

Working at heights

Falls are the No. 1 cause of accidental construction deaths. Using the proper fall protection while working from heights can prevent severe injuries and death.

Safety tips

- Avoid loading your work belt with heavy tools that can affect your balance
- Wear slip-resistant shoes
- Unplug power tools before raising or lowering them
- Make sure your pathway is clear when walking on scaffolds, bridges, and walkways
- Do not use makeshift ladders
- Always wear a hard hat when working from heights
- Inspect all safety equipment prior to leaving the ground

Types of fall protection

- **Guardrail systems**— Vertical barriers consisting of posts, intermediate rails, and top rails to prevent falls and materials and equipment from dropping to lower levels
- **Warning-line systems**— Ropes, wires, or chains that form a barrier to warn others of an unprotected roof side or edge
- **Safety net systems**— Mesh nets, panels, and connecting components that are used for fall prevention when workers are 6 feet or more above the ground

- **Fall-restraint system**— Consists of an anchor, connectors, and body harness or belt that allows the person to do their work but prevents them from reaching a point where they could fall
- **Personal fall-arrest systems**— Consist of an anchor, a shock-absorbing lanyard, and full body harness that stops a worker from falling and minimizes the arrest force
- **Position-device system**— Allows worker to use both hands on an elevated vertical surface such as a wall, and limits falls to 2 feet

