

SPECIFIC-CASE

WORKSHEET 7 OF 9

Emergency Re-Slotting Worksheet — Rapid SKU Count Increase

Scenario: the business takes on a new supplier or product category and SKU count increases by 50 percent or more within 30 days. The existing zone allocation is now undersized for fast-moving SKUs and the layout built for the original mix no longer fits. Picking times are rising and pickers are improvising ad hoc placements.



Complementary worksheet for
Warehouse Management Essentials

by Ibrahim Anwar

What This Is For

When a warehouse absorbs 50% more SKUs in 30 days, the slotting system fails not because it is wrong but because it was designed for a different catalog. New SKUs arrive with nowhere to go. Staff place them in whatever space is available — which is almost never the right zone. Within two weeks, pickers are improvising placements, Fast SKUs are scattered across all zones, and picking times have climbed back toward where they were before the last relay layout. This is not a discipline problem. It is a layout that has not yet been updated to reflect a changed catalog.

This worksheet runs the emergency reclassification fast — using provisional data where historical data does not exist — so the layout can be stabilised before the improvised placements become the new normal. The output is a prioritised repositioning list: who moves first (new Fast SKUs), who gets displaced (existing Slow SKUs), and where every SKU lands, with a location code assigned before anything is moved. The 30-day follow-up check tells the operator how much the initial classification held and what still needs revision.

Benefits

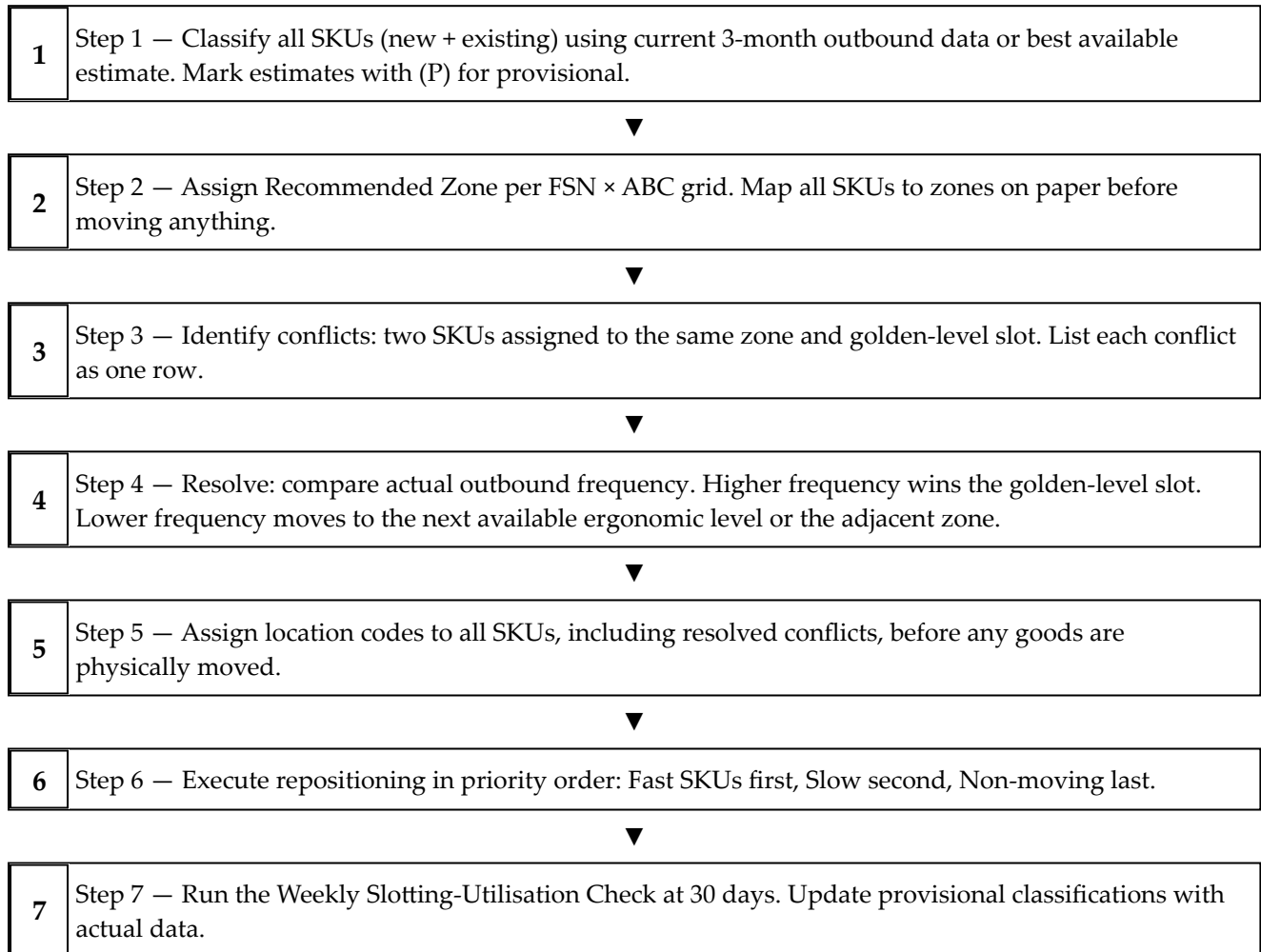
What you get when you actually run this worksheet on a real situation:

