

Fall Arrest: Check, Connect, and Respond

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

PRESENTED BY

A personal fall arrest system stops a fall, but only when the harness, connections, lifeline, and anchorage work together. Construction crews move between work areas and tasks, so a setup that worked in one place may not fit the next. Before you start, know what protects you and what happens if someone falls.

Check the Equipment and the Work Area

- In most construction work, OSHA requires fall protection at unprotected sides and edges 6 feet or more above a lower level: guardrails, safety nets, or a personal fall arrest system. If personal fall arrest is the protection chosen, do not go into the exposed area until you are tied off.
- Before using your gear, look over the harness straps, stitching, buckles, lanyard, lifeline, and connectors. Look for cuts, burns, worn areas, bent parts, or anything that keeps a connection from closing properly.
- If something looks damaged or you cannot tell whether it is safe, stop and report it before using it. Get it checked instead of borrowing a part you don't know or fixing it yourself.
- Use a full body harness for fall arrest, not a body belt. Harnesses, lanyards, and other parts are only for protecting people. OSHA does not allow using them to hoist materials.

Choose a Safe Connection

- Do not guess that a pipe, beam, or nearby fitting is a suitable anchorage. Have the anchorage confirmed for the system before connecting, including its ability to support the required load.
- A fall arrest anchorage must hold at least 5,000 pounds for each worker attached, unless it is specially designed to meet the rule another way. It must also be separate from any anchorage that holds up or hangs a platform.
- Never connect a personal fall arrest system to a guardrail. Do not use a hoist as an anchorage unless another OSHA rule for that work specifically allows it.
- A horizontal lifeline must be designed, installed, and used under the supervision of a qualified person. At hoist areas, the fall arrest system must be rigged so you can move only as far as the edge of the work surface.

After a Fall, Stop and Report

- It's good practice to talk before work about how to call for help and how to reach a fallen worker safely. If someone falls, alert the crew and get help without putting another worker at risk of falling.
- Immediately remove from service any fall arrest system or component that took the force of a fall. Do not return it to employee protection until a competent person has inspected it and determined it is undamaged and suitable for reuse.
- Keep that equipment separate and clearly identify it so nobody picks it up by mistake. Report what happened, even when the worker feels fine and the equipment looks normal.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You are preparing to work near an open edge. A coworker offers a lanyard that caught a fall but looks fine, and suggests connecting to the guardrail. What would you stop and report?

Questions for the crew

1. What damage would make you stop before using your equipment?
2. What should be confirmed before you connect to an anchorage?
3. Who must inspect equipment that took the force of a fall before reuse?

Check your gear, confirm your anchorage, and keep equipment that caught a fall out of service until a competent person clears it.

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.502, Fall protection systems criteria and practices; 29 CFR 1926.501, Duty to have fall protection

Drafted with AI for review by a competent person. Clever Rook writes from the official regulation text it cites, but it doesn't know your site. Check it against your conditions and your company's safety program before use. Not legal advice.

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REVIEWED BY (COMPETENT PERSON)

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