

EXIT

INSPECTING SWINGING FIRE DOORS IN 1-2-3

By:



mpengo

Contents

	Page #
Introduction	3
Common Swinging Fire Door Issues	4, 5
Tools for Inspecting Swinging Fire Doors	6, 7
Performing the Inspection	8, 9, 10
After the Inspection	11
Going Paperless: Choosing a Swinging Fire Door Inspection App	12
Conclusion	13
About the Authors	14

Introduction

When you're inspecting fire doors, there are many types of doors you may encounter, but one of the most challenging to inspect can be swinging fire doors.

Because many swinging fire doors are self-closing, they are often subject to heavier use. They may bang open and bang shut, leading to more wear and tear. Plus, they are often designed for accessibility, which can provide challenges when you're also trying to make sure they are fire safe.

If you don't work with swinging fire doors often, these types of inspections can be more complicated and take up a lot of your time — which is the opposite of what you want, especially if you are inspecting a large batch, working in a high-traffic area, or performing this inspection alongside another job.

In this eBook, we are going into detail about how to inspect a swinging fire door and the types of inspection tools that can significantly speed up the process — particularly on the reporting side of the inspection or if you are unfamiliar with inspecting these types of doors.



Common Swinging Fire Door Issues

Because swinging fire doors usually take more use than other types, there are certain common issues to pay special attention to.



These include:

1. **Missing labels.** Because swinging doors take so much wear and tear, the labels may have worn or peeled off.
2. **Labels that have been painted over.** With more use, building management may have re-painted parts of the door you're inspecting. While in most cases painting modifications don't affect the fire safety rating, the label should still be visible.
3. **Blockages around the door.** Kick downs, furniture, equipment, and more may have been placed around the swinging door to hold it open. Because swinging fire doors are often self-closing, some try to keep them open using office items. In one picture we saw online, one building had even used a curling rock to prop open the door! This is an issue because these types of blockages are against the fire code in most jurisdictions.

Common Swinging Fire Door Issues

4. **Improper clearances** when the door is in the closed position, or, if there are two doors, in the middle where the paired doors meet. Be sure to carefully measure all clearances to ascertain if it meets the fire code.
5. **Hardware** that has been installed to lock the door or keep it in the closed position. The opposite of propping the door open, some buildings will try to keep the door closed. If it is in a location where they don't want people to use it (or perhaps to avoid the wear and tear) there may be a deadbolt or lock installed that is extremely dangerous (remember the nightclub fire where the back doors had been chained shut?).

Be on the lookout for these common issues when you are performing your swinging fire door inspection!



Tools for Inspecting Swinging Fire Doors

When you're inspecting swinging doors, you will need some standard equipment.

This includes:

- Forms/checklists for the inspection.
- Flashlight.
- Digital camera.
- Rulers or measuring tape.
- Screwdrivers.
- Potentially a ladder or stepstool.
- Magnifying glass.
- And more.



Tools for Inspecting Swinging Fire Doors

Some of these tools can be combined using fire door inspection technology.

For instance, with a fire door safety inspection app on your smartphone or tablet, you could merge:

- The paperwork;
- Flashlight;
- Digital camera,
- And potentially more tools into one device!

This will allow you to move from door-to-door with more ease and make the post-inspection process much easier.



Performing the Inspection

Now that you have the tools and most common issues to look for, it is time to start the actual inspection itself.

Inspecting the swinging fire door can vary depending on:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If it is one door or a pair of doors.• If it is a welded or non-welded frame.• The location of the door and surrounding environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If it is self-closing.• The amount of use the door receives.• And more. |
|--|---|

But even with these variations, the inspection can still be done in a simple fashion — by using a checklist. The same items will need to be verified on any door:

Labelling

- Are the labels on the door and frame correctly?
- Have they been painted over?



Performing the Inspection

Visual Inspection

- Are there dents that are preventing the door (or doors) from closing or latching properly?
- Has the door, frame, or hardware rusted through?