- Stops the improvised-placement spiral by assigning location codes to all incoming SKUs before they enter the storage area.
- Resolves zone conflicts systematically — higher-frequency SKU always wins the ergonomic position — rather than by whoever happened to arrive first.
- Produces a provisional classification that can be checked and updated at 30 days, when actual movement data exists.
- Keeps the master slotting list current through a high-change period, so the weekly utilisation check remains meaningful rather than flagging everything as 'No.'
- Documents tie-break decisions so the quarterly revision knows which classifications were data-driven and which were estimates.

Framework To Use

— Zone Conflict Resolution Hierarchy

When two SKUs compete for the same priority zone, the hierarchy resolves the conflict without debate. Higher outbound frequency wins the better position. Every resolution is documented.



How To Use

Follow these steps in order. Each one builds on the previous.

- 1 List all new SKUs first, then all existing SKUs. Use the New or Existing column — it determines whether classification is based on data or estimate.
- 2 Classify new SKUs using supplier velocity data or the buyer's forecast. Mark as (P) provisional. These get reviewed at 30 days.
- 3 Assign FSN Category and look up Recommended Zone from the FSN × ABC grid.
- 4 Assign Available Zone Slot — the physical slot that matches the recommended zone. If no slot is available, note the constraint.
- 5 Record the Assigned Location Code. This is committed before the goods are moved — not discovered after.
- 6 Check Golden Zone: is the assigned location between 0.5 and 1.5 m off the floor? If not, note why.
- 7 Mark any Conflict: two SKUs assigned to the same location code or competing for the same golden-level slot.
- 8 Record Resolution for each conflict: which SKU wins, why, and where the displaced SKU goes. A frequency comparison is sufficient — no other criteria are needed.
- 9 At 30 days: run W-HV-03 (Weekly Slotting-Utilisation Check). Update all (P) classifications with actual data. Adjust location codes for any SKU whose actual category differed from the provisional.

Example Use

An automotive parts distributor adds a Taiwanese electrical components line. Sixty-three new SKUs arrive over three weeks. The warehouse has 120 existing SKUs. Zone A (front) has 24 slots, of which 18 are already occupied by existing Fast SKUs. The 63 new SKUs need to be classified and slotted before they create a picking problem.

The owner lists all 63 new SKUs and all 120 existing SKUs in the table. For new SKUs, she uses the supplier's distributor sell-through data as a provisional Freq/Month estimate.

From the supplier data: 11 new SKUs are projected Fast (alternator brushes, ignition coils, spark plug sets — high-turnover standard parts). 28 are Slow. 24 are Non-moving (specialty parts, likely low volume).

Recommended Zone for the 11 Fast new SKUs: Zone A, golden level. Zone A has 6 available golden-level slots (18 occupied, 24 total, 6 open).

Conflict: 11 Fast new SKUs need Zone A golden-level slots. Only 6 are available. Five conflicts.

Resolution for 5 conflicts: compare new SKU projected Freq/Month against the existing Slow SKUs currently in Zone A (there are 4 existing Slow SKUs in Zone A from the pre-expansion layout that were never moved). Four of the five conflict pairs are resolved by displacing existing Slow SKUs to Zone B: the new Fast SKUs' projected frequency is 2–4× the Slow SKU's frequency.

One remaining conflict: new SKU ELC-14 (alternator brushes) versus existing Fast SKU ENS-07 (engine oil seals). Both classified Fast. Outbound comparison: ENS-07 averages 28 transactions/month, ELC-14 projected at 18 transactions/month (provisional). ENS-07 stays in golden slot. ELC-14 goes to the next ergonomic level (0.6 m, still within the golden zone range). Documented: "ELC-14 displaced by ENS-07 on frequency (18 vs 28 projected vs actual). Review at 30 days."

