

Fall Protection

ON THE EDGE

Who needs fall protection?

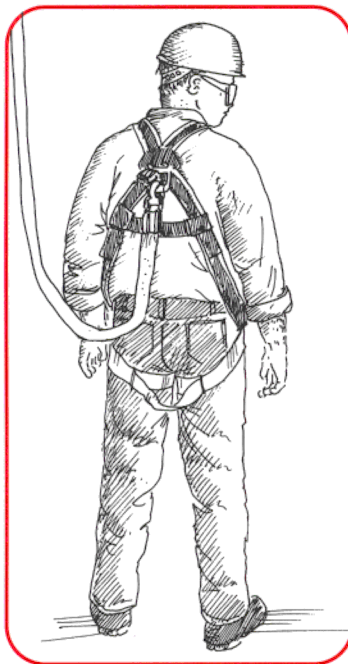
Anyone who uses or works on a level, six feet or more, above a lower level must be protected from falling. This is the simple rule that is the basis behind the sometimes complicated fall protection standard. Every year thousands of workers are killed or injured as a result of falling to a lower level.

What is fall protection?

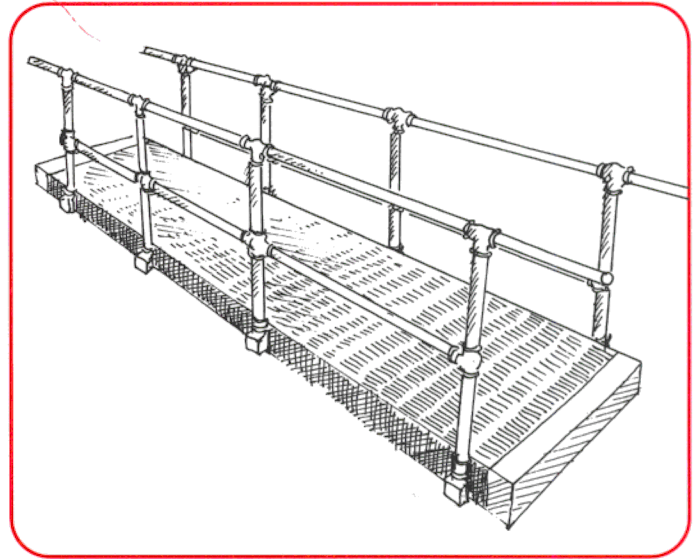
There are three acceptable forms of fall protection for most types of work:

Guardrails are the most common form of fall protection. They can be permanent or temporary, but must meet certain standard in terms of strength and what materials are used to construct them.

Safety Nets: Safety nets are placed under an elevated level and are designed to protect workers from falling as well as to catch tools and materials. Safety nets require strict maintenance and inspection routines and can be expensive.



Personal Fall Arrest Systems: These are systems that are designed to arrest (stop) a worker who has fallen prior to hitting a lower level. A personal fall arrest system has several major parts including a body harness, shock absorbing lanyard, connectors and anchorage point. Workers who are required to use personal fall arrest systems should receive training in the proper use and inspection methods prior to using them.



Do I Need Training?

If you are exposed to a fall hazard, your employer must provide you with training on how to recognize fall hazards and the steps you should take to limit your exposure to these hazards, training must be administered by a competent person and should include, but is not limited to:

- The nature of fall hazards in the work area
- The proper way to erect, maintain inspect and disassemble the fall protection system that will be used
- The proper use and operation of fall protection systems

Workers should be retrained whenever there are significant changes to the fall protection system or when it is known that the worker lacks the proper knowledge for any reason.

How do I learn more?

If you believe your job requires fall protection, or your present fall protection method is inadequate, contact your shop steward or union representative.

Remember, a fall from as low as six feet can cause serious bodily injury or be fatal. Make sure you are protected.

For more information on any of these issues, please contact the DC 37 Safety and Health Unit at 212-815-1685.