



# Walking Working Surfaces

## The OSHA 10-Hour General Industry Course

Required Online Topic Time: 60m



# Learning Objectives



## Duration

60 minutes

## Terminal Learning Objective

Given the various walking/working surface types, the student will be able to protect themselves from walking/working hazards including fall hazards.

## Enabling Learning Objectives

- Identify hazards in the workplace associated with walking and working surfaces.
- Identify best practices for eliminating or controlling hazards associated with walking and working surfaces in the workplace.
- Recognize employer requirements to protect workers from walking and working surface hazards.



# Introduction



**Fall hazards exist at most job sites, exposing workers to dangerous work environments daily.**

A fall hazard is **anything that may cause a person to lose his or her balance or bodily support, resulting in a fall**. Anyone working at a height of **four feet or more** is at risk for a fall. Any walking or working surface is a potential fall hazard.

There are three methods to help you protect yourself from fall hazards:

- *Using fall protection equipment.*
- *Using ladders safely.*
- *Obtaining adequate training.*

# Slip and Trip Hazards



**Poor housekeeping** can lead to clutter and debris in the workplace, creating additional slip, trip, and fall hazards. Employers must follow OSHA's housekeeping rules to:

- *Keep work areas clean, orderly, and sanitary.*
- *Keep floors clean and dry, or covered by the proper non-slip material.*
- *Remove other waste and trash.*
- *Maintain ladders and any fall protection equipment properly to avoid serious injuries.*



# Slip and Trip Hazards

continued...



Slipping on a surface can lead to injury **whether or not one actually falls**. In order to avoid injury to yourself and others, be mindful about potential hazards on walking and working surfaces.

A few ways to prevent injuries are:

- *Know the written housekeeping policies and times that housekeeping personnel are available in your workplace*
- *Prevent entry into areas that are wet*
- *Wear slip-resistant footwear*
- *Use additional caution when weather conditions reduce friction on outdoor surfaces*
- *Keep floors clean and dry*
- *All permanent aisles and passageways should be kept clear of obstruction and should be clearly marked.*



# Slip and Trip Hazards

continued...



## Knowledge Key

Poor housekeeping creates additional slip and trip hazards. Employers are responsible for maintaining the work area, but you have a responsibility to follow your employer's guidelines. In some cases, the work area has some slip and trip hazards which cannot be removed, and workers must use the correct footwear and be aware of their surroundings in order to remain safe.

# Employer Responsibilities



**Your employer is responsible** for providing working conditions which are free from fall dangers, including keeping floors and work areas in a clean and sanitary condition.

Falls from portable ladders (step, straight, combination, and extension) are one of the leading causes of occupational fatalities and injuries.



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# Employer Responsibilities

continued...



Employers are required to provide training to workers on **fall hazards**, **personal protective equipment**, and **ladder usage**.

Employers must also **retrain workers** in specified **high hazard situations**, on **appropriate fall hazards equipment**, and **protection systems**.

Employers can choose an appropriate method of fall protection from a number of different options:

- *Guardrail systems*
- *Safety net systems*
- *Personal Fall Arrest Systems*
- *Positioning systems*
- *Travel Restraint systems*
- *Ladder Safety systems*





# Employer Responsibilities

continued...



To decrease the number of falls and accidents using **portable ladders** at the workplace, OSHA requires employers to ensure that:

- *Rungs and steps are slip resistant.*
- *Ladders used on slippery surfaces are secured and stabilized.*
- *Ladders are not moved, shifted, or extended while a worker is on them.*
- *Top steps and caps of stepladders are not used as steps.*
- *Ladders are not fastened together to provide added length, unless designed for such use.*
- *Ladders are not placed on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain added height.*

# Employer Responsibilities

continued...



## Knowledge Key

Your employer is responsible for providing working conditions which are free from fall dangers, including keeping floors and work areas in a clean and sanitary condition. Your employer is also required to provide PPE at no cost to you and to train you about the job hazards in a language you can understand.

