

Temporary Stairs: Verify Every Landing

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Why this matters

Temporary stairs can look complete while a tread, landing or rail remains unfinished. A delivery or changing floor level can also interrupt the route.

Objective: Confirm usable stairs and landings before people rely on them.

Key hazards or failure points

Missing tread infill; loose steps; uneven transitions; slippery surfaces; missing rails; blocked landings.

Practical controls

- Use the installed access arrangement assessed against the applicable stair requirements. Keep incomplete sections closed with a usable alternative.
- Provide secured temporary treads and landings, required handrails and edge protection. Do not bridge missing parts with loose scrap.
- Keep the route clear and eliminate slippery conditions before use. Coordinate deliveries and changes at the top and bottom.

Verify It in the Field

From protected access, inspect the entire route, including both ends. Stop before an incomplete or uncertain section.

Have the responsible installer verify tread, landing and rail details against the design and applicable criteria; record the actual result. Do not bounce-test them.

Confirm clear landings, usable handholds and the alternative route during restrictions. Ask a worker to identify which stairs are open.

Stop and reassess

Close affected access for loose or missing parts, slippery conditions, altered transitions or blocked passage. Verify correction before reopening.

Ask the crew

1. Is the whole route ready?
2. What could block this landing next?
3. Who verifies a changed stair arrangement?

Use this HOP tool — Job-site review: From safe access, trace the route to the next level without crossing an incomplete section. Name the first uncertain tread, landing or transition. Ask who can verify that detail and how workers will reach their destination while the concern is resolved.

Sources: OSHA 1926.1052; OSHA 1926.1051; OSHA 1926.451; DOE Vol. 2, pp. 8–9. HOP concepts adapted from DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 2 (June 2009). No claim to original U.S. Government work; no government endorsement implied.

Free next step: JHA/JSA planning and field-verification worksheet

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/temporary-stairs-landings-access