CrewSigned

Rigging Safety Toolbox Talk

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

Every lift depends on the rigging. The crane can be perfect, but if a sling is cut, a hook is bent or the load is rigged wrong, the load can drop or swing into someone. Today we will go over how to keep that from happening.

Inspect before every shift. Rigging gear has to be checked before each use on each shift by someone who knows what to look for. Look at wire rope slings for broken wires, kinks, crushing, bird caging and heat damage. Look at synthetic slings for cuts, burns, snags, melted spots, broken stitching and faded or missing tags. Look at chain for stretched, bent or cracked links. Look at hooks, shackles and eyebolts for bends, cracks, wear and missing latches. If anything is damaged, tag it out and take it off the job. Never knot a sling to shorten it or patch it with tape.

Every sling has a tag that tells you its rated capacity. No tag means no use. Never go over the rated capacity, and remember that the angle of the sling changes the load on it. The flatter the sling, the more tension it carries. At a sixty degree angle a two-leg sling holds less than straight up, and at thirty degrees it holds only half. Keep sling angles steep.

Know the weight of the load before you rig it. Find the center of gravity so the load hangs level. Protect slings from sharp edges with softeners or pads. Seat the load in the bowl of the hook, not on the tip, and close the safety latch.

During the lift, use one qualified signal person and agree on the signals. Lift the load a few inches first and check that it is balanced and the rigging is holding. Use tag lines to control swing. Do not ride a load or a hook.

Most of all, stay out from under the load and out of its path. Never put your hands between the load and the rigging once it is tight. If a load starts to shift, get clear. Do not try to catch it.

After the lift, store rigging off the ground, out of the weather and away from chemicals and heat. Good rigging only lasts if we take care of it.

Discussion questions

1. Which sling or shackle in our gear would you take out of service today, and why?
2. What is the heaviest pick this week, and do we know its weight for sure?
3. Where will everyone stand while the load is in the air?

OSHA standard

29 CFR 1926.251, Rigging equipment for material handling
https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.251

SOURCES

29 CFR 1910.184, Slings: https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.184
OSHA Cranes and Derricks: https://www.osha.gov/cranes-derricks

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

Rigging Safety Toolbox Talk

COMPANY

JOB / SITE

DATE

TIME

PRESENTER

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