Employers must keep ladders in good condition for their workers to use and must also ensure that their workers use the ladders correctly.

# Ladders



OSHA requires that **fixed ladders** in outdoor advertising be equipped with fall protection.

Employers are required to have **ladder safety or personal fall arrest systems** for fixed ladders that extend **more than 24 feet, rather than cages or wells** for fall protection.

Workers are at risk of death and injury whenever they climb elevated heights on fixed ladders without fall protection.

Each **qualified climber** for outdoor advertising must:

- Receive **training** and demonstrate the **physical capability** to perform climbs
- Wear a **body harness** equipped with an 18-inch rest lanyard
- Keep **both hands free** when climbing the fixed ladder
- Use **fall protection** after reaching the work position

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# Ladders continued...



Falls from portable ladders are one of the **leading causes** of occupational fatalities and injuries.

A **portable ladder** is any ladder that:

- *Can be readily moved or carried*
- *Is not permanently attached to a structure, building, or equipment.*

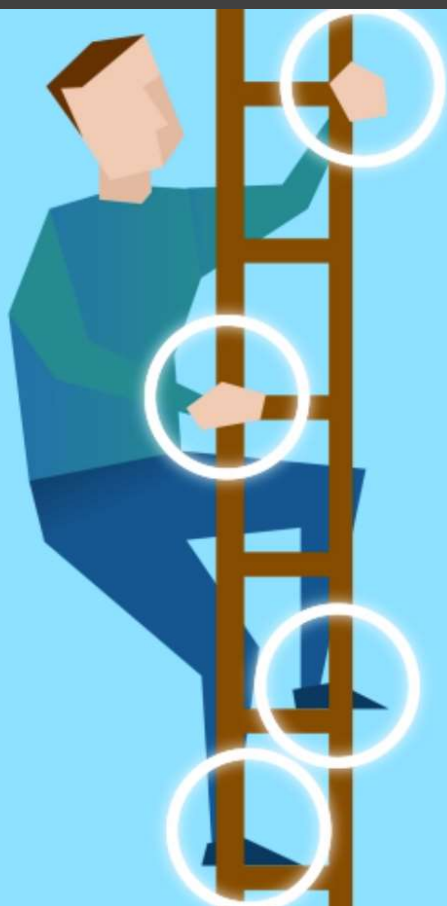
Keys to preventing a fall from **portable ladders** include:

- *Choosing the right ladder for the job.*
- *Tying the top and bottom of the ladder to fixed points when necessary.*
- *Keeping your hands free of carrying tools or other materials when climbing a ladder.*

Just because ladders are found both at work and at home **doesn't mean they're safe**. Be sure to use ladders safely by **choosing the right ladder for the job**.



# Ladders continued...



## Points of Contact

When you climb a ladder, it's important that you maintain **at least three points of contact at any time** to safely ascend or descend the ladder.

A point of contact on a ladder is **where one of your hands or feet touches the ladder**. In the case of climbing, your hand needs to be gripping the sides or rungs to be considered a point of contact.

Having three points of contact with a ladder means that **two hands and one foot** or **two feet and one hand** are all **properly touching** the ladder while you climb or descend.

# Ladders continued...



## Knowledge Key

Fixed ladders are permanently attached to a structure, a building, or equipment. Your employer is required to have ladder safety or personal fall arrest systems for fixed ladders that extend more than 24 feet, and any worker ascending these ladders must be a qualified climber with additional training.

Just because ladders are found both at work and at home doesn't mean they're safe. Be sure to use ladders safely by choosing the right ladder for the job, tying the top and bottom of the ladder to fixed points when necessary, and keeping your hands free and always maintaining three points of contact with the ladder while climbing. Remember to never use the top of a step ladder as a step.