Hardware Issues

On a swinging door, hardware issues can be more abundant than on other types of doors. This might include:

- Visible bolts and screws.
- Assessing if hardware is missing.
- Looking for any field modifications that are compromising the swinging door safety.

Clearances/Gaps

- Are the clearances up to code?
- Is there any separation between the frame and the wall?
- If it is a paired door, do they meet properly?
- Are there any blockages around the door?



Performing the Inspection



Functional Testing

- Does the door close and latch properly?
- Does it open to the full position?
- Does it release automatically if it is self-closing?
- Does the latch bolt work?

Remember that with swinging doors, in many cases you will need to perform the inspection on both the push and pull sides!

After the Inspection

Like any fire door safety inspection, when the on-site work is done you will need to create a well-documented report. This is often the most time-consuming part of the process — if you have been recording information manually on a clipboard. You will now have to compile your notes and create an assessment. This might take 30 – 60 minutes to produce a fully documented inspection report.

This part of the process is often the most tedious for fire door inspectors. There is a lot to remember to check and if you miss a step or misplace a measurement or note, it could mean costly time returning to the site to re-inspect the door. Worse, your inspection report is incomplete and the task you were hired to do (a complete inspection) is compromised.

Checklists make this easier, but even still returning back to the office and compiling notes, photos, measurements, and more into one document or spreadsheet is at best tedious and at worst can leave off an important detail. And then when the reporting is done, you will need to sign-off on your time and send the invoice. If the door needs to be re-inspected after recommendations are implemented, you'll have to repeat the whole process. ***Wouldn't it be easier if there were an app for that? Good news — there is.***



www.mpengo.com/fire-door-inspection-app

Going Paperless: Choosing a Swinging Fire Door Inspection App

Inspecting the swinging fire door can be simple if you are using the right technology.

A good fire door safety inspection app will:

- ✓ Allow you to inspect multiple types of doors (swinging vs. non-swinging, one door vs. double doors, etc.).
- ✓ Have a checklist you can follow so you will never miss a step, even if you don't inspect this type of door regularly.
- ✓ Store all your documents, photos, and measurements in one place.
- ✓ Pre-compile high-quality reports and even invoices for you.
- ✓ Be scalable and perhaps even have a free trial option, so you can try before you buy.

The mpengo Fire Door Safety Inspection App is a great tool to use because it does all of this – and more. It will help walk you through an inspection from start to finish and significantly cuts down on the total time it takes, particularly with the paperwork and post-inspection reporting. This can save up to 70% of your total time! This allows you to become more accurate, more efficient, and more productive — all with one tool.



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Conclusion

When inspecting a swinging fire door, remember to:

- ✓ Look for common deficiencies.
- ✓ Bring the right tools for the job.
- ✓ Perform the on-site inspection fully for both the push and pull sides of the door.
- ✓ Create a detailed properly documented post-inspection report.
- ✓ Consider technology that can help keep you on track.

Technology, such as the [mpengo Fire Door Safety Inspection App](https://www.mpengo.com/fire-door-safety-inspection-app), makes this process even easier. Whether you inspect swinging fire doors frequently or only once in a while, digital tools will help keep you on track, save time and money, and remove the hassle of organizing paperwork.

While swinging fire doors requires some different knowledge to inspect, we hope this eBook has served as a guide to take with you to never miss a step.



About the Authors



This eBook was produced by mpengo. Gary Jonas, president of mpengo and designer of our apps, including the Fire Door Safety Inspection App, contributed to this content.

Although primarily a software developer, Gary worked with a good number of field inspectors to create an app that could readily meet the needs of the industry. He also took the time to join the Door and Hardware Safety association, and attended the courses to certify as an industry partner. These extra steps are just one example of the efforts taken by Gary and his team to ensure good familiarity with the requirements of a proper fire door inspection product — and this dedication extends to other apps they develop.

Gary and the team's passion is mobile app development and usability for field service and inspection-based industries.

[Download a FREE Trial of the Fire Door Safety App Now.](#)



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