Toolbox Talk Training: Scaffold Safety – Scaffolds: Identifying Different Types

OSHA defines a scaffold as any temporary elevated platform (supported or suspended) and its supporting structure, including points of anchorage, used for supporting employees or materials or both (1926.450(b)). Different types have different rules, so knowing the type matters. Federal scaffold rules are in OSHA 29 CFR 1926 Subpart L (1926.450-.454) for construction; general industry scaffold work is covered by 29 CFR 1910.27 and 1910.28. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and your employer's rules.

- Supported scaffold: one or more platforms supported by outrigger beams, brackets, poles, legs, uprights, posts, frames, or similar rigid support.
- Suspension scaffold: one or more platforms suspended by ropes or other non-rigid means from an overhead structure.
- Single-point adjustable suspension scaffold: a platform suspended by one rope from an overhead support and equipped to move to work levels. A boatswain's chair is a single-point adjustable suspension scaffold with a seat or sling for one employee.
- Two-point suspension scaffold (swing stage): a platform supported by hangers suspended by two ropes from overhead supports and equipped for raising and lowering.
- Fabricated frame scaffold: a platform supported on fabricated end frames with integral posts, horizontal bearers, and intermediate members.
- Tube and coupler scaffold: a supported or suspended scaffold with a platform supported by tubing, erected with coupling devices connecting uprights, braces, bearers, and runners.
- Mobile scaffold: a powered or unpowered, portable, caster or wheel-mounted supported scaffold.
- Form scaffold: a supported scaffold with a platform supported by brackets attached to formwork.
- Horse scaffold: a supported scaffold with a platform on construction horses (saw horses).
- Ladder jack scaffold: a supported scaffold with a platform resting on brackets attached to ladders.
- Pump jack scaffold: a supported scaffold with a platform supported by vertical poles and movable support brackets.
- Self-contained adjustable scaffold: a combination supported and suspension scaffold with adjustable platforms on an independent supporting frame, equipped to raise and lower the platforms.
- Catenary scaffold and float (ship) scaffold: suspension scaffolds, hung from horizontal ropes or from ropes of fixed length, respectively.

Prohibited types

The use of shore or lean-to scaffolds is prohibited (1926.451(f)(2)). A lean-to scaffold is kept erect by tilting it toward and resting it against a building or structure. A shore scaffold is placed against a structure and held in place with props.

This is not a complete list. Ask the competent person what type of scaffold you are using.

Can you name the types of scaffolds used on our jobs? Thank you for participating. Please sign the sign-in form before leaving so your attendance is recorded. Signatures record attendance only, not certification or completion of required training.

General safety information only. This material does not replace required training, a site-specific hazard assessment, or professional safety advice. Before using it, verify current requirements with OSHA (osha.gov) and your employer. Follow applicable regulations, equipment manufacturers' instructions, and your employer's safety procedures.

Sources: OSHA 29 CFR 1926.450(b) definitions; 1926.451(f)(2). Discussion aid.

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TOOLBOX TALK TRAINING SIGN-IN FORM

Topic discussed: Scaffold Safety - Scaffolds: Identifying Different Types

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