

Scaffold Safety: Check Before You Climb

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

PRESENTED BY

Supported and rolling scaffolds put workers, tools, and materials above other people. Safe access, sound platforms, fall protection, and careful movement help keep a routine task from becoming a fall or a tip-over. Everyone using the scaffold needs to understand its limits and recognize trouble before climbing.

Know the Scaffold and Check Its Condition

- Workers using scaffolds must receive training from someone qualified in the subject. That training covers falls, falling objects, electrical hazards, proper use, material handling, and the scaffold's load limits.
- Workers who assemble, move, repair, or inspect scaffolds need training from a competent person. Know the correct procedures for the scaffold type; experience with one type does not explain every other type.
- Before climbing, look for damaged planks, loose connections, missing protection, and an unsafe access route. Stop and report anything questionable so a trained person can check it.
- Ask for more training when equipment or protection changes and introduces unfamiliar hazards. Speak up if you do not understand how to use the scaffold safely.

Access, Planks, and Fall Protection

- Use the access method covered in your scaffold training. Keep the route clear of tools and materials, and ask before using an unfamiliar ladder or access frame.
- Check platform ends. Platforms 10 feet long or less generally cannot extend more than 12 inches past a support; longer platforms generally cannot extend more than 18 inches. Exceptions require the specified design or guardrails blocking access to the overhang.
- Check the fall protection provided for the work. Report loose or missing guardrails, and do not improvise a replacement or change protection without trained guidance.
- Keep workers, tools, and stored materials within the scaffold's load limits. Plan material handling so supplies do not block access or create falling-object hazards for people below.

Control Rolling Scaffolds

- Rolling scaffolds must be upright, level, and square, with braces and brace connections secured. Wheel stems must be pinned or otherwise secured, and wheels must be locked during stationary use.
- Before moving, check the route and stabilize the scaffold against tipping. Apply hand pressure near the base, never more than 5 feet above the supporting surface.
- As a practical default, climb down before a move. Riding is allowed only when all applicable movement conditions are met; do not assume locked braces alone make riding safe.
- Tell everyone on the scaffold before it moves. Do not push it with a forklift or truck unless it was designed for that propulsion system.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

A rolling scaffold needs to move along a wall. Materials block the route, one wheel lock will not hold, and a coworker suggests staying on the platform to save time. What would you stop, report, and check before anyone uses or moves it?

Questions for the crew

1. What problems would make you stop before climbing?
2. How do you confirm the access method and load limits?
3. What must be secured before using a rolling scaffold?

Check the scaffold, use your training, and stop when access, protection, or movement is unsafe.

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.451, General requirements; 29 CFR 1926.452, Additional requirements applicable to specific types of scaffolds; 29 CFR 1926.454, Training requirements

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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