

## Distractions are a leading cause of on-the-job injuries.

- Losing focus and being distracted, even for a moment, can result in a simple mistake like a dropped tool, or a life-threatening event like a struck-by injury.



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Distractions can lead to:

- Injuries
- Costly errors
- Dangerous mistakes
- Lost productivity
- Property damage
- Missed safety cues
- Fatalities



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- While it may not be possible to eliminate all distractions on the job, it's important to recognize when distractions are likely to happen and take steps to minimize them.

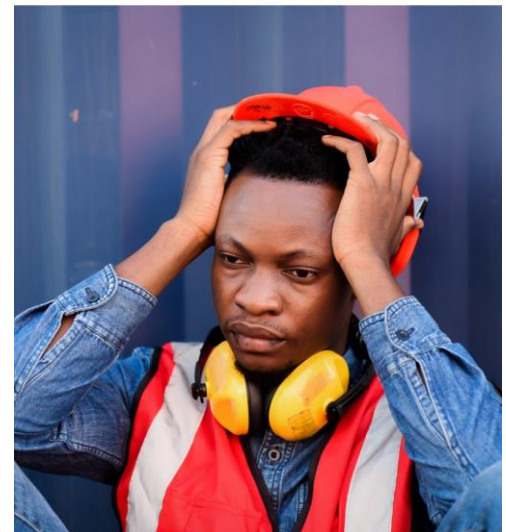
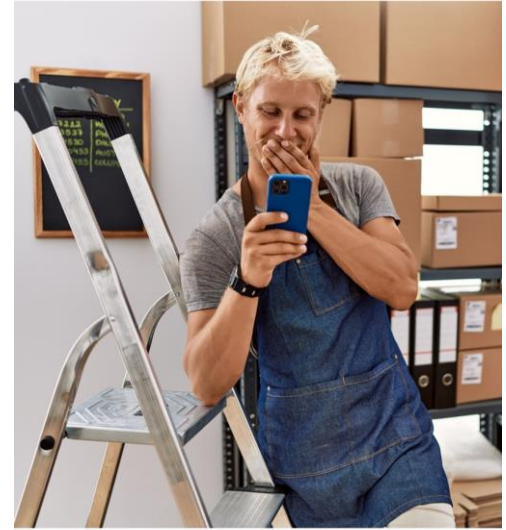
If distractions from outside of work are noticeably affecting how well you can focus on the job, it's important to take action. You may need to take a personal day, reach out to a supervisor, or consider seeking additional support.

There are an infinite number of distractions that can happen at work.

- Every time you are distracted, you immediately lose the situational awareness that is critical to staying safe on the job.

Some of the most common distractions include:

- Looking down at your cell phone
- Wearing headphones that block out important sound cues from the work environment
- Poor housekeeping, a cluttered workspace
- Multi-tasking, divided attention, trying to do too many things at once
- Interruptions
- Drug or alcohol impairment
- Mental distractions caused by personal concerns like family or finances
- Daydreaming
- Stress, anxiety, or worry
- Gossip, distracting conversations
- Physical distractions from pain, hunger, or fatigue
- Rushing



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## Safety tips to limit distractions at work:

- Take hazards seriously. Understand the risks associated with the work activities you participate in and know the consequences of unsafe behavior.
- Pay attention to what is going on all around you, including above, to the sides, and also behind you.
- Understand the pace of the work environment. Watch for unexpected scenarios and adjust accordingly.
- Avoid using electronic devices, including cell phones and headphones, when operating or working near heavy equipment or machinery.
- Prevent fatigue by maintaining a consistent sleep schedule.
- Ensure complacency is not creeping into the workday.
- Keep your work area as clean and organized as the work allows.



When distractions happen at work, they cause an immediate loss of focus which can be risky in a hazardous work environment.

If you suddenly get distracted at work or notice that you are starting to become easily distracted from your tasks, there are many different actions you can take to ensure the distractions don't become dangerous.



**Stop what you are doing.** Before addressing or responding to another person, shut down or disengage any tools or equipment that you are using.



**Take a break.** If you notice that you are becoming increasingly distracted, it may be a signal that you need to take a short break to relax for a moment and recharge. Consider getting something to drink, having a snack, stretching, or taking a short walk before returning to work.



**Clean up.** A tidy work area increases efficiency, reduces distractions, and leads to fewer incidents. When things around you are clean and organized you can more easily focus on the task at hand.



**Eat something.** When we are hungry, it can definitely affect our mood and our ability to focus. Don't skip meals or breaks in an effort to get the work done faster.



**Speak up.** If there is a persistent distraction at work that you can't manage on your own, talk to management or bring it up at the next safety meeting. Work together to address the issue.

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## DO

- Practice situational awareness throughout the workday and stay mindful of mental distractions that may lead to inattention.
- Wear required PPE and follow all safety procedures. Distractions can become deadly when safety procedures are not being followed.
- Follow all company policies regarding cell phone and headphone use. Turn off cell phone notifications if they are distracting during the workday.
- Acknowledge cues from your co-workers, which may be verbal, emotional, or physical.
- Speak up about repeated or unsafe distractions that need to be resolved.



## DON'T

- Engage in horseplay while on the job.
- Become complacent with routine tasks or take shortcuts.
- Make comments about a co-worker's appearance.
- Interrupt or distract others when they are focused and working.
- Take calls or return text messages when you are in the middle of a work task.

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