

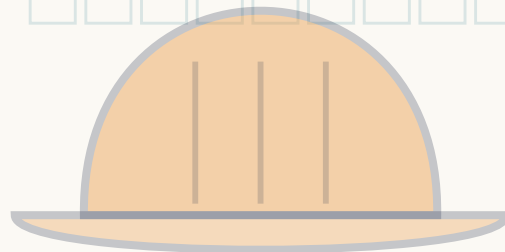
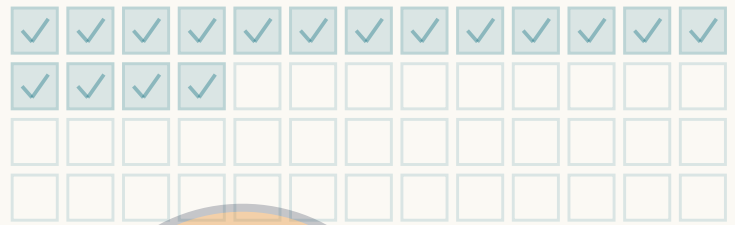


AN ARDENT WORKSHOP PRODUCT

Four Starter Toolbox Talks

Four complete safety talks, free — read one out on Monday.

Housekeeping · Ladders · Hand tools · PPE



How to run five minutes

Four complete toolbox talks, free and yours to print. Each one is a finished page: read the opener out loud, work down it, ask the three questions and **then stop talking**, write what the crew says in the ruled space, and get the signatures at the foot of the same sheet. Five to ten minutes, and then it is over.

Six things that decide whether it works

- **Stand where the hazard is.** Do the ladder talk next to a ladder.
- **Ask the question and then stop talking.** The silence after a question feels much longer to the person who asked it than to everybody else.
- **Ask the quietest person directly, by name.** Not to catch them out — because the newest and quietest person on a crew usually sees the most and volunteers the least.
- **Never argue with the answer.** If somebody says a control is unworkable, they are telling you it will not be followed.
- **Admit the ones you break yourself.** A supervisor who says "I did this last week and I should not have" gets more change out of a crew than any amount of policy.
- **Finish on time, every time.** Five to ten minutes, and then it is over.

THE FOUR IN HERE

Housekeeping · Ladders · Hand Tools · PPE. One from each of four different hazard families — which is also how the paid library's rotation is built, so no hazard family comes round again inside four weeks.

What this is. General talking points written to structure a short crew discussion. It is **not a safety program, not training, not a hazard assessment of your workplace, and not legal or regulatory advice.** Every talk carries a line saying what it does not cover and what needs proper training instead — read that line out with the rest of it. A signature on the slip records attendance at a discussion; it does not certify that anybody is trained or competent.

On the numbers in here. No regulatory thresholds, exposure limits, approach distances, retention periods or permit timings appear in these sheets, deliberately — they differ by jurisdiction and change. Where a talk gives a rule of thumb, such as the one-in-four ladder angle, it is common practice offered to start a conversation and not a statement of what any rule requires. The patterns named here — including "the two mistakes that cause most of the trouble" — are practitioner judgment offered to start a discussion, not measured injury data.

TALK 7 OF 52 · HOUSEKEEPING & WALKING SURFACES · 5 MINUTES

Housekeeping — The Floor Is a Tool

READ THIS OUT

Look down. Everything you can see on the floor that is not floor was put there by one of us in the last four hours.

WHY IT MATTERS ON THIS JOB

Housekeeping is the safety topic people find boring right up until it is the one that got them. Offcuts, banding, packaging, cords, hoses, tools, and the pile of "I'll deal with that later" are what turn a normal walking surface into a trip hazard, and they also happen to be what stops a fire exit working, what hides a spill, and what makes a small fire a big one. The reason it slides is that clearing up is nobody's task in particular and everybody's five minutes.

THREE THINGS TO CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- 1 **Walkways and exits first.** Clear the paths people move along carrying things, and the way out. Those two matter more than a tidy corner.
- 2 **Clean as you go, not at the end.** Offcuts and packaging go in the bin as they are created. The end-of-day sweep is for what is left, not for the whole day.
- 3 **Spills stopped, not stepped around.** A spill gets absorbed or mopped and marked now. Walking around it just means somebody else walks through it.

THE TWO MISTAKES THAT CAUSE MOST OF THE TROUBLE

- 1 **Making a pile in the one place that is out of the way.** The out-of-the-way spot is usually in front of a panel, a valve, an extinguisher, or an exit. Congratulations, the trip hazard is now a blocked emergency.
- 2 **Leaving it for the last person.** The last person out is the one working alone, in fading light, carrying the most. That is the worst possible time to make them navigate a mess.

