



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

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Personal Fall Arrest Systems

A personal fall arrest system is one option of protection that OSHA requires for workers on construction sites who are exposed to vertical drops of 6 feet or more.

Click on any of the components of the personal fall arrest system illustrated below for descriptions and provisions required by OSHA.



[Attachment Location](#) | [Body Harness](#) | [Vertical Lifeline/Lanyard](#) | [Webbing](#)
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Using Fall Arrest Systems Safely

- Ensure that personal fall arrest systems will, when stopping a fall:
 - Limit maximum arresting force to 1,800 pounds.
 - Be rigged such that an employee can neither free fall [more than 6 feet](#) nor contact any lower level.
 - Bring an employee to a complete stop and limit maximum deceleration distance to 3½ feet.
 - Have sufficient strength to withstand twice the potential impact energy of a worker free falling a distance of 6 feet, or the free fall distance permitted by the system, whichever is less
- Remove systems and components from service immediately if they have been subjected to fall impact,



This worker is protected by a properly constructed fall arrest system.

until inspected by a competent person and deemed undamaged and suitable for use.

- Promptly rescue employees in the event of a fall, or assure that they are able to rescue themselves.
- Inspect systems before each use for wear, damage, and other deterioration, and remove defective components from service.
- Do not attach fall arrest systems to guardrail systems or hoists.
- Rig fall arrest systems to allow movement of the worker only as far as the edge of the walking/working surface, when used at hoist areas.



Additional Information:

- [29 CFR 1926 Subpart M](#), Fall protection. OSHA Standard.
 - [1926.502](#), Fall protection systems criteria and practices
 - [1926.502\(d\)](#), Personal fall arrest systems
- [What's the Fall Distance?](#) OSHA, (1998, July), Video, 22 minutes. Links to a video that introduces the viewer to fall distance calculations for personal fall arrest systems.
- [Interpretations and Clarifications - Subpart M -- Fall Protection \(29 CFR 1926.500-503\)](#). OSHA, (1995, February).
- [Worker Deaths by Falls: A Summary of Surveillance Findings and Investigative Case Reports](#). US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Publication 2000-116, (2000, September).

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Occupational Safety & Health Administrations
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

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