

LEN

Len's Friday Toolbox Talks

Five minutes. One talk. Every Friday. The whole crew signs.

1

Pick this week's talk.
Use the finder below.

2

Read the SAY IT page
out. Ask the lads the
questions.

3

Pin up the poster. Get
everyone to sign.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS WEEK? FIND YOUR TALK.

TALK	IF THE JOB IS...	USE THIS TALK
01	Using a ladder or stepladder	Ladders and stepladders
02	Lifting and carrying	Manual handling
03	Cutting or grinding brick, block, concrete, stone or tiles	Dust from cutting
04	Working on an old building (built before 2000)	Asbestos
05	Messy site, deliveries, waste and skips	Slips and trips

About these talks. Plain English, straight from the Health and Safety Executive's own guidance, with the source on every page. Len is a made-up foreman, and the facts are HSE's. Use them alongside your own risk assessment, method statement and site rules.

SAY IT

1. Morning, lads. Five minutes on ladders.
2. Before you climb, check it. No cracks, no bent or missing rungs. On a stepladder, make sure any locking devices are engaged.
3. Firm, level ground. On a stepladder, all four feet on the floor and the steps level.
4. Keep three points of contact: two feet and one hand. If you need both hands for a short job, keep both feet on the same step and your body against the stepladder.
5. Do not stand and work on the top three steps of a stepladder unless there is something to hold. Face the work. Do not overreach: keep your belt buckle between the sides. Get down and move it.
6. A ladder is a last resort, for low-risk jobs that take minutes, not hours. If the job is longer, use a platform or a tower.

ASK THE LADS. LET THEM ANSWER.

- **What is the ladder standing on today?**
- **Will this job take minutes or hours? If hours, what else could we use?**
- **Who has checked the ladder this week?**

The rule. Ladders are not banned. HSE says they can be used for low-risk, short duration work, where a risk assessment shows better equipment cannot be used. Three points of contact is HSE's advice.



Talk given this week. Now get everyone to sign the sign-on sheet.

Ladders and stepladders

5 MINUTES
PIN IT UP



CHECK IT before you climb



LEVEL, firm ground



3 POINTS of contact: 2 feet +
1 hand

Job takes hours, not minutes? Use a platform or tower.

SAY IT

1. Right, lads. Lifting. Ten seconds of thinking saves a bad back.
2. First, do you need to lift it at all? A barrow, a sack truck, a trolley or a hoist does the work for you.
3. Look at the load. How heavy is it? Is it awkward? Is there anything to hold? Could two of you take it?
4. Look at yourself. Know your limits today. Nobody wins a prize for lifting the heaviest bag.
5. Look at where you are going. Firm, level ground, a clear route and good light. Move the trip hazards first.
6. If you must lift, keep the load close to your waist, feet apart, and do not twist. A lifting aid or a better way of doing the job beats good technique.

ASK THE LADS. LET THEM ANSWER.

- What is the heaviest thing you are moving today, and how?
- Is the route you will carry it along clear?
- Which job today needs two people?

The rule. Employers must avoid hazardous manual handling where they reasonably can, assess what cannot be avoided and reduce the risk (Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992).



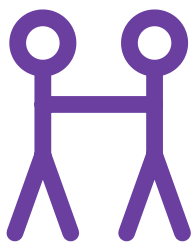
Talk given this week. Now get everyone to sign the sign-on sheet.



CAN YOU AVOID IT? Use a barrow or trolley



KEEP IT CLOSE. No twisting



TOO HEAVY? Get a second person

Check the route is clear before you pick it up.

SAY IT

1. Morning. Dust from cutting. You will not see the worst of it.
2. Cutting and grinding concrete, brick, block, stone and roof tiles makes fine dust with silica in it. Breathe it for years and it can cause serious, permanent lung disease.
3. So control the dust where it starts. Use a saw with water on it, or extraction on the tool. HSE says H or M class extraction, to suit the job.
4. The mask is the back-up, not the plan. HSE's sheets call for protection factor 20, for example an FFP3 mask or a half mask with a P3 filter. It has to be fit tested, and a beard stops it sealing.
5. Before you start, check the water jets work and the extraction is not blocked. If the control is not working, stop and fix it.
6. Do not dry cut engineered stone. HSE said in May 2026 that it is unacceptable.

