TOOLBOX TALK BRIEFKIT

Lifting Operations & Slinging

A ready-to-deliver toolbox talk for foremen and supervisors. 8-10 minute spoken script plus briefing register for operative sign-in.

REFERENCE	TBT-LIFTING-OPERATIONS-001	**DURATION**	8-10 minutes
DATE		**SITE**	
TRAINER (PRINT)		**SIGNATURE**	

1 Why it matters

When a lift goes wrong it goes wrong in seconds and there's rarely a second chance, a load drops, a sling fails, a machine tips, and whoever's underneath or alongside doesn't get clear in time. Most lifting incidents come down to the same handful of things: no proper plan, overloaded or damaged gear, or people standing where they shouldn't. Get those right and lifting is routine, get them wrong and it's a fatality.

2 PPE required for this task

- Hard hat under suspended loads and around plant
- Gloves for handling slings, chains and shackles
- Safety boots with toe protection
- Hi-vis so the operator and slinger can see you

3 What to say

Spoken script for the supervisor. Read or paraphrase, in order.

1 Every lift needs planning, by someone competent

Under LOLER, lifting operations have to be properly planned, supervised and carried out safely. That means a competent person plans it and an appointed person oversees anything beyond the simplest lift. You should know the plan before you start, what's being lifted, how, by whom, and where everyone stands. If there's no plan and you're not sure, stop and ask, don't make up a lift on the spot, because that's when people get hurt.

2 Know the weight and never exceed the SWL

You have to know the weight of the load, and the safe working load of everything in the chain, the machine, the slings, the shackles, the eyebolts. The weakest item sets your limit, and you never exceed it. Remember the rating is for a sound item used correctly, not a worn one, so don't run it to the line. Guessing the weight of a load is one of the most common ways gear gets overloaded and fails.

3 Sling angles matter more than people think

The wider the angle between the sling legs, the more load goes through each leg, and it climbs fast as the angle opens out. So slinging a load with the legs spread wide can overload slings that would be fine at a narrower angle. Use the right length slings, keep the angles sensible, and don't just hook on and hope it'll take it. The geometry is doing things you can't see.

4 Check every sling, chain and shackle before use

Look the gear over before every lift, slings for cuts, fraying, kinks or damaged stitching, chains for stretched or distorted links, shackles for the right pins and no spreading. It needs to be in date for its thorough examination, and lifting accessories get examined at least every six months. Anything damaged or out of test gets quarantined, not used. The tag tells you it's been checked, no tag, no lift.

5 Never stand or walk under a suspended load

This is the simple one that saves lives. Nobody goes under the load, ever, and there's an exclusion zone around the lift that people stay out of. Loads swing, slings slip and things drop without warning. Steady and guide a load with tag lines from a safe distance, not with your hands up by the hook in among the pinch points. If you wouldn't want it landing on you, don't be stood there.

6 One person directs, with clear signals

There's one slinger or banksman giving the signals, with agreed hand signals or radio, so the operator isn't being waved at by three different people. Everyone else stays clear and stays quiet. And if the operator loses sight of the signaller at any point, the lift stops until they can see each other again. Mixed signals on a lift is how loads end up in the wrong place, or on someone.

7 Ground, weather and what's overhead

The machine needs firm, level ground, outriggers fully out and on mats where needed, and watch the ground doesn't give way near excavations. Check for overhead power lines before the jib or the load goes up, and keep the exclusion distance off them. And lifting stops in high wind, because a load turns into a sail and the machine gets unstable, no lift is worth chancing that.

4 Common mistakes to call out

Lifting with no proper plan or competent supervision

Not knowing the load weight, or exceeding the SWL of the machine or gear

Forgetting that wide sling angles multiply the load on each leg

Using damaged or out-of-test slings, chains or shackles

Standing, walking or working under a suspended load

Steadying a load by hand near pinch points instead of using tag lines

Several people signalling the operator at once instead of one slinger

Setting up on soft or uneven ground, or outriggers not properly out

Lifting near overhead power lines without checking clearances

Carrying on lifting in high wind

5 Watch on site this week

What the supervisor should be actively spotting on walk-arounds.

Lifts happening with no plan and nobody clearly in charge

Loads being lifted with the weight unknown or the gear overloaded

Slings rigged at very wide angles between the legs

Damaged, frayed or out-of-test lifting accessories in use

People standing or walking under suspended loads

Operatives steadying loads by hand instead of with tag lines

More than one person signalling the operator

Plant set up on soft ground or without outriggers deployed

Jibs or loads being raised near overhead lines

Lifting continuing in strong wind

6 Confirm the team understood

Ask one or two of these at the end of the talk.

1. What sets the maximum you can lift? (The lowest safe working load in the chain, the machine, slings, shackles or eyebolts, whichever is weakest.)
2. Why does a wide sling angle matter? (The wider the angle, the more load goes through each sling leg, so it can overload gear that's fine at a narrow angle.)
3. Where should you never stand during a lift? (Under or near the suspended load, stay outside the exclusion zone.)
4. How should a load be steadied and guided? (With tag lines from a safe distance, not by hand near the hook and pinch points.)

Briefing register: Lifting Operations & Slinging

All operatives who attend this toolbox talk must sign below. Their signature confirms they have heard and understood the briefing.

Briefing delivered by:

Name (print):		**Date:**	
Signature:		**Time:**	
Site:			

Attendees. I confirm I have heard and understood the briefing detailed above:

#	Name (print)	Company / Role	Signature	Date	CSCS / Ticket No.
1					
2					
3					
4					
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11					
12					

Keep this register in the site Safety File. Additional sheets may be appended if more than 12 operatives are briefed.