

Safety Tips

Overhead Cranes

Overhead cranes are generally used for indoor hoisting activities. They are often installed for specific repetitive tasks. The capacity of these cranes is wide ranging. Contractors may use them for specialized hoisting operations such as removing or installing major plant equipment.

Safe operation of overhead cranes requires operators to have the knowledge and competence to employ safe rigging practices. The rigger must rig the load to ensure its stability when lifted.

The following points highlight safety tips for overhead crane operation.

- Before use, ensure the crane is suitable for the planned hoisting task(s). Confirm it has appropriate travel, lift, and capacity.
- Visually and physically inspect the crane before use. Check for damage, wear, and proper operation of all functions.
- Confirm the load weight. Check the capacity of all equipment including the hardware, rope, and slings. *Do not exceed these capacities.*
- Select the right sling for each lift. Inspect slings and other rigging hardware before use for wear, stretch, or other damage. Do not use damaged or defective slings. Use softeners around sharp corners. Do not splice broken slings.
- When communicating with a crane operator, use clear agreed-upon signals. Except for the stop signal, the crane operator should follow instructions from only one person – a designated signaller. Where a wired or remote controller is used, the operator should become familiar with all of its functions before lifting the load.



- Warn all people in the load lift area before starting the lift. Ensure that the path of the load is clear of persons and obstructions. Do not lift loads over anyone.
- Centre the crane hoist over the load before hoisting to prevent swinging of the load.
- Slide the sling fully onto the hoisting hook and ensure the safety catch is closed. Do not load the hook tip or hammer a sling into place.
- Secure unused sling legs. Do not drag slings or leave loose materials on a load being hoisted.
- Keep hands and fingers from being trapped when slack is taken out of a sling. Step away before the lift is made.

Caution

Ensure that the load is free to move. If a load is stuck and the crane begins or continues to lift, it may reach its full capacity quickly. There may be little or no warning of this condition and rigging components may fail.

- Move the load and controls smoothly. Minimize load swing.
- Walk ahead of the load during travel and warn people to keep clear. Use a tag line to prevent rotation or other uncontrolled motion. Raise the load only as high as necessary to clear objects. Do not ride on hook or load.
- Set loads down on blocking, never directly on a sling. Do not pull or push loads out from under the hoist.
- Do not leave the load (or the crane) unattended while the load is suspended.
- Where crane operation by other personnel must be restricted, employ lockout and tagging procedures.
- Store slings off the floor in a clean, dry location on hooks or racks. Do not leave slings, accessories, or blocking lying on the floor.



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