Location codes assigned for all 63 new SKUs before any goods move. Repositioning sequence: displaced Slow SKUs to Zone B first (half a day), then new Fast SKUs to Zone A (1 hour). New Slow SKUs placed in Zone B from arrival. New Non-moving SKUs placed in Zone C.

30-day check: ELC-14 actual frequency was 22 transactions/month, not 18. Still below ENS-07's 28. No change needed. Three other new Fast SKUs showed lower-than-projected frequency. Two reclassified as Slow; moved to Zone B.

Reflection Prompts

After filling in the worksheet on the previous page, work through these.

1. List all new SKUs first. Classify each by movement frequency using the best available estimate — if historical data does not exist, use the supplier's stated velocity or the buyer's forecast. Place new Fast SKUs in the front zone even if it means temporarily displacing existing Slow SKUs from those positions. Fast SKUs generate throughput. Slow SKUs can absorb the inconvenience.

2. Identify every Conflict in the table. A conflict means two SKUs are assigned to the same priority zone but only one can occupy the golden-zone level. Resolve by comparing actual outbound frequency: the higher-frequency SKU wins the ergonomic position. Document the tie-break decision — next quarter's revision may change it.

3. After 30 days under the new layout: run the Weekly Slotting-Utilisation Check (W-HV-03) and measure whether the classifications made in this worksheet held or shifted. A new product category rarely stabilises in the first month; the 30-day check tells you how much further revision is needed.

Tips and Traps

TIPS

- Run this worksheet on paper before a single goods movement. A physical layout map with SKUs pencilled into zones catches conflicts in two dimensions that a spreadsheet can miss — two SKUs assigned to adjacent slots that will physically block each other's access.
- Assign location codes to new SKUs on the arrival day, not after they are placed. A SKU placed in the warehouse without a location code is an unlabelled stock unit from the moment it leaves the dock.
- Existing Slow SKUs displaced to Zone B to make room for new Fast SKUs do not need a full reclassification — they are still Slow, just in a more appropriate zone. Update their location code in the master list; no FSN/ABC recalculation required.
- If the emergency reclassification takes more than one working day, prioritise Fast SKUs on day one. Even an incomplete relay layout where Fast SKUs are correctly placed is a net improvement. Slow and Non-moving SKUs can wait one more day without operational impact.

TRAPS

- Classifying all new SKUs as Fast because the first week of sales is high. New product introductions often spike in the first two weeks from pent-up demand, then settle. Use provisional classification with the explicit 30-day review, not a permanent classification from two weeks of data.
- Resolving conflicts by physical convenience — 'the new SKU fits here' — rather than by outbound frequency. A conflict resolved by convenience rather than data is a misplaced Fast SKU from the moment it is placed.
- Updating the master slotting list only for new SKUs and not for the displaced existing SKUs. If ENS-07 moved from Z-A-01-L2-M to Z-A-01-L3-M to make room for a new SKU, ENS-07's master list entry must be updated simultaneously.
- Skipping the 30-day check because 'things seem fine.' The first four weeks under a new SKU mix are the highest-drift period. The 30-day check is not a formality — it is when provisional classifications are replaced with data.

Appendixes

Appendix A – Conflict Resolution Reference

When two SKUs compete for the same golden-zone slot, apply this sequence:

Step 1: Compare actual outbound Freq/Month (transactions, not quantity).
Higher frequency wins the golden-level slot. No other criteria apply.

Step 2: If frequencies are within 10% of each other (too close to call):
Compare stock value (cost × qty on hand). Higher value wins.
Reason: higher-value goods in the golden zone reduces time-per-pick on your most capital-intensive SKUs.

Step 3: If both frequency and value are equivalent:
Choose the heavier SKU for the lower ergonomic level (0.5-0.9 m).
Reduce lifting height for the heavier item.

Document every tie-break decision with the comparison figures and the rule applied.
A conflict resolved without documentation cannot be revisited at the quarterly revision.

After resolution, the displaced SKU goes to:
Next ergonomic level in the same zone (if still Fast category), or
Front of Zone B (if reclassified as Slow due to lower frequency), or
Zone C (if reclassified as Non-moving).



WHERE THIS WORKSHEET COMES FROM

Warehouse Management Essentials

Control What Enters, What Is Stored, and What Leaves Your Warehouse

by Ibrahim Anwar

This worksheet is one of nine in the *Warehouse Management Essentials* companion worksheet pack. The full pack is grouped into three categories: high-volume worksheets you can run weekly, niche-search worksheets for rare but high-value situations, and specific-case worksheets that walk you through a single concrete scenario.

Every framework, decision filter, and figure used in these worksheets is drawn from the chapters of the source book. The book sets the diagnosis, the worksheets give you the form to act on it.

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