

Rigging: Before the Load Moves

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Why this matters

A sling that looks usable may still be wrong for the load or the way it is connected. Before movement, the crew needs a known load, suitable rigging and a landing plan that keeps hands and bodies clear.

Objective: Recognize a rigging uncertainty and identify the evidence needed before lifting.

Key hazards or failure points

Unknown load weight or balance; unreadable identification; damaged gear; an unsuitable hitch or connection; sharp edges; and hands caught during take-up or landing.

Practical controls

- Have the designated competent or qualified people, as the task requires, confirm the load, center of gravity, lifting points, rigging arrangement and equipment capacity. Do not guess from appearance.
- Select rigging for the actual configuration using its identification, manufacturer instructions and applicable requirements. Capacity can change with the hitch and sling angle. Remove defective or unidentified gear from use.
- Plan the travel and landing area, supports, hand clearance and communication before take-up. Keep people clear of suspended loads. Use only the approved method for guiding and positioning the load.

Verify It in the Field

- Match each sling and attachment to the planned configuration and legible capacity information. Confirm that the load information and any required calculation or technical review apply to this lift.
- Have the appropriate person complete the required inspection. Look for type-specific defects using the applicable removal criteria; do not invent a wear percentage or “close enough” limit.
- Before tension is applied, confirm the connections, edge protection, load security and landing supports against the plan. Identify where every person will stand and how the operator will receive a stop signal.

Stop and reassess

Hold the lift for missing identification, unknown weight, damage, a changed hitch, unexpected movement or an unclear signal. Stay clear; let the operator make the load safe under the lift procedure. Correct the issue, have the appropriate person recheck, and rebrief before the authorized restart.

Ask the crew

- What evidence supports the load weight and rigging capacity in this configuration?
- Where could a hand or body be trapped during take-up or landing?
- What uncertainty means we hold the lift, and who resolves it?

Known load. Verified rigging. Clear people. Planned landing.

Next step: Record today's changes and checks on the free JSA Planning and Field-Verification Sheet. Supervisor check and attendance are separate.

[Free JSA planning sheet](#)

References: OSHA 1926.251, 1926.1425 and 1926.1419. Expanded explanation and references accompany the web version.