Lone Working Toolbox Talk

Key points, do's and don'ts, and questions with answers. The attendance sign-off sheet is on the last page.

Asked to show your toolbox talk records? The Site Book keeps each talk and its signatures with the job, on Pro: **thesitebook.co.uk/features/toolbox-talks**

Key points to cover

- Carry out a specific risk assessment for lone working before the work begins — identify what could go wrong and how the lone worker will get help
- Establish a check-in system — regular contact at agreed intervals with a supervisor or buddy
- Ensure the lone worker has a reliable means of communication (mobile phone, two-way radio) and knows who to call
- Identify tasks that must never be done alone (e.g. confined space entry, work at height, work near live services)
- Ensure the lone worker is competent and experienced enough to handle foreseeable situations without supervision
- Plan for medical emergencies — the lone worker should have access to first aid equipment and the site emergency procedures

Do's and don'ts

Do

- Complete a lone working risk assessment before starting any solo work
- Establish regular check-in intervals and stick to them — if you miss a check-in, the alarm should be raised
- Carry a charged mobile phone or two-way radio at all times
- Know the emergency procedures and the location of the nearest first aid kit
- Tell someone your planned work location and expected finish time

Don't

- Never enter a confined space alone under any circumstances
- Never work at significant height alone without specific assessment and controls
- Never assume someone will notice if you don't return — always have an active check-in system
- Never ignore a missed check-in from a lone worker — treat it as a potential emergency
- Never take on tasks beyond your competence when working alone — there is no one to help if it goes wrong

Questions to check understanding

Ask each question and let the crew answer before you read out the answer.

Q1. What tasks on a construction site should never be carried out by a lone worker?

Answer: Tasks that should never be done alone include: confined space entry (requires a top man and rescue team), work at height where there is a risk of a fall and no one to raise the alarm, work near live electrical services, lifting operations requiring a slinger/signaller, and any work where the risk assessment identifies that a second person is essential for safety. The specific prohibited tasks should be listed in the site rules.

Q2. What is a lone worker check-in system and how does it work?

Answer: A check-in system requires the lone worker to make contact (phone call, radio check, or app check-in) with a designated person at agreed regular intervals — typically every 30 minutes to 2 hours depending on the risk level. If the lone worker fails to check in, the designated person must immediately attempt to contact them and, if unsuccessful, initiate the emergency response procedure. Automated lone worker devices can also detect lack of movement and raise an alarm.

Q3. What legislation requires a risk assessment for lone working?

Answer: The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 3, requires a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of all work activities. This includes the additional risks that arise from working alone. The assessment must identify the hazards, who might be harmed, and the control measures needed. The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Section 2 also underpins the general duty to protect lone workers.

Attendance sign-off sheet: Lone Working Toolbox Talk

Everyone who attended prints their name and signs to confirm they received this talk.

Date _____ **Time** _____

Site or location _____ **Presented by** _____

No.	Name (print)	Company	Signature
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Presenter's signature _____

This is general guidance for UK construction sites. Check it against your own risk assessment, method statement and the site before you deliver it. Toolbox talk from The Site Book, reviewed 26 October 2026. Read it online at thesitebook.co.uk/toolbox-talks/lone-working.