

FALLS FROM HEIGHT



YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE
TO WORKING SAFELY AT HEIGHT



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CONTROLLING RISK TOGETHER

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE 11 DISTRICT COUNCILS

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO WORKING SAFELY AT HEIGHT

Before working at height follow these simple steps:

AVOID working from height in the first place by carrying out the job at ground level.

PREVENT a fall from occurring with edge protection and safe use of ladders.

MINIMISE the consequences of a fall with safety nets and other safety equipment.

USING LADDERS AND STEPLADDERS

For tasks of low risk and short duration, ladders and stepladders can be a sensible and practical option.

If your risk assessment determines it is correct to use a ladder, you should further minimise the risk by making sure workers:

Use the right type of ladder for the job.

Are competent (you can provide adequate training and/or supervision to help).

Use the equipment provided safely and follow a safe system of work.

Are fully aware of the risks and measures to help control them.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Considering the risks associated with work at height and putting in place sensible and proportionate measures to manage them is an important part of working safely.

Follow this simple step-by-step guide to help you control risks when working at height. For each step, always consider measures that protect everyone at risk (collective protection) before measures that only protect the individual (personal protection).

1 STEP

CAN YOU AVOID WORKING FROM HEIGHT?

Do as much work as possible from the ground. Some practical examples include:

- using extendible tools from ground level to remove the need to climb a ladder.
- installing cables at ground level – lowering a lighting mast to ground level.
- ground level assembly of edge protection.

If this is not an option then consider STEP 2



2 STEP

CAN YOU PREVENT A FALL FROM OCCURRING?

You can do this by:

- using an existing place of work that is already safe, for example a non-fragile roof with permanent perimeter guardrail or, if not;
- using work equipment to prevent people from falling, for example mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) such as scissor lifts, tower scaffolds.

If this is not an option then consider STEP 3





3 STEP

CAN YOU MINIMISE THE DISTANCE AND/OR CONSEQUENCES OF A FALL?

If the risk of a person falling remains, you must take sufficient measures to minimise the distance and/or consequences of a fall. Practical examples include:

- safety nets and soft landing systems, including air bags, installed close to the level of the work.
- industrial rope access, including working on a building façade.
- fall arrest system using a high anchor point.





FALLS ARE THE BIGGEST SINGLE CAUSE OF WORKPLACE FATALITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. FROM 2011 TO 2016 ONE THIRD OF WORKPLACE FATALITIES WERE THE RESULT OF FALLS.

The Law:

The purpose of The Work at Height Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 is to prevent death and injury caused by a fall from height. Employers and those in control of any work at height activity must make sure work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people. This includes using the right type of equipment for working at height. Low-risk, relatively straightforward tasks will require less effort when it comes to planning but will still need consideration.



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Further information

Guidance is available on the HSENI website:

www.hseni.gov.uk/articles/falls-height

Or on the HSE website:

www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height

You can access the Work at height Access equipment Information Toolkit (WAIT):

www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/wait

Using ladders and stepladders safely:

A brief guide Leaflet INDG455 HSE Books 2014:

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg455.htm

Health and safety in roof work HSG33 (Fourth edition)

HSE Books 2012