

Toolbox Talk – Sling Inspection Safety

Lifting and rigging operations are a routine part of many jobs, but they also come with serious risks — especially when the slings used for lifting are damaged or worn out. Slings endure a lot of stress during use, and if not properly maintained or inspected, they can fail — potentially leading to serious injury or costly damage.



Let's review common causes of sling failure and the key things to look for during inspection.

⚠ Common Reasons Slings Fail

Slings can become unsafe due to:

- **Overloading** – Exceeding the rated load capacity can cause slings to snap.
- **Wear and tear** – Repeated use causes slings to stretch, fray, and weaken.
- **Cuts, abrasions, and burns** – Contact with sharp edges, grinders, or weld spatter can compromise sling integrity.
- **Chemical exposure** – Certain chemicals degrade the material, making slings brittle or discolored.
- **Environmental exposure** – Prolonged exposure to water or direct sunlight can lead to rot, UV damage, and deterioration.

🔍 Sling Inspection Best Practices

Before each use — and during use if the sling is heavily loaded or reused often — inspect the sling for:

- **Burn marks, melted spots, or fraying threads** – Clear signs of heat or abrasion damage.
- **Exposed red fibers on synthetic slings** – This is a built-in warning sign. Remove the sling from service immediately.
- **Discoloration or stiffness** – Often caused by chemical damage.
- **Hard, brittle, or rigid slings** – Likely due to long-term UV exposure or improper storage.
- **Frayed or rotted fibers** – Common with slings left in wet or harsh environments.

- **Missing or unreadable tags** – If the load rating isn't legible, the sling is non-compliant and must not be used.

Inspection Schedule

- **Before each use:** Quick visual check for any damage or defects.
- **During the shift:** Re-inspect slings used repeatedly or under high stress.
- **Monthly and annually:** Include slings in your scheduled safety inspections and record findings.

Key Takeaway

Sling inspections are a simple, effective way to prevent equipment failure and injury. If you notice **any sign of damage or uncertainty**, stop using the sling immediately. Replace or tag it out and use one that's in safe working condition.

A few minutes of inspection can prevent a serious incident. Always take the time to do it right.



SAFETY TRAINING SIGN IN SHEET

TRAINING TITLE			
DATE & TIME		LOCATION	
COMPANY		TRAINER	