

Supported Scaffold Selection Guide

Determining the right type of scaffold for any project is important. Every type of scaffold has its own advantages and limitations. While all scaffolds should be designed by a qualified person, this guide provides some general guidance when selecting a scaffold based on the application for which the scaffold will be used. This scaffold selection guide is a suggested method on how to select scaffolding based on its application.

Follow the manufacturer's recommendation for erection, dismantling, and loading.

Straight Run Scaffold

If the area required to scaffold is unobstructed, and the ground is relatively level, then frame scaffolding may be the best choice. Frame scaffolding is easy to erect and dismantle and is widely available. Another alternative is system scaffolding due to its versatility.

Large Area (Dance Floor) Scaffolds

If the area required to scaffold is wide, long, and the top level is decked, the best choices may be frame scaffolding with putlogs (truss) or platforms with stringer and joist or system scaffolding with long trusses or stringer and joist. By using putlogs or trusses you can span long distances and provide open space below the scaffolding. Applications with putlogs or trusses always require adequate lateral bracing.

Boilers and Circular Scaffolds (Birdcage Scaffolds)

If the area required to scaffold is inside or outside of boiler or circular vessel, the best choice may be system scaffolding or tube and clamp scaffolds. Often due to limited access inside boilers and vessels, scaffold frames may not fit.

Scaffold Stair Tower

If the scaffolding is used to make a stair tower for construction purposes, then there are generally two options: frame stair towers and system stair towers. System scaffolding generally has more capacity than frame scaffolding. For public access scaffold stair towers should meet the appropriate code.

This Technical Bulletin was prepared by members of the Scaffold & Access Industry Association SSFI Committee.

SSFI is a committee comprising manufacturers of shoring, scaffolding, forming, and suspended scaffolding. The committee focuses on engineering and safety aspects of scope products.

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Rolling Tower

If the scaffolding is used for a rolling tower application, there are two options: scaffold frames and system scaffold. Equipment selection will depend on the size of the tower. For a small tower, use a frame tower. For larger towers, use system scaffolds.

Hanging Scaffolds

A hanging scaffold is a platform without support from below, secured to an overhead structure (such as a bridge) using fixed length supports.

Flying Scaffolds

If you want to lift or fly scaffolding by crane or any other means, the best choice is system scaffolding or frame scaffolding. System scaffolds are very rigid compared to other types of scaffolding, which makes it suitable for flying. Frames in some cases may need special bracing with tube and clamps. You must have an application drawing or instruction on how to construct and lift, or fly, the tower from the manufacture or from a qualified person. When flying a scaffold, all components that are attached with pins must be secured using bolts or manufacturers recommended fastening devices.

Spanning Across an Opening

If you want to use the scaffolding to span across an opening there are two choices: frame scaffolding with putlogs or system scaffolding with trusses. Some system scaffolding has the ability to span big openings with standard components.

Special Scaffold

A qualified person must determine the best type of scaffold to use in certain situations.

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