# Guardrails and Stairs



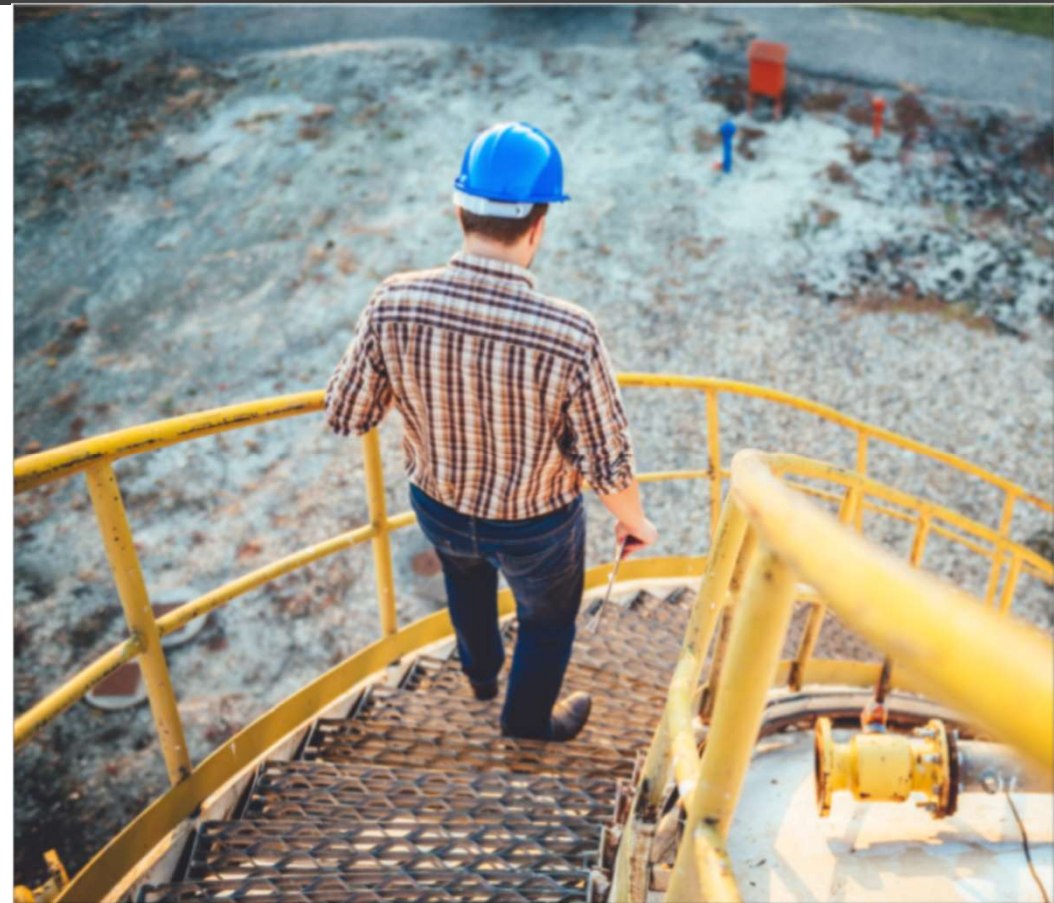
When there are **holes or openings in a floor or wall**, OSHA regulates how employers must protect these potential fall hazards using an appropriate fall protection system to **prevent falls**.

One of the most common fall prevention systems is a **guardrail**, which is a barrier along the open sides of stairways and platforms that prevent falling.

What must be guarded?

