

Scaffolds: what users must check

About 5 minutes · Read it out, then ask the questions at the end.

Why it matters. Only competent scaffolders may erect, alter or dismantle a scaffold. Everyone who uses it still needs to check it is safe before they step on.

The hazards

- Missing guardrails, toe boards or brick guards
- Loose, broken or missing boards
- Scaffold altered by someone who isn't a scaffolder
- Overloading platforms with materials
- Ties removed or undermined foundations

Stay safe

- Look for the scaffold tag or inspection record before you use it
- Scaffolds must be inspected at least every 7 days, and after anything that could affect their stability, such as high winds
- Never remove ties, boards, guardrails or braces yourself
- Don't overload platforms: stack materials as directed
- Use the ladder access or stair tower, never climb the frame
- Keep platforms clear and tidy
- Report any damage or change straight away and keep off until it is fixed

Ask the team

1. Where is the scaffold tag on this scaffold and what does it say?
2. What would you do if a guardrail was missing?
3. Who is allowed to alter the scaffold?

The law and guidance

Work at Height Regulations 2005. HSE INDG401, Working at height: a brief guide.

General guidance to help you give a toolbox talk. It doesn't replace your site's risk assessments, method statements, permits or training. Check it against your own site rules before you give it.

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Site: _____ Date: _____

Given by: _____ Company: _____

By signing, I confirm I attended this toolbox talk and understood it.

Name (print)	Company	Signature	Time

Keep this record with your site's training and briefing records.