How to Select the Right Lanyard

1. How do I choose the right lanyard?

Selecting the correct lanyard depends on four key factors:

1. The task being performed
2. The methods of fall protection planned to be used
3. The working environment
4. The level of movement required

A suitable lanyard must be compatible with the harness, anchor system and overall fall protection system.

2. What type of lanyard do I need for fall protection?

If you can't avoid the risk of falling then you, you will need a fall arrest lanyard with an energy absorber. The lanyard should have a rating suitable for the user plus their equipment.

The energy absorber deploys in the event of a fall to reduce impact forces on the user and anchor point.

If the fall can be avoided, but you need to prevent access to an edge, a restraint lanyard may be more suitable.

If you need support while working hands-free, a work positioning lanyard is typically used — but this must be backed up by a separate fall protection system where required.

3. What is the difference between single and twin lanyards?

Single-leg lanyards are suitable when:

- The user remains connected to one anchor point
- The task is static or user movement is limited
- Continuous reattachment is not required

Twin-leg lanyards are used when:

- Moving between anchor points
- Climbing structures

Twin-leg lanyards allow one leg to remain connected while the other is repositioned.

4. Should I choose an elasticated or fixed-length lanyard?

This depends on the working environment.

Elasticated lanyards:

- Contract when not under load
- Reduce slack and snagging
- Improve mobility in complex or restricted spaces
- When longer lanyard length is needed

Fixed-length lanyards:

- Maintain a consistent length
- Can be used in restraint systems
- Suitable where slack management is less critical
- When shorter lanyard length is needed

Elasticated options are commonly chosen in construction, telecoms and utilities where longer lengths are required.

5. When should I choose an adjustable lanyard?

An adjustable lanyard allows the user to modify working length. They are commonly used for:

- Work positioning
- Restraint systems
- Tasks where anchor distances vary
- When movement relative to an anchor is required

Adjustability allows more precise positioning and control.

6. How does the working environment affect lanyard selection?

Environmental considerations include:

- Fall clearance – ensure sufficient space for the fall plus lanyard and energy absorber deployment
- Confined spaces – shorter or elasticated designs reduce snag hazards
- Frequent transitions between anchors – twin-leg lanyards may be required
- Connector types chosen to reflect anchors available
- Sharp edges – consider lanyards rated for edge exposure if acute edges are present

A risk assessment should always inform product choice.

7. What length lanyard should I choose?

Lanyard length affects:

- Fall clearance requirements
- Reach and mobility
- Effectiveness of restraint or work positioning systems

For fall arrest systems, adequate clearance below the working area must be available to accommodate the lanyard length and energy absorber deployment plus the user's body length.

8. Do connectors affect which lanyard I should select?

Yes. Connector choice must suit:

- The anchor point size and design
- Harness attachment points
- The industry norms
- The structure being worked on

Options may include standard karabiners, scaffold hooks or specialist connectors such as step bolt hooks, depending on application.

9. What if I am unsure which lanyard to choose?

If there is any uncertainty, consult a competent person or seek technical guidance to ensure compliance with relevant standards and site requirements. Selecting the correct lanyard is critical for both safety and regulatory compliance.