- *Floor openings, floor holes, or wall openings through which materials or persons may fall*
- *Open-sided platforms, floors, or runways 4 feet or higher above the ground or next level*
- *Dangerous machines or equipment if a worker can fall into/onto them, regardless of height*

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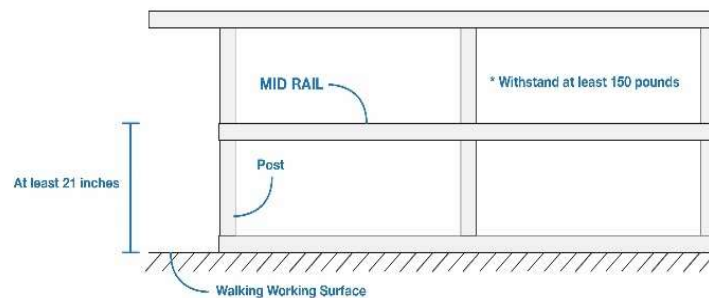
# Guardrails and Stairs

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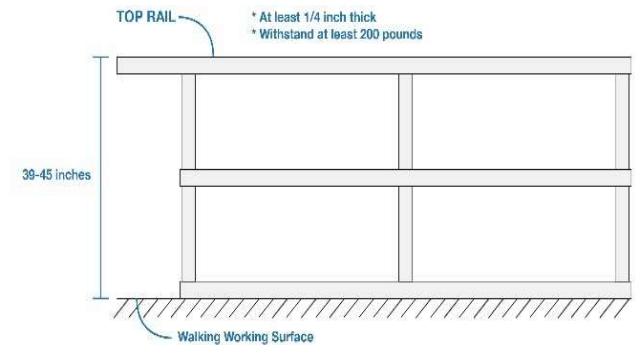


Guardrails prevent falls by acting as barriers along open sides of stairways, platforms, and other hazards involving floor or wall openings.

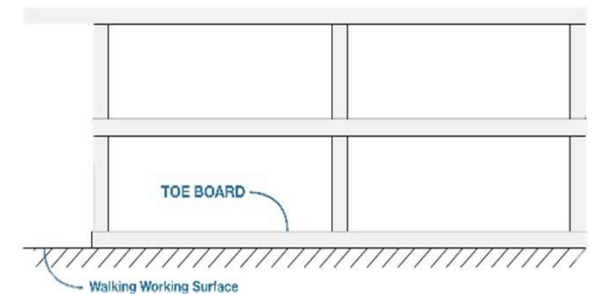
**Mid-Rail**



**Top Rail**



**Toe Board**





# Guardrails and Stairs

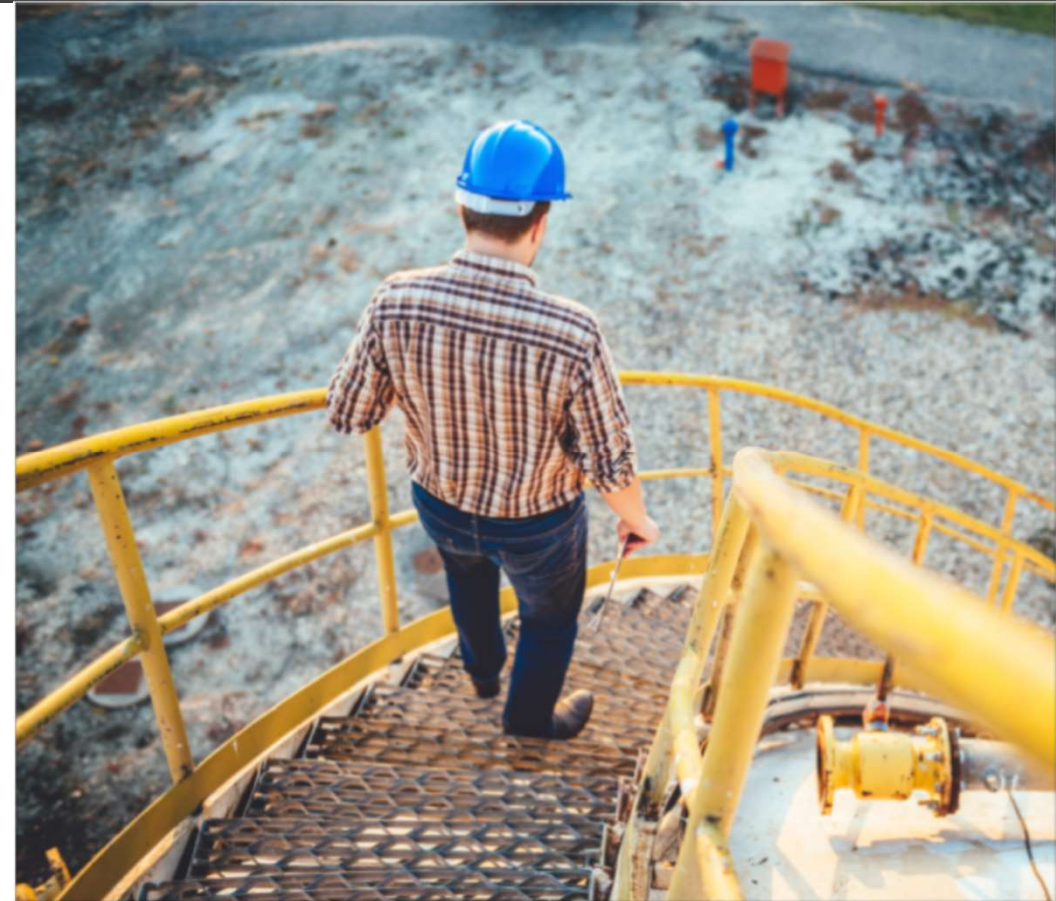
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Any staircase extending **more than 4 steps** is required to have a handrail in order to allow you to maintain 3 points of contact while walking along the stairs.

