



Why Safety Harness Comfort is Critical to Helping Protect Workers from Falls



WE KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE.

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#1 FALLS
ARE THE LEADING CAUSE
OF DEATH IN CONSTRUCTION.¹

200,000 WORKERS
 **REQUIRED DAYS
OFF OF WORK
AS A RESULT OF
INJURIES FROM FALLS²**

 **FOR THE PAST
12 YEARS
FALL PROTECTION
WAS THE MOST CITED OSHA VIOLATION³**

When it comes to fall protection PPE (personal protective equipment), workers may be reluctant to don gear that is too hot and heavy. Lighter weight harnesses are available, but they don't always equate to "comfort"—especially for workers of varying shapes and sizes. So, even if workers are introduced to something "new and improved," the improvements are so miniscule that the "it's too hot, too heavy," argument prevails.

**Which begs the question:
Can anything be done to make safety harness
wearers more comfortable?**

In this white paper, we answer the question by exploring why comfort should be a priority when selecting a safety harness and what to look for when choosing new harnesses for yourself and/or your team.

Comfort is Crucial

What does being comfortable at work have to do with performance? Everything.

We've all experienced less-than-optimal performance when trying to do a job wearing something unsuitable. But for those working at height, ill-fitting and uncomfortable gear is like nothing else: It's a potential distraction they simply cannot afford.

In the real world, the concept of "comfort" can be a bit elusive. What's comfortable for one person may not be comfortable for another. In the world of worker safety, however, comfort must have a defined attribute; namely, unrestricted, freedom of movement, without pain or constraint.

Historically, safety harnesses have been everything but comfortable. And this has gotten in the way of getting the job done safely. For example, the best-in-class gear of the mid 19th century was a simple body belt. The problem, however, was that the body belt could slip off, the worker could easily slide out or, worse, a fall could cause severe force trauma to the most vulnerable part of the body, the spine.



Fast-forward a few years to when military-style harnesses became the trend. They offered quite literal full-body coverage. Yet, these hot and hefty harnesses not only exhausted the wearer, they restricted movement and limited mobility in ways that made wearing them almost as unsafe as not wearing them.

The fact is, beginning in fiscal year 2010, Fall Protection—General Requirements has made OSHA's 'Top 10' citations list for 12 years running.² And that means, in part, that workers are failing to be compliant with their PPE.

According to a recent study by CPWR, The Center for Construction Research and Training, unused but provided fall protection PPE ranked as one of the top reasons identified by workers as the cause of falls.⁴

So, if being consistently equipped and protected is central to performing well on the job and helping to prevent workplace injury, it's incumbent on the Safety Manager to not only pick the PPE that's right for the job but also make sure it is worn correctly. Ultimately, that means that safety managers encourage worker compliance by providing fall protection equipment that is properly fitted and exceptionally comfortable.

When it comes to improving worker compliance with respect to fall protection safety harnesses, one thing is clear: employers must offer a comfortable harness that workers will actually wear.

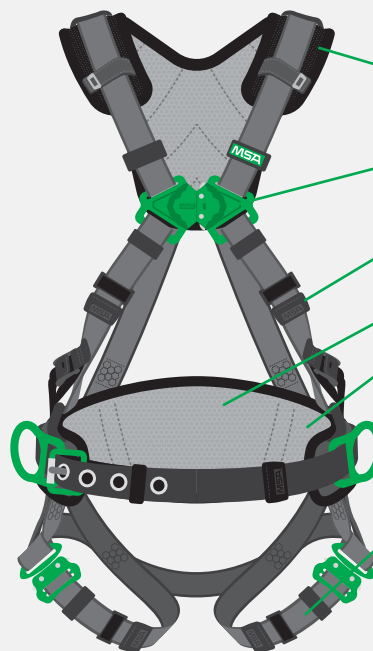


MSA V-SERIES® Harnesses

Designed to deliver exceptional comfort, so workers can focus on the job, not PPE.

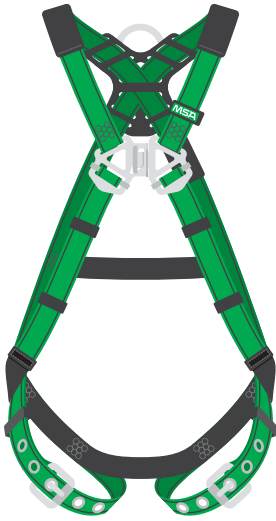
FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Bulky construction
- Hot and heavy materials
- Cumbersome chest buckle
- Limited range of motion
- Complicated adjustments required
- Uneven weight distribution



THE FIX

- Lightweight, breathable, and comfortable
- Racing-style buckle for more mobility
- Pull-down adjustment for quick and lasting fit
- Lumbar support
- Integration of the most breathable materials where possible to leverage natural radiant and evaporative cooling
- Horizontal leg straps to help reduce pressure points



V-FORM™ Safety Harness



V-FIT™ Safety Harness



V-FIT™ Construction
Safety Harness



V-FLEX™ Construction
Safety Harness

To try V-SERIES Harnesses for yourself
and your team as part of a no-cost product trial,
visit [MSAsafety.com/dare-to-compare](https://www.msasafety.com/dare-to-compare).

Sources

1. <https://www.osha.gov/stop-falls>
2. <https://www.nsc.org/workplace/safety-topics/slips-trips-and-falls/slips-trips-and-falls-home>
3. <https://www.nsc.org/newsroom/osha-reveals-top-10-safety-violations-for-fiscal-y>
4. <https://ohsonline.com/articles/2022/08/31/survey-results-show.aspx>

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