

# Spot The Safety Violation: Tips for the Safe Use of Scissor Lifts



A scissor lift may be the right equipment for the job, but is this the right way to use it'



One way to protect workers from getting injured at work is to ensure that they use the right equipment for the job. But selecting the appropriate equipment is only the first step'workers must also use that equipment properly.

In this picture from WorkSafe Victoria in Australia, the worker may have correctly chosen to use a scissor lift for this job. But he shouldn't be standing on the lift's top rail, which isn't intended for this use. Instead, he should be standing on the lift's platform, surrounded by the rails, with the platform raised to the height needed for him to safely access the work area.

## TIPS FOR THE SAFE USE OF SCISSOR LIFTS

To protect your workers, make sure they have the right equipment to do their jobs'and are trained on how to use that equipment properly and safely. To that end, here are some tips for the safe use of scissor lifts, such as the one in this picture:

1. **Inspect the worksite.** Scissor lifts should be operated only on flat, level surfaces. So inspect the worksite to ensure there are no uneven surfaces, drop offs or holes, bumps, floor obstructions or debris. Also, check for overhead hazards or other workers in the area where the lift will be operated.
2. **Inspect the equipment.** Before workers use a scissor lift, they should visually check the platform floor, guardrails and toe boards, and ensure the tires and wheels are in good shape. They should also check that the controls are clearly marked for function and the hydraulics aren't leaking.

(See, Elevating Work Platform Inspection Checklist)

3. **Test the equipment.** Workers should test the ground controls, manual lowering control and platform controls, including emergency stops, to ensure the equipment is functioning properly. They should also check the steering and drive functions.
4. **Wear proper PPE.** Workers on a scissor lift should wear appropriate fall protection, such as a harness and fall arrest lanyard, as required by the OHS regulations or recommended by the manufacturer. They should also wear any other PPE required or recommended. For example, where overhead obstructions are present, they should wear hardhats.
5. **Get appropriate training.** All workers who must operate a scissor lift should be trained so that they're competent to do so. That is, they must receive adequate instruction and demonstrate competency in operating the equipment. (For more information on who qualifies as a 'competent person,' see 'Compliance 101: What Makes a Worker a 'Competent Person' under OHS Laws'')

In addition, here's a model safe work procedure for powered aerial work platforms that you can download and adapt for your workplace, OHS program and your jurisdiction's OHS laws as well as the manufacturer's instructions.