

Watch Your Step! Know the Three Points of Contact

You climb in and out of your cab constantly. You may even be required to climb into the trailer or on top of a flatbed to secure the load you are transporting. This is done so often, that you probably don't think of the risk involved. But move too fast or carelessly, and you could end up out of service with a serious injury.

Trips, slips, and falls cause around 100,000 work-related injuries a year for professional drivers. They also keep workers off the job for an average of 24 days, according to [National Safety Council](#) data. Wintertime is an especially dangerous time for falls due to weather hazards like snow, sleet and ice that impact the central and northern regions of the U.S.

You can avoid trips, slips, and falls by following a few basic steps:

1. Use the three points of contact rule

The three points of contact rule will give you the most stability every time you enter and exit your truck, reducing your risk for a slip, trip or fall. Three points means that you should have two hands and one foot — or two feet and one hand — in contact with your truck at all times. When you climb up or down, grab onto fixed items, such as door handles, the door frame, steps or your steering wheel. Don't rely on tires or wheel hubs to climb out.

2. Don't climb and carry

Avoid the temptation to hold anything — a coffee cup, your smartphone or logbook — in your free hand when you enter and exit the truck. Doing so will prevent you from effectively using the Three Points of Contact Rule. Always place your items into the cab before attempting to enter your truck.



3. Move slowly and deliberately

While jumping out of your cab may save time, you must never do it. Jumping puts extra strain on your back and joints, which can cause you pain and create injuries over the long term. Jumping also puts you at risk for ankle, shoulder and knee injuries that may occur if you fall awkwardly.

4. Look before you leave the cab

Make sure your vehicle's handles and steps are clear of ice, snow and other hazards. Park in well-lit areas and on level surfaces so you can climb out of your truck safely. Look for objects blocking your path and move them out of the way.

5. Wear proper footwear

Choose non-slip footwear. Waterproof work boots with textured treads are always a good option.

6. Pay attention

Focus on climbing up and down the stairs only. Don't look at your phone or other objects. Avoid distractions.