacts along the way. Set up "Pickup & return" on one tool and transfer it to the others with "Copy from resource". For machines there is the "Operating hours" template. The QR sheet for the shelves is available once an admin creates a page under "Booking Pages". The trial runs for 30 days.

What Dispoly can't do here:

- "Pickup & return" is set per tool, not per category. You copy the setting from tool to tool.
- The QR sign on the tool doesn't create a booking. It records pickup and return. Bookings are made through the booking page or with an account.
- Members can't book on behalf of others. If someone phones, from now on they book themselves or through the booking page.

The plan

Rollout week by week

Week	Goal	What to do
Week 1	Prepare	Pick the five to ten tools people ask for most. Talk to the store and the equipment manager. Get the lending rules onto one page. Name the person responsible and a deputy.
Week 2	Record	Stocktake of these tools, attach inventory numbers and QR codes, put contents lists in the cases. Enter inspection dates as blocked periods. The store makes a test booking with issue and return.
Week 3	Announce	Link in the team chat, sign at the store, announcement with the rules. From now on each of these tools only goes out with a booking. Answer questions with the link.
Week 4	Expand	Add more tools, loosen approval for the uncontested ones. Check whether returns are recorded and whether the note on the door has gone. If not, make the return simpler rather than the rules stricter.

Finally

An equipment pool doesn't need a warehouse management system. It needs a list in which every tool has a number, one place where bookings are made, a quick look at issue and return, inspection dates in the calendar and a fixed place for everything that is broken. Most of that works with paper and a spreadsheet, as long as the pool is small and everyone works at the same site.

When that is no longer enough, Dispoly is the booking calendar for this part: equipment, vehicles and rooms in one view, booking by link and QR code without an account, approvals, blocked periods and pickup and return with a reminder when overdue, on every plan. What that looks like in the trades is on the trades and construction page (dispoly.net/solutions/trades-construction), and for equipment rental on the event technology page (dispoly.net/solutions/event-technology).

Trying it costs nothing: no contract, no setup fee, 30 days free.



dispoly.net/guides/equipment-pool

General information, not legal advice. As of October 2026.