

INTRODUCTION

Scissor lifts are used by a variety of businesses and industries to perform work at elevated locations. However, while they are commonly used, these pieces of equipment can expose you and others to harm if certain safety precautions are not in place. In this lesson, we will cover the different types of scissor lifts that may be used in your work environment, the hazards associated with these pieces of equipment, the personal protective equipment that may be worn when working from a scissor lift, and the safe work practices associated with scissor lifts.



Please note that in states that fall under the Federal OSHA standards, scissor lifts are classified as scaffolds, while under some state plans, they are classified as either elevating work platforms or aerial lifts. If you have questions regarding which standards apply to your scissor lift, please speak with your supervisor.

TYPES OF SCISSOR LIFTS

There are many different types of scissor lifts that may be used in your workplace, which include:

- Hydraulic scissor lifts
- Electric scissor lifts
- Diesel scissor lifts
- Rough Terrain scissor lifts
- Pneumatic scissor lifts
- Vehicle-Mounted scissor lifts
- Self-Propelled scissor lifts
- Specialty scissor lifts (i.e., custom-designed scissor lifts)

HAZARDS

When operating or working around a scissor lift, you or others could be exposed to one or more of the following hazards:

- Tipping of the lift due to the unit being struck while stationary, when the lift is being operated on uneven ground, when the platform is elevated when moving the lift, when lifts are used when winds are high, or when the weight limit of the lift is exceeded
- Falling from the lift due to the lift tipping, when ascending and descending the lift, and when overreaching when working from the lift platform
- Falling objects when tools or equipment are dropped from the platform
- Electric shock or electrocution from the lift making contact with live electrical components or overhead powerlines



- Striking or getting caught between the scissor lift and overhead hazards, such as low ceilings, beams and rafters, HVAC ducts and piping, and cable raceways
- Striking stationary objects or pedestrians when moving the lift
- Crushed extremities from body parts getting caught between the scissor links or between the guardrails and stationary objects
- Fire or explosion from batteries being charged in areas where flammable or explosive gases or particles may be present or when fuel is ignited when refueling
- Burns from making contact with heated components or hydraulic fluid

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

To help minimize the chances of injuries occurring when working from or around the scissor lift, you and coworkers should wear the appropriate personal protective equipment for your work task. PPE may include:

- Hard hat
- Safety glasses or goggles
- Reflective vest
- Gloves
- Hearing protection
- Close-toed or steel-toed shoes
- Fall harness

You should inspect all provided PPE for wear or damage before you put it on. Report worn or damaged items to your supervisor. Do NOT wear damaged PPE.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Before Operating or Working from a Scissor Lift

Before you operate or work from a scissor lift, you should do the following:

- Conduct a walkaround of the area where the scissor lift will be used to identify any hazardous conditions that may exist.
 - Report any hazardous conditions to your supervisor.
 - Where feasible, correct hazardous conditions in accordance with your company's or facility's policies and procedures.
 - If the scissor lift will be operated outdoors, you should check forecasted weather conditions to see if any hazardous weather, such as high winds or storms, are predicted for the day's work.
 - If such conditions are forecasted, speak with your supervisor.
- Read and become familiar with the manufacturer-provided owner's or operator's manual.
 - Please note that per OSHA standards, manufacturer-provided manuals should be kept with the scissor lift. If a manual is missing, damaged, or illegible, report it to your supervisor and replace the manual as needed.
- Inspect the lift for worn, modified, missing, or damaged parts in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your company's or facility's policies and procedures.
 - Report lifts that do not pass inspection to your supervisor.
 - Do NOT operate or work from scissor lifts that do not pass inspection.
 - Where applicable, tag lifts that do not pass inspection in accordance with your company's or facility's policies and procedures.
- Make sure to perform a function test in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your company's or facility's policies and procedures.
 - Report lifts that do not pass the function test to your supervisor.

- Do NOT operate scissor lifts that do not pass the function test.
- Assure that all warning and safety labels are in place and are legible.
 - Report worn, missing, or illegible warning and safety labels to your supervisor.
 - Replace warning and safety labels as needed.
- Where applicable, mark or otherwise secure the area around the scissor lift in accordance with your company's or facility's policies and procedures.

When Operating or Working from a Scissor Lift

When operating or working from a scissor lift, you should do the following:

- Only allow trained and authorized personnel to operate and/or work from the lift.
 - Employees who are training on scissor lifts should only do so under the instructions of a qualified person.
- Do NOT operate or work from the lift if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
 - If you are on prescription medication that could affect your ability to operate or work from the lift safely, please speak with your supervisor.
- Make sure that the lift is set up on solid, level ground.
 - Where applicable, use outriggers to help stabilize the lift in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your company's and facility's policies and procedures.
- Maintain three points of contact when ascending and descending the lift.
- Assure that gates have been properly closed and secured in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Where applicable, make sure that fall harnesses have been secured to manufacturer-provided anchor points.
- Make sure that tools and equipment are properly stored or secured to the lift in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your company's or facility's policies and procedures.
- Do NOT exceed the weight limit of the lift.
- Operate the lift in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your company's or facility's policies and procedures.
 - Do NOT climb, sit, or stand on the guardrails, or use planks, ladders, or other devices to gain a greater working height or reach.
- Where applicable, move the scissor lift in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your company's policies and procedures.
 - Keep scissor lifts a safe distance away from overhead powerlines or live electrical components in accordance with your state's OSHA standards and your company's or facility's policies and procedures.
 - If you have questions regarding the safe distance from overhead powerlines, please speak with your supervisor.
- Be aware of your surroundings while moving the lift or working from the platform.
- Do NOT overreach.
- Do NOT operate a scissor lift when there are high winds or other hazardous weather conditions.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, scissor lifts can be used for a variety of job tasks that require you to be elevated. However, improper use of the scissor lift could expose you or others to harm. To help minimize the chances of an accident occurring, you should always operate the lift in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your company's or facility's policies and procedures. If you have questions regarding your lift, please speak with your supervisor.