Stairs **should not be used as a storage area**, and you should **never carry heavy items** while using stairs.

Your **employer** is responsible for **installing** and **maintaining** any guardrails where you work.



# Guardrails and Stairs

continued...



## Knowledge Key

Guardrails prevent falls by acting as barriers along open sides of stairways, platforms, and other hazards involving floor or wall openings. Your employer is responsible for installing and maintaining any guardrails where you work. Any staircase extending more than 4 steps is required to have a handrail in order to allow you to maintain 3 points of contact while walking along the stairs. Stairs should not be used as a storage area, and you should never carry heavy items while using stairs.

# Scaffolds

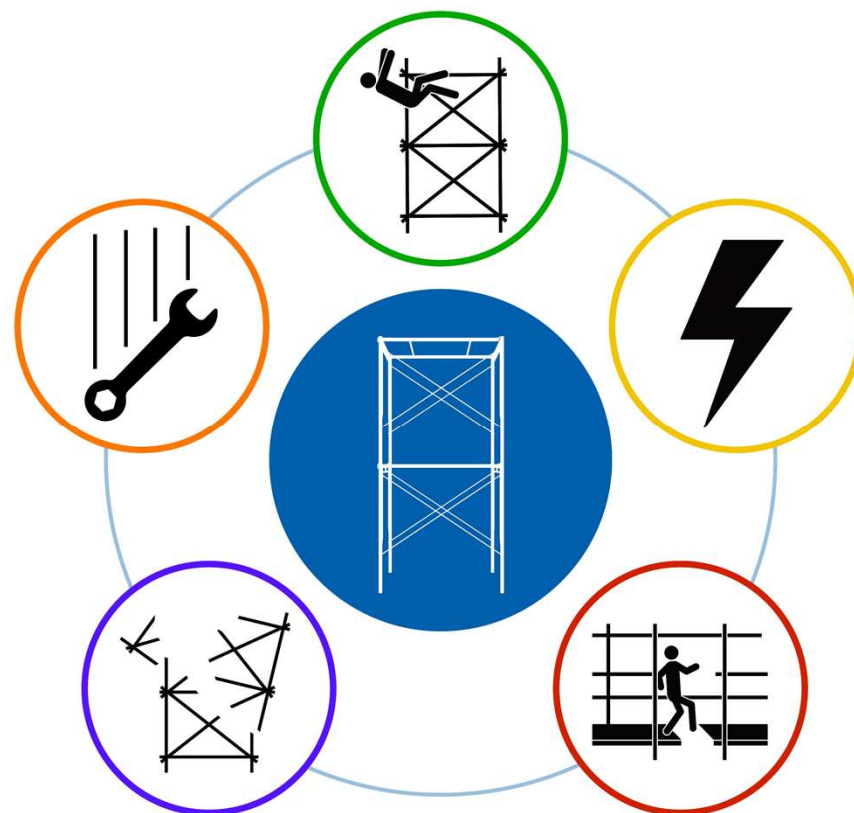


All scaffolding used in general industry must comply with OSHA's construction scaffold standards under 29 CFR Part 1926, Subpart L.

This standard covers the **proper use of scaffolds** and **required training** for workers using scaffolds, and it ensures that employees are protected from common hazards such as **falls**, **falling objects**, **structural instability**, **electrocution**, or **overloading**. It also covers specific **load capabilities** and **design requirements**.

## Scaffold Hazards:

- Falls from scaffolds pose a serious danger to workers.
- Workers can be injured on scaffolds by being struck by falling objects.
- Scaffolds too close to power lines increase the risk of injuries and/or death to workers on the scaffolds.
- Scaffolds which are not properly constructed can lead to a scaffold collapse.
- If your employer uses bad planking or sets up a partially-planked or -decked scaffold, this increases your risk of falling.



# Scaffolds continued...



## Knowledge Key

In this section, we learned that the main causes of deaths and injuries on scaffolds are falls, being struck by objects, electrocution, scaffold collapse and bad planking.

# Practice Questions



1. Which of the following answer options are your employer's responsibility? **Select all that apply.**

- a. Providing working conditions free from fall dangers
- b. Providing wage raises on a regular basis
- c. Providing training to workers about job hazards
- d. Providing PPE at no cost to workers

