DO NOT FORGET · THE SHORT CHECKLIST



Backslab (plaster of Paris) application

A non-circumferential plaster of Paris slab that immobilises an acute fracture or soft-tissue injury while leaving room for swelling.

EM Orbit

Patient reference	Date	Time	Completed by

The 7 steps that must not be missed

- [ ] BEFORE
Remove rings, watches and jewellery from the injured limb
Swelling can make removal impossible later and cause ischaemia of the digit.

- [ ] BEFORE
Do not use hot water to wet the plaster
Hot water increases the heat of setting and can cause burns.

- [ ] DURING
Do not apply padding or bandage tightly
The limb will swell; a tight wrap acts as a tourniquet.

- [ ] DURING
Do not press with fingertips or rest the wet slab on a hard edge
Dents in setting plaster create internal pressure points and pressure sores.

- [ ] DURING
Do not cover the setting plaster with pillows, blankets or plastic
Trapped heat can cause burns while it sets.

- [ ] AFTER
If neurovascular status is worse than before, loosen the bandage and reassess immediately
Split the bandage and padding down to skin if needed and escalate to orthopaedics.

- [ ] AFTER
Tell the patient to return immediately with increasing pain, numbness, tingling, pale or blue digits, or a slab that feels too tight
These may indicate compartment syndrome or vascular compromise.

The short list: an aid to memory, not the whole procedure. The full checklist is at the QR code. It does not replace your local protocol or your clinical judgement.
EM Orbit · Emergency medicine, in one orbit · proc-backslab-quick · the short checklist