# Stop Falls With Protective Gear




When you work off the ground, you need protection to prevent falls and to catch you if you do fall.

Fall protection includes personal fall arrest equipment, conventional equipment such as guardrails, and positioning device systems.

A fall arrest system is used to halt a person’s fall from a working level 10 feet (three meters) above any surface. It may consist of anchors, connectors, a full body harness, a lanyard, deceleration device, lifeline or any suitable combination of this equipment.

A lanyard is a flexible line of rope, wire rope or strap that generally has a connector at each end to attach the body harness to a deceleration device, lifeline or anchorage.

An anchor is a secure point of attachment capable of sustaining 5,000 pounds (2,200 kilograms) for lifelines, lanyards or deceleration devices.

A positioning device system consists of a body belt or body harness rigged to allow a worker to be supported on an elevated vertical surface with both hands free.

**Fall protection pointers:**

- Use a fall arrest system when climbing to or working on any unguarded elevated work area.
- When possible, conventional fall arrest protection should guard elevated work areas greater than four feet (1.5 meters) in height.
- A fall arrest system should be used when floor or wall openings cannot be protected by a handrail system or be covered to prevent someone from falling through the openings.
- Elevated walking/working surfaces should have a toe board installed to prevent tools and other items from falling onto workers below. Hand tools should have wrist lanyards attached.
- Lanyards should not be used as climbing or rigging devices.

Never use makeshift equipment for fall protection. Workers have died using outdated gear such as that which requires the user to tie a knot or a belt which can cause internal injury to the abdomen. Safety harnesses, not safety belts, should be used when working at heights.

Many fatal falls have occurred when the worker temporarily disconnected fall protection gear from an anchorage point or unbuckled a safety harness. Stay hooked up all the time you are exposed to fall hazards.

Fall protection equipment requires proper training, regular inspection and cleaning. Equipment exposed to a fall must be taken out of service and not used again.

*Make sure your personal protective equipment (PPE) is the best available – it could save your life.*