



Man-lifts and scissor lifts are two pieces of equipment that have become so common that many workers can't imagine working without. This equipment, if used correctly, provides quick and safe access to elevated work areas. These lifts, collectively called Aerial Work Platforms, are important tools. But as with any tool, there are right and wrong ways to use them safely.

The most important thing to remember before operating any aerial lift platform is always read and follow the manufacturer's safety and operation manual! This information must be kept on the equipment and can usually be found in a PVC tube tied to the machine's frame or rails.

Safe Operating Procedures for Both Man-lifts and Scissor Lifts include the following:

- Only trained and authorized individuals should operate the lift. A qualified instructor must make sure that every operator reads and/or understands the equipment's safety and operating instructions. This includes all of the warning decals and labels mounted on the equipment.
- Always check for overhead obstructions before driving or elevating the platform.
- Refuel tanks only when the unit is turned off. If battery powered, the batteries should be charged only in a well ventilated area, away from any open flame and in a "no smoking" zone.
- Prior to each shift a safety inspection should be completed by the operator; this includes both a visual inspection and a function test. If a problem is found, get the lift repaired before putting it into service.
- Elevate the platform only when it is on a firm, level surface. Although many lifts look like a rough terrain piece of equipment, they are not. Their large tires do allow the equipment to access somewhat difficult areas, but once in position they are designed to be out of level only 5 degrees while in operation. This amounts to 10 inches in a 10 foot wheel span. In addition, the lift must have a tilt alarm that activates when the machine is more than 5 degrees out of level.
- Scissor lifts are efficient one-direction lifts. They provide a solid surface to work from, but always remember:
- Guardrail, mid-rails and toe-boards must be in place.
- The platform must be equipped with a mechanical parking brake that will hold the unit securely on any slope it is capable of climbing. The brake should be tested periodically.
- Never use the lift's rails, place planks across the rails, or a ladder, to gain additional height.

Man-lifts can move in more than a single direction, increasing the risk of mishaps, so it's important to remember the following:

- Whenever working out of a man-lift, a full body harness must be worn, and properly attached to the basket. A sudden jolt has thrown people from man-lifts, before they could react.
- Always maintain a safe distance from piles of debris, drop-offs, floor openings, etc.
- Never drive the man-lift when it is elevated above the limit the manufacturer considers safe. Each piece of equipment will state what the maximum extension can be while being driven.

Used correctly, aerial work platforms can be priceless pieces of equipment that save time and provide safe access to elevated work areas. However, they must be operated within design limitations and according to manufacturer requirements to avoid undue risk.



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