

# WORK SAFE



## Chocking and Blocking



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### Introduction:

Rental operations involve loading and unloading trucks and trailers as well as the transport of goods and equipment. Chocking and blocking can help ensure items stay in place during these tasks. Failure to chock and block can result in a runaway vehicle or the shifting of cargo, leading to severe or fatal injuries and property damage.

### Real-life cases:

Look at these examples of runaway vehicles that occurred when rental store personnel failed to take the time to do the crucial step of chocking. Fortunately, no one was in the path of the vehicles.

- While loading a dozer onto a trailer, the truck and trailer rolled down a hill and hit several trees.
- A fully loaded box truck rolled down a driveway, struck one parked car, bounced over a retaining wall and struck three additional parked cars.

### Answers to questions about chocking and blocking:

#### ■ What is chocking and blocking?

Both chocking and blocking serve the purpose of keeping something stationary. Chocking is the act of placing a wedge under a wheel to pin it, keeping the vehicle or mobile equipment from moving accidentally. Blocking using lumber serves to keep cargo in place.

#### ■ Why are chocking and blocking necessary?

Without the chock to stop it, a vehicle under many circumstances could begin to roll, crushing anyone or anything it encounters. Blocking prevents a shift in cargo that could cause the vehicle carrying it to overturn. Blocking cargo also keeps it from toppling onto workers and injuring or killing them.

#### ■ When should you perform chocking and blocking?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standard 1910.178(m)(7) states, "Brakes shall be set and wheel blocks shall be in place to prevent movement of trucks and trailers while loading or unloading." You also should chock wheels when you are hitching and unhitching a towed trailer or towable equipment. Finally, chock wheels when servicing and maintaining mobile equipment.

Talk given by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Attended by: (employee signatures)

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You should perform blocking to keep cargo or equipment securely in place while in transit or when loading and unloading a trailer. Blocking also can prevent serious pinches from occurring if equipment accidentally shifts during service or maintenance.

### How is chocking and blocking done?

To chock, place correctly sized wheel chocks on both rear-axle wheels. You also may chock the front-axle wheels for additional safety. Do not substitute wood, cement blocks or other contrived stop mechanisms for an actual wheel chock.

To block, use appropriately sized, sound lumber and nails of an adequate length to block each cargo item separately and on all four sides. Avoid placing hands or fingers between the equipment and blocks. Never use other cargo for blocking.

### Demonstration:

Demonstrate the proper techniques for chocking and blocking.

### Company policy:

Read any company policy pertaining to chocking and blocking.

### Parting words:

**Chock and block to keep everything in its place.**



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This program is intended to help employees understand general safety practices and procedures. However, each company must make a careful determination of appropriate safety requirements for its operation. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made that the information presented is adequate or appropriate for any particular application.

### Quiz:

- 1. It is a good idea to store chocks at the loading dock.**
  - a. True
  - b. False
- 2. You only should chock the front wheels of a truck backed up to a dock for loading or unloading.**
  - a. True
  - b. False
- 3. You only need to block round or wheeled cargo.**
  - a. True
  - b. False
- 4. You do not need to chock the wheels of equipment you are working on if you set the parking brake.**
  - a. True
  - b. False
- 5. You should chock before unhooking a trailer.**
  - a. True
  - b. False

- Answers to quiz:**
- 1. True.** Making chocks readily available will encourage use of them.
  - 2. False.** Chock truck or trailer wheels closest to the dock. If you only chock the front wheels, the force of a forklift loading or unloading the unit can loosen the chock and cause the unit to move forward or jump the chocks entirely.
  - 3. False.** Block any freight that you do not want to shift during transport.
  - 4. False.** Although you should set the parking brake, this is no substitute for chocking. For example, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) records the fatality of a man who set the parking brake, but did not chock the wheels before working under a truck. When the man disconnected the truck's driveshaft, it made the brake ineffective. The truck rolled over the man, killing him.
  - 5. True.** Chocking before hitching or unhitching a towed trailer will prevent the trailer from moving and pinning you between it and the vehicle towing it.