

How To Use Jacks Safely

This week's **Tail Gate Safety Topic** deals with one of the easiest pieces of equipment to operate in any industry: the jack. Many people think there is nothing more to operating a jack than to putting it under the load, inserting the handle and jacking away. But every year there are lots of workers who are seriously hurt because they didn't use the jack correctly. To avoid having an accident of your own follow these simple, basic rules:

- Use a jack with a rated capacity that equals or exceeds the load you're lifting.
- Always set the jack on a firm and level foundation.
- To prevent slipping, use a wooden-block softener between the head of the jack and the load.
- Set the jack perpendicular, at a right angle, to the load.
- If there is a chance the load will swing to the side, install props or guys before doing any lifting.
- Have enough help when you install or move a jack.
- When you're working on a floor of any kind, make sure the load limit of the floor isn't exceeded.
- Before working under a raised load install blocking to keep the load from accidentally falling.
- Keep jacks in good shape and well lubricated, but only lubricate at the points where lubrication is specified. Check for broken teeth and other defects. Never throw or drop jacks.
- When a jack develops any defect whatever, turn it in for repair and be sure to test it under load before putting it back in service.

A jack can slip out from under a load before you have to time get out of the way. Make sure you are using your jack the safe way. By following these simple **Tale Gate Safety Topic** rules you can keep from becoming an accident statistic.