

Health and Safety Bulletin (May/2026)

No Falls Week 18th – 22nd May 2026

HSE's construction industry statistics show that falls from height were the cause of over half (53%) of the construction worker fatalities in 2024 to 2025.

The No Falls Foundation is running its annual No Falls Week, promoting safe working at height. For more information and resources visit <https://nofallsfoundation.org/> or <https://nofallsweek.org/about-no-falls-week/>

The best way to prevent falls from height is to follow the hierarchy when planning works from height.

1. Avoid Working at Height Whenever Possible - Eliminate the need to work at height.

- Examples:
 - Use extendable tools from the ground.
 - Prefabricate components at ground level before lifting them into place.
 - Relocate controls or equipment to accessible, lower levels.

2. Use a Safe Place of Work - Carry out tasks from areas that are already safe.

- Examples:
 - Work from rooftops with permanent parapets or guardrails.
 - Use plant rooms or enclosed walkways with built-in fall protection.
 - Access flat roofs via internal staircases rather than ladders.

3. Use Collective Fall Protection Equipment - Protect multiple workers at once without relying on individual behaviour.

- Examples:
 - Erect scaffolding with full edge protection.
 - Install mobile access towers or MEWPs (Mobile Elevated Work Platforms).
 - Use guardrails, toe boards, and safety gates on platforms and walkways.

4. Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Provide individual protection when collective measures aren't possible.

- Examples:
 - Wear full-body harnesses with shock-absorbing lanyards.
 - Use retractable fall arrest blocks for vertical movement.
 - Ensure helmets with chin straps are worn to prevent head injuries.

5. Minimize the Distance of Potential Falls - Reduce how far someone could fall.

- Examples:
 - Install safety nets or soft landing systems below work areas.
 - Use work restraint systems that prevent reaching fall edges.
 - Position platforms as close as possible to the work area.

6. Minimise the Impact of a Fall - Reduce injury severity if a fall occurs.

- Examples:
 - Use energy-absorbing lanyards and fall arrest systems.
 - Install cushioned landing zones, or safety mats.
 - Ensure fall arrest systems are anchored correctly and regularly inspected.

7. Ensure Proper Training and Supervision - Equip workers with the knowledge and oversight to work safely.

- Examples:
 - Provide training on working at height, equipment use and emergency procedures.
 - Supervise new or inexperienced workers closely.
 - Conduct regular refresher courses and toolbox talks.

8. Provide PPE and Protection from Falling Objects - Prevent injuries from above.

- Examples:
 - Supply hard hats with chin straps and impact-rated visors.
 - Install debris netting or overhead protection on scaffolds.
 - Use tool lanyards to prevent dropped objects.

9. Ensure the Working Environment is Safe - Maintain a hazard-free and well-prepared work area.

- Examples:
 - Inspect access equipment, platforms and edge protection, and PPE before use.
 - Keep walkways clear of debris and trip hazards.
 - Monitor weather conditions and postpone work in high winds or rain.

10. Plan for Emergencies and Rescues - Be prepared to respond quickly and effectively to incidents.

- Examples:
 - Develop and communicate a rescue plan for fall incidents.
 - Ensure rescue equipment is available, and staff are trained in its use.
 - Practice emergency drills regularly.

Key Reminders

- Always conduct a risk assessment before starting work at height.
- Ensure all equipment is inspected and certified.
- Never rely solely on PPE—prioritise elimination and engineering controls.
- Report any unsafe conditions or near misses immediately.

If you would like help in implementing or further advice this, please get in touch.

