

Spot The Safety Violation: 12 Scaffolding Do's and Don'ts



What's wrong with how this worker is working on this scaffolding'



The whole purpose of scaffolding is to give workers safe access to areas they can't otherwise reach on their own. But if scaffolding isn't used properly, it can pose serious safety hazards to workers.

A friend took this picture and even though he's no safety professional, even he quickly realized that this worker was in a very unsafe position.

First, he's not wearing any fall protection at a height that clearly requires the use of such PPE.

Second, the board he's standing on is very narrow and doesn't appear to be secured in any way to the scaffolding itself.

As a result, it would be quite easy for this worker to fall from this slim platform and, because he's lacking fall protection, suffer very serious 'if not fatal' injuries.

That's why it's critical that you make sure to comply with the scaffolding and [fall protection](#) requirements in your jurisdiction's OHS laws.

Newfoundland's WHSCC and OHS Division developed a *Scaffolding Safety Guide* to help employers and workers in the erection, care and safe operation of scaffolds in the workplace. This guide includes these 12 scaffolding dos and don'ts:

1. **DO** check that scaffolds are in safe condition prior to use. (Use this [inspection checklist](#).)
2. **DO** ensure that planks, decks and guardrails are installed and secure.
3. **DO** use a hoist or rope to move materials to upper levels (but don't [overload](#) the scaffolding).
4. **DO** install cross-bracing at all levels and make sure locking devices and ties are secure.
5. **DO** make sure there's safe entrance to working levels.
6. **DO** check that the base is sound, level and adjusted.
7. **DON'T** carry materials when climbing scaffolding.
8. **DON'T** force braces to fit.
9. **DON'T** climb or stand on cross braces or guardrails.
10. **DON'T** work on scaffolding during storms or high winds. ([See what can happen to scaffolding as a result of strong winds](#).)
11. **DON'T** jump from planks or platforms.
12. **DON'T** rest materials or equipment on guardrails.

And ensure that workers wear proper [fall protection](#) when working from scaffolding at [heights over three metres](#) in general or when required by your OHS regulations.