

••• FALL PREVENTION

••• Safety Meeting Topic



••• Falls from Heights

Year after year, falls from heights are the most significant cause of work-related fatalities in construction in the United States. Fall protection violations have also topped OSHA's list of the most-cited violations for years. Based on these facts, it's easy to see that there is an issue with how work at heights is approached. Today, we'll discuss how to safely conduct work at heights so you can avoid becoming another statistic.

••• Fall Restraint or Arrest?

There are two types of protection systems. Fall restraint and fall arrest.

- Fall restraint is a system that protects you from being exposed to falls. Think of things like guardrails, warning lines, barricades, and all those mechanisms that prevent you from reaching the ledge or area where it would become possible to fall.
- Fall arrest is the system that is put in place to stop a person from hitting the ground if a fall occurs. This includes harnesses, lanyards, and anchor points.

••• Protect Yourself

Falls are easily preventable. Keep yourself and your coworkers safe by making sure you do the following:

- Wear a harness
- Always stay connected when there is a risk of fall
- Adjust your harness so it fits correctly
- Use guardrails and lifelines
- Inspect all fall protection equipment before use
- Guard floor holes, openings, and skylights

••• Inspect Equipment Before Each Use

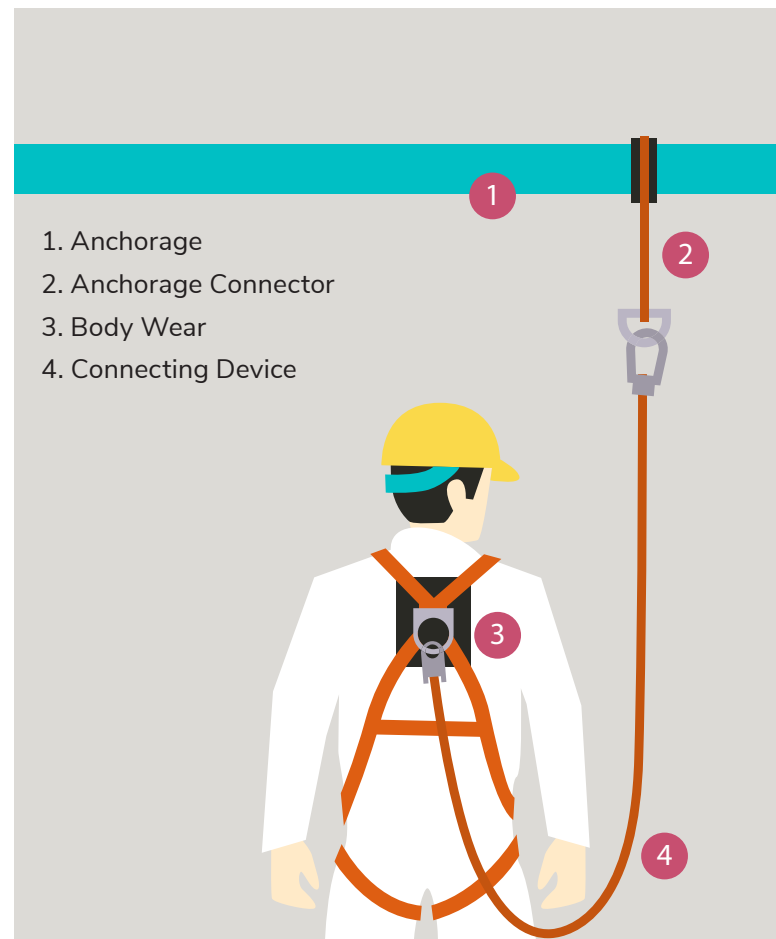
Before starting work, make sure all equipment that will be used is available and in good working order. Inspect the following before and after each use:

- **Webbing of the harness and lanyard** – check for broken fibers, cuts, chemical damage or burns
- **Buckles** – Check that the shape has not been distorted and that the buckles latch properly
- **Snap hooks** – Check for shape distortions, proper closing, make sure the lock engages and verify that the surface isn't corroded or pitted
- **Lanyards** – Has the lanyard been deployed? If so, the red flag will be visible, and it should be taken out of service. Inspect the housing for damage and make sure that self-retracting lanyards pull out and retract properly