2. To access a landing that is nine feet above the adjacent floor, a worker climbs an unsecured 10-foot ladder that has slip-resistant feet. Does this ladder pose a fall hazard to the worker?

- a. Yes
- b. No

3. A worker sets up to begin a painting job. He lays down a drop cloth and makes sure that the floor is even so that the ladder is stable. The worker also makes sure that the area around his painting zone is free of clutter or objects lying on the ground. He then stands with both feet on the top step of the ladder and starts to paint. What does the worker do incorrectly?

- a. He is working on an uneven, cluttered surface.
- b. He is not wearing a Personal Fall Arrest System.
- c. He is standing on the top of the ladder.

# Practice Questions continued...



4. What are some of the things your employer should do to prevent worker falls and accidents using portable ladders at the workplace? **Select all that apply.**

- a. Rungs and steps are slip-resistant.
- b. Ladders used on slippery surfaces are secured and stabilized.
- c. Ladders are not moved, shifted, or extended while a worker is on them.
- d. Top steps and caps of stepladders are not used as steps.
- e. Ladders are fastened together to provide added length.
- f. Ladders are placed on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain added height.

5. Which of the following statements about fixed ladders are true? **Select all that apply.**

- a. Any worker ascending fixed ladders must be qualified climbers with additional training.
- b. Employers are required to have ladder safety or personal fall arrest systems for fixed ladders that extend more than 24 feet.
- c. PFAS and ladder safety systems are required for any fixed ladders that extend more than 5 feet.
- d. Fixed ladders are permanently attached to a structure, a building, or equipment.

# Practice Questions continued...



6. Which of the following is a fall prevention system?

- a. Personal fall arrest system
- b. Safety net system
- c. Guardrail
- d. Top rail

7. How do handrails on stairs help keep you safe?

- a. They are useful when carrying heavy loads on stairs.
- b. You can slide your materials down them instead of carrying them.
- c. They give you something to grab if you miss a step.
- d. They allow you to maintain 3 points of contact.

