# A screen shot of a computer  Description automatically generatedskid steer safety talk

Skid steers (skid loaders) are very common on construction sites. In fact, they are so prevalent that they often receive little consideration regarding safety.

Skid steers pose an extra risk of injury due to the equipment’s compact design. The machine is configured with the operator’s seat and controls located between two lift arms. To enter, the operator must step on or over the lowered arm and usually a loader bucket. This action creates an opportunity for the operator to get caught between the machine frame and the lift arm (or attachment) during entry and exit. To prevent injuries on a skid steer, familiarize yourself with the points of danger and current safeguards.

*The equipment should have these safeguards:*

* Control interlocks – To avoid unintentional control activation, the manufacturer equips skid steers with interlocked control systems. The machine should not start up until a safety device, such as a seatbelt or restraint, is in use.
* Rollover protective structures and operator restraints - The machines are equipped with rollover protective structures and seat belts to keep the operator inside the cab in the event of a rollover.
* Side screens – Skid steers have side screens comprised of metal or shatterproof glass to prevent the operator from leaning or reaching out of the operator’s compartment or contacting the moving lift arm. The screen also protects the operator from debris and prevent objects from entering the operator’s compartment.

*Operators should abide by these guidelines:*

* Read, follow and understand the operator’s manual.
* Always be seated in the cab before running equipment – never attempt to run the machine from outside.
* Secure safety restraints before use.
* Keep all body parts inside the operator compartment.
* Travel and turn with the bucket in the lowest position possible.
* Carry loads low.
* Never bypass or modify safety guards.
* Never carry passengers.
* Every machine operates differently. Be familiar with equipment before use.
* Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines for safe operation.
* Never exceed the recommended load capacity.
* If you must perform service under a raised bucket, make sure the lift-arm support device is in place.