

Fall Protection

Rope Grabs

List fall hazards on site

- After putting the rope grab on the lifeline, give it a firm tug in the direction of a fall to make sure it engages.
- Ensure that lifeline and rope grab match. Rope grabs are designed to work with certain types and diameters of lifelines.
- Remember to tie a knot in your lifeline at the farthest point where you need to travel. The knot ensures that the rope grab will not run off the free end of your line.
- Some grabs have a “parking feature” that locks at a point on the lifeline that won’t let you reach a fall hazard.
- On a vertical lifeline, always position the rope grab as high as possible above your D-ring to minimize free fall.

Also make sure you have clearance below. Fall arresters may slide down the lifeline as much as one metre before arresting your fall.

Identify

With rope grabs, there are three basic hazards:

- attaching them the wrong way
- grabbing hold of them during a fall
- using them with the wrong size or type of rope

A rope grab attached upside down to a lifeline can’t work properly. Instead of locking on the line, it will simply slide down.

Don’t grab the device if you fall. This can prevent some grabs from working properly. Instead of stopping you’ll slide to injury or death below.

Communicate & Control

Rope grabs are technically known as fall arresters and must meet CSA requirements.

- When attaching a rope grab to a lifeline, always make sure the arrow on the grab points along the line to the anchor point.

- Inspect rope grabs before use.
- Check for distortion
- rust
- moving parts that don’t move easily
- sharp edges.

A rope grab that arrests a fall should be taken out of service and inspected and recertified for use.

Lead by Example

Inspect fibre rope lifelines for fraying, burns, kinking, cuts, and signs of wear and tear.

Reminder: Ensure that lifeline and rope grab match.