



# SAFETY PAGES

March 2022  
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Remember if you have any safety suggestions, questions or concerns please let us know. In addition, if you have a safety topic that you would like covered in a Safety Page for training purposes let us know and we will develop one. Topics to our inventory of monthly Safety Pages are continually being added.



The OHBA/SAIF Safety Pages are an ongoing series of pages, designed to provide a selection of safety topics each month to OHBA members. Please use these pages to add to (or start) either a Safety Committee file or manual for your company. Some of the Safety Pages will be on general topics and others will be for Owner/Supervisors. The Owner/Supervisor Safety Pages will be on topics based more on compliance or suggested management safety practices.

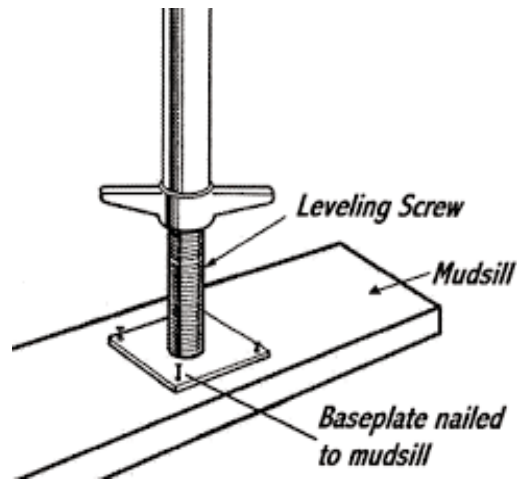
#### IMPORTANT NOTICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Oregon Home Builders Association Safety Committee's purpose is to provide safety guidelines, information and resources to help our members work more safely and reduce jobsite accidents. Full and active monthly participation in safety meetings using the OHBA Safety Committee's agendas, topics and checklists will only meet safety committee requirements. It remains your responsibility to comply with all aspects of safety rules and regulations.

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# OHBA Safety Pages: Scaffolding Requirements

- Scaffold erection and dismantling must be done by, or supervised by, a qualified person or persons.
- The vertical supports of scaffolds must be – Placed on a firm base or mudsill – Capable of withstanding superimposed weight from the scaffold and anything placed on the scaffold
- Do not use pallets, boxes, concrete blocks, bricks, or other unstable materials to support scaffolds.
- Base plates and mud sills: Poles, legs, posts, frames, and uprights must bear on base plates and mud sills or another firm foundation. Footings must offer full support without settling (e.g. dirt, sand, gravel, and warm asphalt are foundations that can allow settling or displacement).
  - A concrete slab is considered a firm foundation. However, it's still a good practice to use mud sills. Nailing base plates to mud sills will prevent a scaffold from "walking."
  - The scaffold must be plumb and braced so that it does not sway. All scaffolds must be erected plumb and level and be designed for the intended use.
- Supported scaffolds with a height to base-width ratio greater than 4-to-1 (including outrigger supports) must be prevented from tipping. Use ties, guys, braces, or another means that provides at least the same degree of safety. Install guys, ties, or braces where the horizontal members support both the inner and outer legs. They must be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions (or at the closest horizontal member to the 4-to-1 height) and be repeated vertically at least every 20 feet if the scaffold is up to three feet wide, every 26 feet if the scaffold is more than three feet wide.
- Bracing requirements for prefabricated scaffolds must be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. Bracing for job-built scaffolding must meet standards acceptable to Oregon OSHA.
- Load capacities: Is the load capacity for your scaffold rated for light, medium, or heavy duty? Is it rated for one person? Two? Three? Scaffolds and components must be able to support their own weight and at least four times the maximum intended load applied to them. The maximum intended load includes workers, equipment, and supplies.
- All scaffolds must be inspected before use by those who will use them, regardless of who erected them. No damaged or weakened scaffold may be used until it has been effectively repaired.



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Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Shift: \_\_\_\_\_

Number in crew: \_\_\_\_\_ Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Safety or Health issues discussed. Include recent accident investigations and hazards involving tools, equipment, the work environment, work practices and any Safety or Health recommendations:

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Follow up on recommendations from last safety meeting:

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Record of those attending:

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Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
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# OHBA Safety Pages: Train Your Brain

## For Safer decisions, pause and think

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Experts tell us there are at least two ways to look at every problem:

- We can rely on our automatic, involuntary response, which is influenced by intuition and unconscious bias.
- We can engage in deliberate, analytical problem solving.

This is sometimes called “fast” and “slow” thinking, and there are advantages and disadvantages to both. For instance, if we’re about to be run over by a speeding taxi, the best response is to leap to safety. But if we’re surprised by a sudden fire, the proper response requires conscious thought.

