

OSHA Training Toolbox Talk: Basic Scaffold Safety – Reminders for Safely Accessing Scaffolding

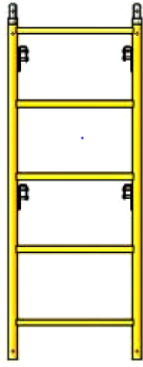
[Reference 1910 Subpart D / 1926 Subpart L]

Working on top of a scaffold presents many potential hazards, but so does the simple act of getting onto or off of a scaffold. So here are a few safety tips to remember each time you prepare to get onto or off of a scaffold platform:

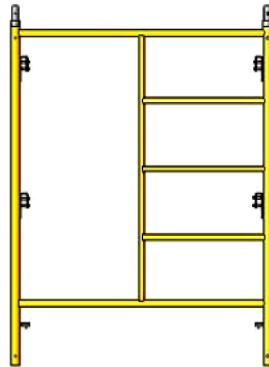
- Rule Number One – NEVER access any scaffold that has not been inspected and cleared for use by the Competent Person. This inspection by the Competent Person must take place when the scaffold is erected or moved, as well as prior to initial use on each shift;
- When scaffold platforms are located more than 2 feet above or below the ground or other point of access, access to the scaffold platform must be made via an approved means. This includes portable ladders, hook-on ladders, attachable ladders, stair towers, stairway-type ladders, ramps, walkways, prefabricated scaffold frames designed with access that is built into the frame, or direct access from another surface. When in doubt about what constitutes an approved means of access for the scaffold you are using, check first with the Competent Person for clarification;
- Stepping directly onto, or off of, a scaffold platform from any other surface, such as a building structure or another scaffold platform, is only allowed when the scaffold platform is not more than 14 inches horizontally and 24 inches vertically from the other surface;
- NEVER climb the cross-bracing on a scaffold as a means of accessing a scaffold platform. Cross-bracing is not designed for this purpose, and doing so can lead to a potential fall for the person climbing on the bracing, or even failure of the entire scaffolding system;
- The same thing applies to scaffold frames; NEVER climb up or down a scaffold frame unless approved by the Competent Person. Most scaffold frames are NOT designed for climbing on, even though it may appear they are. Only scaffold frames that meet strict design criteria and are designed and constructed for use as ladder rungs can be used for climbing (*see hand-out attached to this toolbox talk for examples – both good and bad*);
- Make sure portable ladders used to access scaffold platforms are set up, inspected, secured, and used per the OSHA standards for portable ladders. (*NOTE: The OSHA requirements for portable ladders are addressed in our toolbox talks covering ladder use*);
- Hook-on and attachable ladders, stair towers, and stairway-type ladders must be designed by the scaffold manufacturer or other qualified individual for use with the specific scaffold you are using, and installed per the manufacturer’s instructions.

If in doubt about the proper means to access your scaffold platform, check with the Competent Person for further guidance. Does anyone have any questions about accessing scaffold platforms? Thank you for your participation. Please make sure to sign your name on the training certification form so you get credit for attending today’s training session.

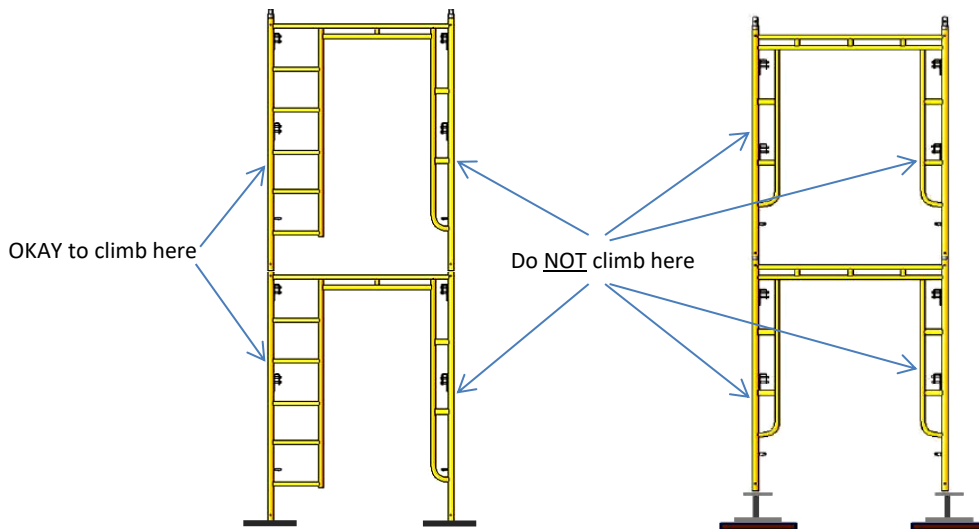
SCAFFOLD ACCESS



Narrow Frame with Built-in Access
(Rungs must be uniformly spaced, and have a maximum spacing of 16 ¾ inches)



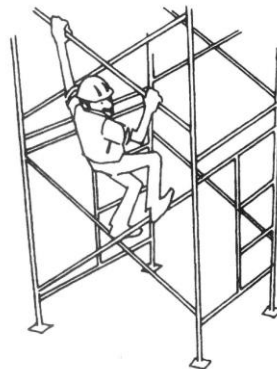
Wide Frame with Built-in Access
(Rungs must be uniformly spaced, and have a maximum spacing of 16 ¾ inches)



Combination Frames (walk-thru) with Built-in Access on One Side Only
(Rungs must be uniformly spaced, and have a maximum spacing of 16 ¾ inches)

Wide Frame (walk-thru) with NO Built-in Access

Examples only – your scaffold frames may vary in shape, size, or configuration. Always check with your Competent Person for approval to use scaffold frames for access.



NEVER climb or stand on scaffold cross-bracing