ASK THE CREW

- What is the messiest area we have right now, and whose work makes it that way?
- Is anything blocking a panel, an extinguisher, an eyewash or an exit today?
- What would it take to have a bin where the waste actually gets made?

WHAT CAME UP ON OUR SITE

THIS WEEK

Ten minutes before the end of the shift, everything gets picked up — not stacked, picked up.

Where this stops. General practice. Your site may have specific requirements for waste segregation, egress width and storage — follow those first.

SIGN-IN · EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED THIS TALK		DATE _____ SITE / CREW _____ LED BY _____	
NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE

Signing records that you attended this discussion. It does not certify that you are trained or competent in this subject.

TALK 1 OF 52 · FALLS & ACCESS · 5-7 MINUTES

Ladders — The Two Minutes Before You Climb

READ THIS OUT

Nearly every bad ladder story starts on the ground, not up the ladder. So this week we are talking about the setup, not the climb.

WHY IT MATTERS ON THIS JOB

A ladder that is wrongly placed cannot be climbed safely no matter how careful the person on it is. The three things that put a ladder over — a soft or sloped footing, too steep or too shallow an angle, and a top that is not secured — are all decided before anybody's boot leaves the ground. They take about two minutes to get right and they are the two minutes most often skipped, because the job at the top looks like it will only take a second. Falls from height are among the most serious injuries in this kind of work, and a fall from a stepladder onto a hard floor is more than enough to end somebody's season.

THREE THINGS TO CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- 1
- The feet.** Level, solid ground under both rails. No mud, no gravel that will shift, no board propped under one foot, nothing balanced on a pallet or a bucket. If the ground will not hold it, move the ladder or build a proper level base.
- 2
- The angle.** For a straight or extension ladder, about one foot out from the wall for every four feet of height. Stand at the base with your toes at the rails and put your arms straight out — your palms should land on a rung. Too steep tips backward, too shallow slides out.
- 3
- The top.** Extended about three feet past the landing if you are climbing off it, resting on something solid, and tied off or footed. A ladder leaned against a gutter, a pipe, or a stack of anything is not resting on something solid.

THE TWO MISTAKES THAT CAUSE MOST OF THE TROUBLE

- 1
- Standing on the top two steps.** The top cap and the step below it on a stepladder are not standing surfaces, and the moment you use them your hips are above the rails and there is nothing to hold. If the work is out of reach from the third step down, the ladder is too short — get the right one instead of the extra reach.
- 2
- Moving the ladder by walking it while standing on it.** Shuffling a stepladder sideways with your weight on it saves maybe ten seconds and is one of the most reliable ways to put yourself on the floor. Get down, move it, climb again. Every time.

ASK THE CREW

- Where on our current job is somebody most likely to be tempted by a too-short ladder?
- Have we got the right ladder on the truck for the work we are doing this week, or are we making do?
- Who checks ladders for damage, and when did we last pull one out of service?

WHAT CAME UP ON OUR SITE

THIS WEEK

Before anybody climbs, somebody else looks at the base and the top and says out loud that it is good.

Where this stops. This is a discussion about setup habits. The one-in-four angle and the three-feet-past-the-landing figure are common practice offered to start a conversation, not a statement of what any rule requires — check them against your own rules. Ladder selection, duty rating, inspection, and any work that needs fall protection or a rescue plan are governed by your jurisdiction's rules and your own site assessment — make sure the crew has that training separately.

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TALK 11 OF 52 · TOOLS & HANDS · 5-6 MINUTES

Hand Tools — The Right One, In Good Order

READ THIS OUT

Show me your screwdriver. Now tell me the last time you used it as a screwdriver.

WHY IT MATTERS ON THIS JOB

Hand tool injuries almost never come from the tool doing its job. They come from the tool doing somebody else's job — the chisel used as a pry bar, the wrench extended with a pipe, the screwdriver used to open a can or punch a hole, the file with no handle. The failure is sudden: the tool slips, snaps, or shatters, and your hand is already moving hard in the direction the resistance was. Worn tools do the same thing more quietly — a rounded wrench, a mushroomed chisel head, a loose hammer handle.

THREE THINGS TO CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- 1 **Is this the tool for this?** If you are about to say "this'll do," stop. That sentence is in the story of most hand-tool injuries.
- 2 **Condition.** Handles tight and uncracked, jaws not rounded, edges sharp not chipped, struck faces not mushroomed. A mushroomed head throws steel fragments.
- 3 **Where your other hand is.** Look at where the tool goes if it slips and make sure your hand, thigh or eye is not there. Cut and push away from yourself, always.

