CrewSigned

# Fall Protection Toolbox Talk

5-minute read-aloud · Last reviewed November 24, 2026

Falls kill more construction workers than anything else. Every year we read about people who went up for a quick job and did not come home. Almost every one of those falls could have been stopped with equipment that already existed on the site.

Here is the rule to remember. In construction, when you are working six feet or more above a lower level, you need fall protection. That counts for roof edges, the sides of floors, holes in a deck, open windows low to the floor, the edges of excavations, and work above machinery or rebar no matter the height. It does not matter if you will only be there a minute.

Fall protection comes in three main forms. Guardrails keep you from reaching the edge at all, and they are the best choice where we can put them up. Safety nets catch you if you go over. Personal fall arrest systems, which means a harness, a lanyard or lifeline, and a solid anchor, stop you after you fall. If we use a harness, it only works when everything is connected and the anchor can hold the load.

Holes are easy to forget. Any hole in a floor or roof has to be covered with something strong enough to hold twice the weight that could land on it, fastened so it cannot slide, and marked HOLE or COVER. If you lift a cover for your work, you put it back or guard the hole before you walk away.

Before you put on a harness, look it over. Check the webbing for cuts, burns and fraying, the stitching, the buckles and the D-ring. Check the lanyard and the snap hooks. If the lanyard has been through a fall, it is done. Adjust the harness so it fits snug, with the D-ring between your shoulder blades.

Ask yourself three things before you go up. Is there a plan for this edge? Is the right equipment here and in good shape? Do I know how to use it? If the answer to any of those is no, stop and come find me.

A rescue plan matters too. A person hanging in a harness needs to be brought down quickly, so we need to know how we would do that before anyone goes over an edge.

## Discussion questions

1. Where on this job is there an unprotected edge or opening of six feet or more right now?
2. Who here has been trained to inspect a harness and lanyard, and when was yours last checked?
3. If someone fell and was hanging in a harness, what would we do in the first five minutes?

## OSHA standard

29 CFR 1926.501, Duty to have fall protection
https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.501

**SOURCES**

Fall Protection in Construction (OSHA 3146): https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3146.pdf
OSHA Safety and Health Topics, Fall Protection: https://www.osha.gov/fall-protection
NIOSH, Falls in the Workplace: https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/falls/about/index.html

*This talk does not replace training that an OSHA standard requires. Scripts are based on OSHA and NIOSH publications and rewritten in plain language.*

# Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

TOPIC

**Fall Protection Toolbox Talk**

COMPANY

JOB / SITE

DATE

TIME

PRESENTER

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