

Falls are a leading cause of truck driver injuries Use three points of contact every time

Falls from height are a leading cause of injury for commercial drivers. One in three falls happen when the driver exits or enters the cab.

The safety issue

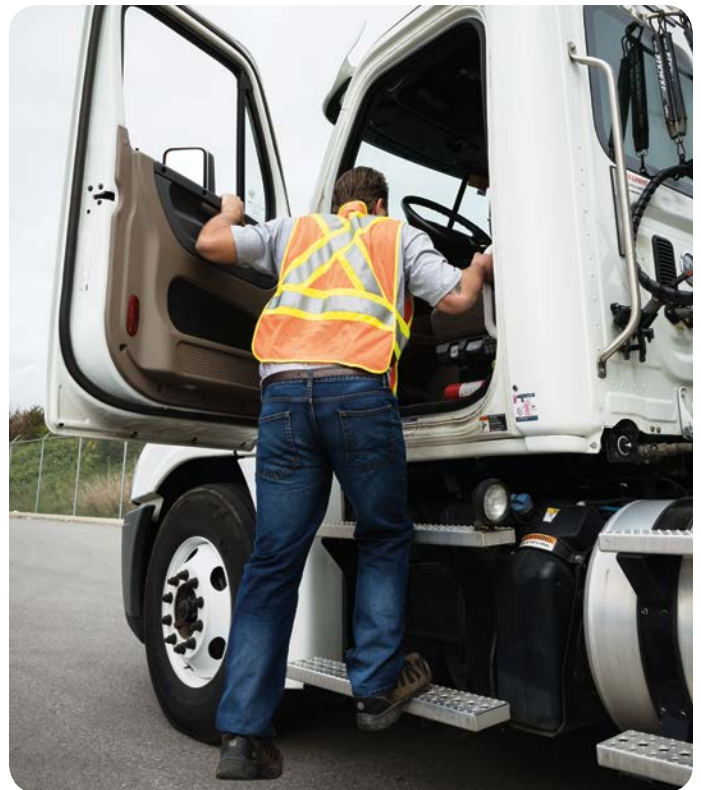
Falls from height are the third leading cause of truck driver injuries, following overexertion and motor vehicle incidents. Most fall incidents occur when the driver:

- Exits or enters the cab (37 percent)
- Conducts vehicle inspections, maintenance and repairs (18 percent)
- Unloads cargo (14 percent)

Drivers most often fall from the cab front steps, followed by falls from freight trailers and flatbed decks. One in three fall incidents occurs between 9:00 a.m. and noon. Not surprisingly, the chance of a fall increases when work surfaces are wet or covered with snow, ice, mud, or grease.

The safety solution

Always wear suitable safety footwear with good support and slip-resistant soles. If it's your first time driving the truck, take a few moments to learn the placement of the handholds, steps, and handrails.



Look at the condition of the steps or work surface you're about to step on. Is it wet, or covered in snow, ice, or grease? Are there obstacles or tripping hazards in the way?

Always use three points of contact

This means keeping two hands and one foot — or two feet and one hand — on the vehicle or equipment at all times. Always face the truck and keep your weight evenly distributed among the three points of contact. Only break three points of contact with your truck or equipment when you safely reach the ground or a secure work platform.

Remember to climb up and down slowly. Never rush this process, no matter what the delivery pressures might be.

Only use the steering wheel as a handhold if the manufacturer permits it. Avoid using the door frame as a handhold or the wheel hubs or tires as a step.

Never climb up or down while holding an object. Place items where they won't create a tripping hazard and can be safely retrieved when you're on the ground or a secure platform.

Take time to clean or clear the work areas of your truck and trailer. Report unsafe work environments — or the existence of any other workplace hazard — to your dispatcher or supervisor.

Never jump down from your truck!

Jumping from the cab of a tractor unit can create an impact force of 5 to 7 times your body weight. So if you weigh 200 lb. (91 kg) the impact force of jumping from the cab is almost 1500 lb. (680 kg). Compare that with using correct 3-point contact and slowly stepping down from the lower step which only creates an impact force of 1 to 1.5 times your body weight.

(Source: Washington State
Department of Labor and Industries)

For more information

For more information on workplace health and safety, visit worksafebc.com and SafetyDriven.ca.