THE TWO MISTAKES THAT CAUSE MOST OF THE TROUBLE

- 1 **The cheater bar.** A pipe over a wrench multiplies force past what the wrench was made for. When it lets go it lets go all at once, and you are already leaning into it with your whole body.
- 2 **Dull is safe.** It is the opposite. A dull blade needs more force, tracks worse, and skips — which is exactly the combination that puts it in a hand instead of the work.

ASK THE CREW

- What tool do we all misuse because the right one is not on the truck?
- What is in our kit right now that should be binned?
- Who sharpens what, and when did that last happen?

WHAT CAME UP ON OUR SITE

THIS WEEK

Everyone pulls one worn or wrong tool out of their bag and replaces it.

Where this stops. General practice. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for every tool, and your own program for inspection and removal from service.

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TALK 17 OF 52 · PPE · 5-6 MINUTES

PPE — Fit Is the Whole Point

READ THIS OUT

Everybody here is wearing PPE. The question this week is whether any of it is actually doing its job.

WHY IT MATTERS ON THIS JOB

PPE is the last line, after everything else has failed to remove the hazard — and it only works if it fits, if it is in good condition, and if it is worn at the moment the hazard happens rather than for the walk across the yard. Badly fitted PPE is worse than none in one specific way: it makes people feel protected while doing very little. Glasses that sit away from the face, a hard hat with the suspension stretched out, gloves two sizes big near a machine, a respirator that leaks at the cheek — each of those is protection on paper only.

THREE THINGS TO CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- 1 **Does it fit this person?.** Not the person it was issued to two years ago. Sizes, adjustment, and — for anything sealing to the face — a real check every time it goes on.
- 2 **Is it damaged?.** Scratched lenses, cracked shells, split seams, degraded straps, gloves worn through at the fingertip. PPE wears out and then quietly stops working.
- 3 **Is it on at the right moment?.** Most PPE failures are timing: glasses pushed up on the hat for "just this cut," hearing protection out for a conversation next to a running machine.

THE TWO MISTAKES THAT CAUSE MOST OF THE TROUBLE

- 1 **Treating PPE as the control.** If the answer to a hazard is only "wear the gear," the hazard has not been dealt with. Ask what would remove it, guard it, or move people away from it first.
- 2 **The shared gear box.** One size of anything, shared between people, means it fits almost nobody. Gear that seals — respirators especially — needs to be individual.

ASK THE CREW

- Whose PPE does not fit properly right now, and what would it take to sort it?
- What are we wearing that has quietly worn out?
- Is there a job where we are using PPE because we never fixed the actual hazard?

WHAT CAME UP ON OUR SITE

THIS WEEK

Everybody checks the fit and condition of their own gear and says out loud what needs replacing.

Where this stops. PPE selection is driven by a hazard assessment for your specific work, and some equipment — respirators above all — requires medical clearance, fit testing and a written program under your jurisdiction's rules.

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The other forty-eight

These four are a month. The **Weekly Toolbox-Talk & Safety-Meeting Script Library** is the year — fifty-two talks in the same shape, across eleven hazard families, plus the part that is genuinely hard to do yourself: the order.

What the full library adds

- **All 52 talks**, one page each with its own sign-in slip — falls and access, housekeeping and walking surfaces, tools and hands, PPE, lifting and the body, electrical and energy, vehicles and mobile equipment, chemicals and dust and air, heat and cold and weather, fire and hot work, and crew habits and reporting.
- **Six computed 52-week rotations** — a general master year plus five weighted to the work (construction and remodel, landscape and grounds, warehouse and shipping, facility maintenance, shop and fabrication) — each solved so seasonal talks land in their season and no hazard family comes round again inside four weeks.
- **A first-twelve-weeks starter set** for each trade, for a crew beginning from nothing.
- **A hazard index and a coverage matrix**, so the week something nearly happens you look it up and run that talk out of order — plus the whole year on one page for the wall.
- **The forms** — a long sign-in sheet for bigger crews, a twelve-month talk log, a blank talk page for your own site-specific hazards, and a near-miss slip, in US Letter and A4.
- **52 plain-text talks**, for pasting into an email, a group chat or a notice board.
- **A Start Here playbook**, including a subject-by-subject table of what a talk can do and what it cannot replace.

FIND IT AT ARDENT WORKSHOP

105 printed pages, a one-time purchase, and files you keep — no seat, no per-crew fee, and no platform that can change its pricing and take your talk library with it. [See the Weekly Toolbox-Talk & Safety-Meeting Script Library >](#)

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