

Working at height – A fall protection philosophy

Whether using personal fall protection equipment or not, there are two essential elements in the protection of persons working at a height. The first element is the **primary support** the person has and the second element is the **fall protection** measure employed. The fall protection measure chosen depends on the result of the hazard identification and risk assessment process. For example:

Scenario	Primary support	Fall protection
Work on a non-fragile roof	Roof	Scaffolding, providing edge protection
Erecting steel	MEWPs	Barrier ¹
Placing pre-cast units	Precast units positioned previously	Bean bags
Climbing a pylon	Step bolts	Vertical lifeline
Unloading a trailer	Trailer bed	Edge protection and/or bean bags
Fixing roof sheets	Adjacent roof sheets	Safety netting

Table 1 – Different fall protection measures

Examples of work at height

The two photographs (below) give examples of work at height. The primary support is identified, along with the fall protection measure.



Primary support:

Non-fragile roof

Fall protection:

Scaffold edge protection; Safety net below)



Primary support:

Precast plank

Fall protection:

Air bags

A number of other examples of work at height are given in the photographs following. These can be used as examples to consider what constitutes the primary support and what constitutes the fall protection measure(s).

¹ Use of lanyard for restraint recommended. See: www.ipaf.org (Document Ref. H10812).



Primary support: _____
Fall protection: _____



Primary support: _____
Fall protection: _____



Primary support: _____
Fall protection: _____



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Fall protection: _____



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Primary support: _____
Fall protection: _____