ASK THE LADS. LET THEM ANSWER.

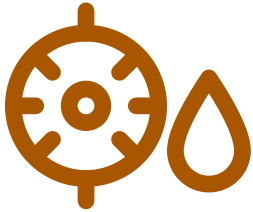
- **What is the dust control on this saw today?**
- **Who has been fit tested for the mask they are wearing?**
- **Who is working downwind of this cutting?**

The rule. Silica dust is a hazardous substance under COSHH. The workplace exposure limit for respirable crystalline silica is 0.1 mg/m³ averaged over 8 hours.



Talk given this week. Now get everyone to sign the sign-on sheet.

Dust from cutting



CUT IT WET or use extraction



WEAR THE MASK. Fit tested, FFP3



NO DRY CUTTING of engineered stone

Not working? Stop and fix it first.

SAY IT

1. Right, lads. Asbestos. It is still in a lot of older buildings.
2. It is dangerous when it is disturbed and the fibres get in the air. What you do first decides how safe everyone is.
3. HSE says buildings built after 2000 are unlikely to have it. Built or refurbished before then, assume it could be there.
4. It hides in textured ceilings like Artex, old floor tiles, soffits and insulating board, cement roof sheets and gutters, and lagging on pipes and boilers.
5. It is often mixed with other materials, so it is hard to spot. Only sampling and analysis confirms it.
6. If you think you have found some: stop. Do not drill, sand, scrape or break it. Keep people away and tell your supervisor. Treat it as asbestos until it is confirmed it is not. If you are not trained, do not try to remove it.

ASK THE LADS. LET THEM ANSWER.

- **What year was this building built?**
- **Has anyone seen the asbestos survey for this job before we start?**
- **Who do we tell, and how, if one of us finds something?**

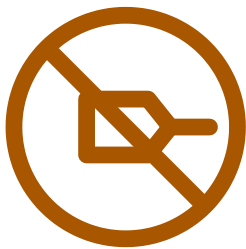
The rule. Anyone whose work could disturb asbestos must have asbestos awareness training. Asbestos surveys must be done by competent surveyors.



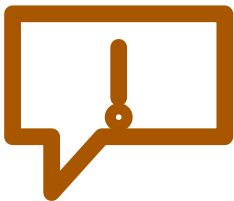
Talk given this week. Now get everyone to sign the sign-on sheet.



STOP. If it might be asbestos



DO NOT drill, sand, scrape
or break it



TELL your supervisor. Keep
people away

Built or refurbished before 2000? Assume it could be there.

SAY IT

1. Morning. Tidy site, safe site. Slips and trips.
2. HSE says several thousand construction workers are hurt every year after a slip or a trip. Most of it could have been avoided.
3. Clean up as you go. Your own work area and your own storage, every day. Not on Friday afternoon.
4. Keep walkways clearly marked, well lit and in good condition underfoot.
5. Plan deliveries to keep the material on site to a minimum, and keep it out of the walkways. Know where the skips are and who empties them. Clear packaging and timber offcuts regularly, they are a fire risk too.
6. If you see a risk, sort it or report it to someone who can. Walking past it is how the next person gets hurt.

ASK THE LADS. LET THEM ANSWER.

- **Where is the worst trip hazard on site today?**
- **Is the way to the cabin and the toilet clear and lit?**
- **Where is today's waste going?**

The rule. HSE: the law says you must keep every part of your construction site in good order and every place of work clean.



Talk given this week. Now get everyone to sign the sign-on sheet.



CLEAN AS YOU GO. Every day



KEEP WALKWAYS CLEAR and lit



SEE IT? SORT IT or REPORT IT

Packaging and offcuts are a fire risk. Clear them.



PRINT AS MANY AS YOU NEED

Toolbox talk sign-on sheet

Talk number and title: _____

Site: _____

Date: _____

Talk given by: _____

Name (print)	Signature	Company