Making safe decisions often requires that we slow down and think deliberately. This helps to counter any biases, such as assuming company leaders always know what’s right or sticking with the way things have always been done. Consider asking the following:

- What are other ways to perform this task?
- What alternatives are the safest?
- Do we have enough information to make an informed decision?
- Is any key information missing?
- Why are we doing it this way?

The following techniques also can help build resilience and increase performance, focus, and memory while reducing stress, anxiety, and fatigue.

### **Switch on**

Ask simple questions to activate deliberate thinking:

- What’s changed since my last shift?
- How would someone else see this?
- Does this mean I’m safe?

### **PAUSE before acting**

Perceive the situation.

Allow at least 10 seconds.

Understand before taking action.

Seek new solutions.

Evaluate if things are going as expected.

### **Take a walk**

Focused walking, such as in a labyrinth, can induce a contemplative or meditative state of mind.

### **Prime for safety**

Conduct a job hazard analysis or pre-task plan.

### **Take care of yourself**

Reducing fatigue, eating a balanced diet, and managing stress can increase our capacity for deliberate thinking.

### **Unplug from screens**

Powering down electronics provides time to reset, refresh, and refocus.

### **Practice mindfulness**

Follow these steps for five minutes each day:

1. Sit with your back straight.
2. Take a deep breath and close your eyes.
3. Notice your natural breathing pattern but don’t change it.
4. As your mind wanders, bring your awareness back to your breathing.

Credit: Saif.com



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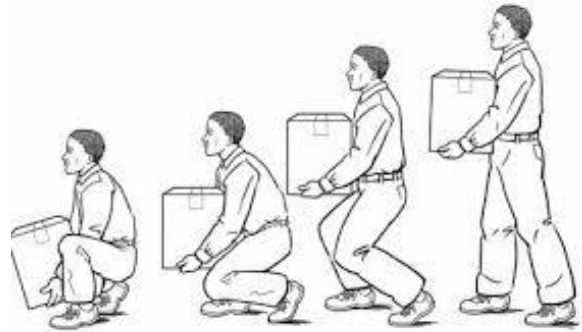
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# OHBA Safety Pages: Lifting and Carrying

**Introduction:** Back injuries are caused by lifting and carrying heavy materials, working in awkward positions, and bending often to lift materials off the ground. Construction has one of the highest rates of back injuries of any industry.



## **Main Message:**

- Whenever possible, use mechanical equipment like a dolly to move heavy objects horizontally.
- Never try to lift an item weighing over 50 pounds by yourself.
- Plan your lifts; make sure the path is clear and you are facing the direction of travel before lifting.
- While lifting, tuck in your chin to keep your neck straight, and keep your back as straight as possible.
- Lift with the leg muscles, which can help protect your back.
- Ask for help with heavy or awkward objects.
- Avoid twisting your body while carrying an object.
- Coordinate and practice team lifting before using it for moving objects.



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# OHBA Safety Pages: Hearing Protection

## Hearing Protection is for Everyone

Why? Everyone is exposed to loud noise at some time in their lives—even babies! Lawn mowing, fitness classes, truck and tractor pulls, airplanes, table saws, rock concerts, snowmobiles—all these environments can be too loud. The decibel is a unit used to express sound level, and “loud noise” means sounds that are more than 80 decibels. Loud noise can be very hazardous to your health and particularly to your hearing. Over time, exposure to loud sounds on a regular basis can result in permanent hearing loss. You often don’t know you have the hearing problem until it is too late to do anything about it. Sudden, VERY loud noises, like explosions, can cause instant hearing loss.



**Why is hearing loss a problem?** Imagine being cut off from all the things that are important to you—friends, family, TV, radio, MUSIC! It’s not a comforting thought. When you’re born, your hearing is as good as it will ever be, so you need start protecting it as soon as you can. Hearing loss due to loud noise is preventable, but it is NOT treatable once you have it.

**So what kind of hearing protection should I wear?** Either earplugs or earmuffs are fine. For noise exposure outside of the workplace, most types sold in safety stores or hardware stores will block out enough noise to protect your hearing. Pick a style that you like the look of and feels comfortable to wear.

**Really, what’s the BEST hearing protector?** The best hearing protector is one that you will want to wear for the entire time you’re exposed to noise.

**How should they fit?** Earplugs should fit snugly in your ear canal and someone looking at you should have a hard time seeing them. If they stick out too far, they’re not blocking sound. Earmuffs should fit close to your head, with no gaps. There is another style of hearing protector called the “banded” earplug—it’s an earplug (that can go into the ear canal or sit over it) on a headband.

**How long do they last?** Foam (“disposable”) earplugs will last for about 10 wearings; other earplugs will last about 1 year. The custom molded type, made of medical silicone, will last about 3-4 years. Earmuffs will last about 4-5 years, but you must replace the cuff (the part that sits right on your skin) every year. The oils and sweat from your skin will make the plastic of the cuff deteriorate.



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