

# Fall Protection Equipment

Fall protection equipment could save your life, so it's important to take the time to make sure everything is working properly and put on correctly.

## Checking a Full Body Harness

- Inspect your harness before each use including the buckles, the webbing and the D-rings. If anything is damaged or worn, do not wear it.
- When checking buckles, look for any bent, cracked or nicked pieces. Be sure to test the buckle to make sure the coupling is secured.
- The webbing should not be frayed, cracked, cut, burned, damaged, or have loose or broken stitching. If it does, do not use it.
- As you inspect the D-rings, look for bent, cracked, nicked, or gouged rings.

## Putting on a Full Body Harness

- Adjust all hardware and straps so the harness fits snugly but still lets you move freely. Tuck in all loose straps so they don't snag or cause you to trip.
- Hook onto the harness D-ring designed to arrest falls.

## Using the Right Lanyard

A lanyard is a flexible line of webbing, or a synthetic or wire rope, used to secure a safety belt or full body harness to a lifeline or anchor.

- Keep lanyards as short as possible to reduce the distance you could fall. In arrest situations, limit the lanyard to no more than four feet.
- When using a wire rope lanyard for fall arrest, a personal shock absorber must be included in your personal fall protection system in order to keep the arrest force at a safe level.

## Rope Grabs

A rope grab is a device that travels along a lifeline and will lock onto it in the event of a fall.

- Rope used with all rope grabs must be the diameter specified by the manufacturer.
- Ensure the rope grab is installed on the rope in the correct orientation. The top of the device must point towards the anchor.

The two most common types of mechanical rope grabs are **automatic** and **manual**.

- An automatic (or mobile) rope grab moves freely along the lifeline with you. If you fall, it locks automatically to stop you after a short distance.
- If you use an automatic rope grab, limit your lanyard to two feet in length.
- A manual rope grab does not move freely with you. It is always in a locked position on the lifeline and must be repositioned by hand.
- Manual rope grabs are best suited for use in fall restraint systems.

## Retractable lifelines

A retractable lifeline is a type of vertical lifeline that works somewhat like a seat belt in a car. The lifeline is coiled inside a protective housing. As you move up or down, the lifeline extends or retracts. The line is under constant tension and leaves no slack.

- The moment you fall, the lifeline locks and stops your fall after a short distance.
- Many retractable lifelines have fall indicators on their protective housings. Do not use the lifeline if the indicator shows that a fall has occurred.
- After a fall, the manufacturer's authorized agent must inspect the lifeline and approve it for continued use.
- Always use a retractable lifeline block in the vertical position unless specifically allowed for by the manufacturer.

For more information and additional risk management and prevention tools, visit: [fwcruminsurance.com](http://fwcruminsurance.com)