Overhead cranes and rigging

For the start of the shift: what to check before a lift, how to work with the signal person and why the area under the load stays empty.

DURATION
5 minutes

WHO LEADS IT
The supervisor or the safety lead, with the operator and the signal person

WHEN TO USE IT
At the start of a shift with lifts, or when the type of load changes

WHAT TO BRING
The area's slings, chains or wire rope and the agreed hand signals

Read it out loud

Good morning, everyone. Today we talk about overhead cranes and rigging, a team job between the person running the crane, the person rigging and the person giving signals.

Before you lift, check the hook and its latch, the wire rope, the chains and the slings. A broken wire, a stretched link or a cut sling means the lift does not happen.

Picture a common scene. The load comes up a little crooked, the operator tries to fix it while traveling and it starts to swing. If someone is underneath, the problem is no longer the load.

The simplest rule is also the most important: nobody stands under a suspended load, and nobody walks across the path it is going to travel.

The operator takes signals from one signal person, agreed on before starting. If they lose sight of each other, everything stops.

Never lift more than the rated load marked on the crane, and don't improvise the rigging. If you are not sure about the weight, ask before lifting.

Before moving, tell the people in the area and look at the whole route, from pickup to set-down. If someone shows up in the path, the load waits, stopped and low.

To wrap up: only designated people run the crane. Today, each of you checks your own rigging before the first move.

What OSHA says

- Under 29 CFR 1910.179, only designated personnel may operate a crane (1910.179(b)(8)), no load exceeds the rated load (1910.179(n)(1)), the load is secured and balanced before it is lifted more than a few inches (1910.179(n)(3)(i)) and the operator avoids carrying loads over people (1910.179(n)(3)(vi)).
- Hooks are visually inspected daily for deformation or cracks (1910.179(j)(2)(iii)), and each sling and its attachments are inspected every day before use by a competent person designated by the employer (1910.184(d)).

Source: OSHA, 29 CFR 1910.179 (Overhead and gantry cranes) and 1910.184 (Slings), current text. Reviewed on October 29, 2026.

Questions for the crew

1. **What do you check before a lift?**
   Expected answer: Hook and latch, wire rope, chains and slings. Hooks get a daily visual check for deformation or cracks (1910.179(j)(2)(iii)), and slings and their attachments are inspected each day before use by a competent person the employer designates (1910.184(d)).
2. **Where does everyone who is not running the crane stand?**
   Expected answer: Away from the area under the load and out of its path. OSHA requires the employer to have the operator avoid carrying loads over people (1910.179(n)(3)(vi)).
3. **Who can run the overhead crane?**
   Expected answer: Only designated personnel (1910.179(b)(8)). And while a load is suspended, the operator does not leave the controls (1910.179(n)(3)(x)).

Sign-in sheet

Date _____ **Area** _____ **Led by** _____

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