••• Check Harness Fit

One of the biggest mistakes people make is not ensuring their harness fits and is adjusted correctly. Imagine the force of a fall on a poorly fitting harness? This amount of force often leads to injury in itself. To make sure your harness fits, by:

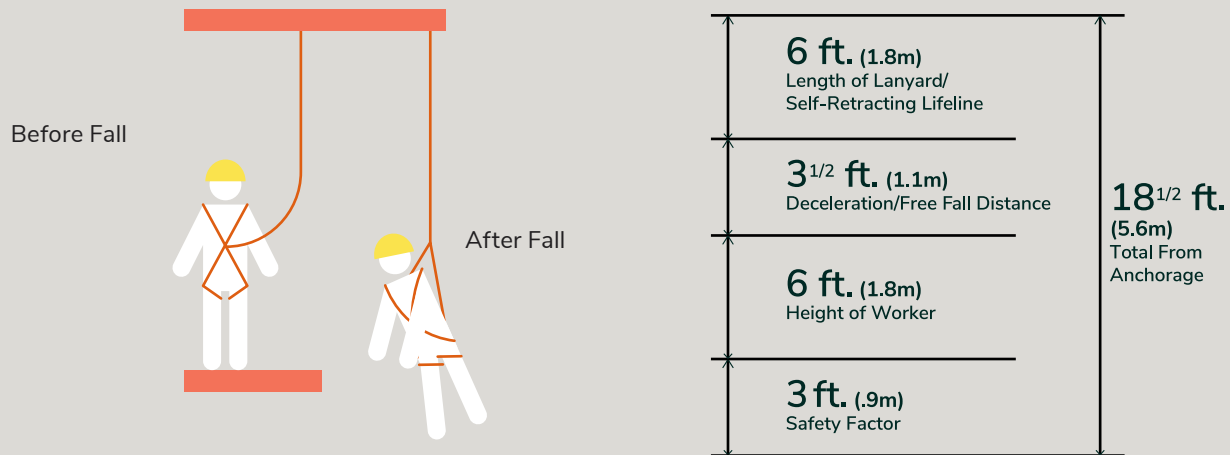
- Adjusting the harness settings to make sure the fit is centered and secure.
- On a well-adjusted harness, only two fingers should fit between the wearer and the leg straps.
- Inspecting every strap for snugness and ease of movement.
- Remember, harnesses that are too loose result in injury to the ribs, arms, and groin. Keep it secure and effective rather than loose and defective.



●●● Fall Prevention Plan

A fall prevention plan is one of the best ways to get your work plan down on paper. It should include the following:

- **Fall clearance:** Does the harness and lanyard combination work to actually prevent employees from hitting the ground in the event of a fall?
- Have fall hazards in the area been assessed, such as skylights, floor holes, sharp edges, debris, or weather conditions?
- Has equipment been inspected before use?
- How will tools and materials be handled? How will they get from the ground to the work area without inhibiting employees who need to climb ladders or operate lifts?
- Have the employees conducting the work been through fall protection training?



●●● Using Fall Protection in Lifts

When using lifts such as articulating booms make sure to wear your fall protection when it's required and check for the following:

- Test and inspect the controls and brakes before each use. The guardrail system must be in place, and any gates should be closed before operating.
- Never stand on the guardrails.
- Keep work within an easy reach distance to avoid leaning away or outside of the lift's platform.
- Never exceed the manufacturer's weight rating and make sure you take tools and weights into account.
- Don't drive the lift to the work location with the platform elevated. Wait until you arrive at the work area to elevate and place the platform.
- Use a guide to help on the ground when moving through difficult or congested areas.

●●● Ladder Safety

Did you know that nearly 1 in 4 fatal falls involve ladders? It's a surprising number for a task many see as relatively harmless. However, employees working on ladders often make mistakes such as working with both hands, working on the top step, improperly setting ladder, or using a broken ladder.

Make sure you are safe by doing the following:

- Choose the right ladder for the job
- Maintain three points of contact
- Secure the ladder
- Always face the ladder
- Never reach to a point where a belt buckle would be outside the rails

●●● Questions

1. What fall hazards do you encounter in a typical workday?
2. What is one thing that you could do to improve your safety when fall hazards are present?