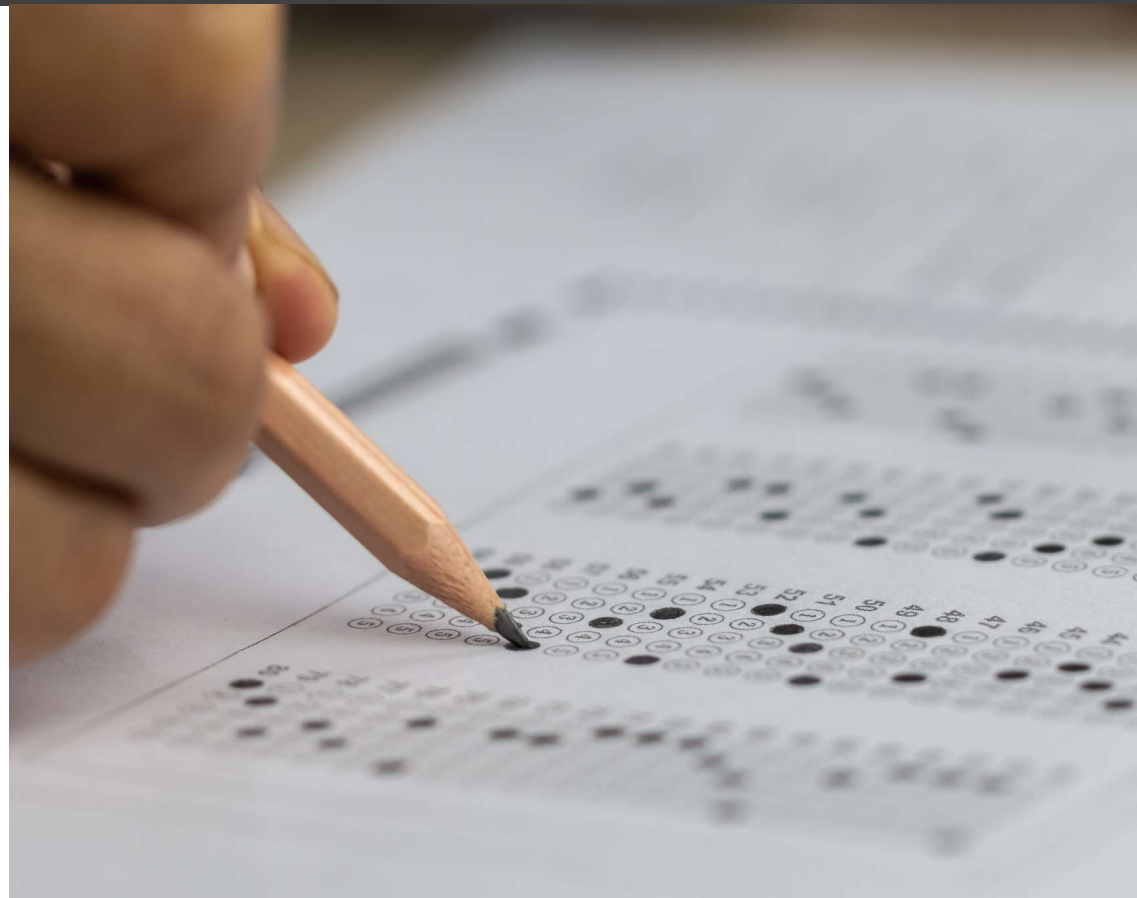
8. Under which circumstances must an employer provide a guardrail? **Select all that apply.**

- a. Around every floor hole into which a worker can accidentally walk
- b. Around every open-sided platform, floor, or runway that is 4 feet or higher off the ground or next level
- c. Anywhere there is a slip hazard
- d. Regardless of height, if a worker can fall into or onto dangerous machines or equipment

# Practice Questions Answer Key



1. A, C, D
2. A
3. C
4. A, B, C, D
5. A, B, D
6. C
7. D
8. A, B, D





# Conclusion



## Great Job!

You have now completed the Walking Working Surfaces topic.

