

Nail Safety with Tool Belts

Tool belts are the next best thing to sliced bread, but they can turn a normally productive day into misery if you're careless. A falling tool is subject to damage, and can cause injuries to your feet or to others working below. A sharp tool such as a chisel can stab you if it is not carried safely.

Tool belts allow you to keep your hands free for tasks, while securing your tools and guarding their sharp edges.

Choose the right tool belt assembly. Pockets, pouches and slots should be the correct size and shape to keep tools from falling out. The belt should be made of a sturdy material, reinforced for tool points and edges.

Knives, saws, hatchets, axes and other cutting or chopping tools must be guarded with scabbards or sheaths to prevent injury and tool damage.

Don't hang your tool belt up on nails, hooks or other protruding objects where it may cause an entanglement hazard around mobile equipment or machinery.

A tool belt should be balanced so the weight is approximately equal on each side. When the belt is heavier on one side, your back is pulled out of alignment. If you need most of your tools on one side for easy access, balance the other side with supplies.

Use broad-strapped suspenders to allow the muscles in your upper back and shoulders to take some of the load. Take the tool belt off when you take a break. This will give your back a rest.

Don't pack around excess pounds. Take a regular inventory of items in your tool belt and get rid of unnecessary weight.

Tool belts must never be used as safety belts for working at heights.

Cool tool tips

- Choose the right tool for the job.
- The tool must be free from defects.
- Store tools in a safe place where they will not be damaged and where they cannot cause injury.
- Wear the required personal protective equipment.
- Take all precautions to prevent electrical shock; don't rely solely on insulation.
- Tools that are used in potentially flammable or explosive environments should be of the nonsparking type.

CONCLUSION

Use your tool belt wisely. You'll prevent nasty injuries, back problems and entanglement hazards.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Pockets, pouches and slots in your tool belt should be the right size and shape for your tools.
 - ☐ True
 - ☐ False

2. The material shouldn't be reinforced or too stiff for the points of tools.
 - ☐ True
 - ☐ False

3. It is not advisable to take your tool belt off during breaks.
 - ☐ True
 - ☐ False

4. You should never hang your tool belt on hooks or nails near moving machinery.
 - ☐ True
 - ☐ False

5. Always ensure your tool belt is properly balanced with tools to prevent strains.
 - ☐ True
 - ☐ False

BEFORE THE TALK – PREPARATION TIPS

Refer to the "Tips For Safety Talks!" for ideas on planning this safety meeting. Read through the article ahead of time to help you with your presentation. Add further questions to those we have provided at the end of this talk.

1. Plan on bringing different types of tool belts to the meeting and discuss which belts are appropriate for various jobs.
2. Plan to discuss why tool belts should never be used as safety belts for working at heights.
3. Demonstrate how a belt should be properly balanced with tools to prevent strain injuries.
4. Stress the hazards of falling tools that are not secured properly in the belts of workers on scaffolds or ladders.
5. Demonstrate how sharp tools in a belt should be properly guarded or sheathed.
6. Plan to discuss when tool belts should be replaced after repeated use.
7. List any points you want to cover at this safety meeting:

AFTER THE TALK - CHECKLIST

The workers who obtained poor results in the questionnaire were followed up.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Observed workers

Task (s):

Date: _____

Refresher training

Topic (s): _____

Date: _____

Others(describe): _____

Meeting Date: _____

Location: _____

Directed by: _____

NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Meeting material to go:

Safety meeting materials such as presentation tips, PowerPoint presentations, quiz answers and more are downloadable at www.SafetySmart.com

ANSWERS:

1. True
2. False

3. False
4. True
5. True