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WORKING SAFELY  
AT HEIGHT TOOLKIT  
Factsheet



# Planning a safe approach to working at height



Start by planning a safe approach. Too many falls from height are caused by a failure to plan and organise work properly.

Planning safe working at height means:



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# 1

## Identify the hazards

Identify any hazards of working at height where someone could fall. Four ways of identifying hazards are:

- *physical inspections* – walk around the workplace using a checklist to identify and manage hazards
- *task analysis* – identify the hazards involved in each task of the job
- *process analysis* – identify hazards at each stage of the production or service delivery process
- *analysis of accident investigation* – identify hazards and causal factors from investigations involving similar types of work.

# 2

## Assess the hazards

- Decide if the hazards you have identified are significant.
- How badly harmed someone would be if they fell and how likely a fall could be?
- If serious harm could result, then it's a significant hazard.

# 3

## Control the hazard

Select the best work method to **eliminate, isolate or minimise** (in that order) the risk of the significant hazard.

Provide additional training and instruction to keep people safe when working at height.

Effort is in proportion to risk – the greater the risk, the greater the controls. But remember, **doing nothing is not an option.**



### 1: Eliminate the hazard of working at height:

- Use long-handled tools from ground level.
- Build structures at ground level and lift into position when finished.



### 3: Minimise the distance and impact of the fall:

Only take this step when you've exhausted both elimination and isolation as controls.

- Use a total restraint system to prevent people being near height hazard.
- Use a fall arrest or work positioning system i.e. personal fall minimisation method.
- Use safety nets or soft landing systems to minimise a fall to any worker at height. This is a fall minimisation method for a group of workers.



### 2: Isolate people from the hazard of working at height:

- Use edge protection.
- Use a guardrailed work platform (eg, scaffold or elevating work platforms).

# 4

## Monitor your approach to working at height safely

Constantly assess your approach to ensure it is fit for purpose. This includes:

- regular inspections of the hazard control measures
- discussing the control measures at tool box talks and site meetings
- discussing the control measures with clients, contractors, sub-contractors and workers
- actively supervising the work.

# 5

## Document your approach to working at height safely

Keep a good record of your planning process and communicate your safe approach to clients, contractors, sub-contractors, workers, and other site visitors.