

TOOLBOX TALK #41

THREE POINTS OF CONTACT

The “three points of contact” rule (both feet with one hand or both hands and one foot) is a time-tested method for safe climbing but presents a challenge for workers who need to bring equipment with them. Although standard backpacks, tool belts and toolboxes have their place on the ground or in truck beds, most aren’t properly rated for storing or tethering tools when working at height. Hoist buckets, tool pouches and tool holsters are specifically designed and tested to safely store and support gear while it’s being lifted – making these items a critical element in dropped object prevention, fall protection and general worksite organization.



Considered “portable” containers, hoist buckets are designed to hold tools and equipment being transported to elevated jobsites. The handle of the bucket (or a dee ring or carabiner affixed to the handle) is attached to a pulley system or other lifting element, allowing workers to safely lift and lower gear without being weighed down by it. Hoist buckets commonly come in a variety of capacities. They may also include tethering points for affixing tool lanyards to the bucket and removeable or affixed covers that prevent gear from spilling out should the bucket tip.

Tool pouches and tool holsters – considered “stationary” containers – are designed to be attached to worker fall protection, tool belts or the structure on which work is being done. Smaller and lower capacity than hoist buckets, they keep tools accessible while preventing spillage. Pouches often feature covered tops and dee ring tethering points for tool lanyard attachment.

All three solutions must be engineered to support the weight of the intended gear, with the entire bucket, pouch or holster being load-rated and tested as a system.

When it comes to solving the hands-free climbing compliance conundrum, any old bag simply won’t do. By using buckets, pouches and holsters specifically designed and tested for use at height, workers can safely transport the gear they need to get the job done.