



## Ladder Safety

### Introduction

There are many different scenarios when it comes to the use of a ladder. Whether you are doing some minor repairs around the home or you need the use of a ladder at work, there are some general safety rules that should be applied at all times. We will take a look at some generally accepted safety guidelines for ladder safety.

### Working With Ladders

1. The employer, employee and the user of the ladder should ensure that a portable ladder has non-slip feet, is placed on firm footing, and has no broken or loose members or other faults.
2. Always inspect the ladder for signs of cracks or other damage before using it.
3. If the ladder is damaged, do not use it! Place a label on it so as to notify anyone else who may wish to use it that it is not safe to use.
4. Disable the ladder if possible so that it cannot be set up for use if it is beyond minor repairs.
5. Replace all damaged ladders immediately.
6. If it is necessary to work on a ladder for an extended period of time, without changing location, the employer should try to provide scaffolds or other work platforms to reduce the risk of falling.
7. When a portable ladder exceeds six meters in length, and is not securely fastened or is likely to be endangered by traffic, it should be: held in place by one or more workers while being used; *and*, inclined so that the horizontal distance from the top support to the foot of the ladder is not less than one quarter and not more than one third of the length of the ladder.
8. The employer should ensure that an orchard ladder is appropriate for the task, and that the worker is instructed in its proper use. When necessary for safety, the feet of the ladder should be equipped with steel points or other non-slipping bases designed for the surface on which the ladder will be used.

9. Where a worker climbs the outside of a structure such as a silo or grain bin on an access ladder fixed in position, the ladder should have a safety cage installed to protect the worker. In the absence of a safety cage, other means of fall protection should be used, for example, the three-point method of contact while climbing.
10. The three-point method of contact means that the user must keep two feet and one arm/hand inside the confines of the ladder and in contact with the ladder at all times.
11. Never reach excessively so that part of your body is outside the frame of the ladder. Go back down the ladder and reposition it properly. Don't stretch or reach beyond the side rails of a ladder. You could lose your balance.
12. Secure the top of the ladder as needed. Secure the top and bottom of a ladder when using it to access a platform or scaffold.
13. Hoist materials or attach them to a belt. Do not carry materials in your hands.
14. Make sure that only one person at a time is on the ladder.
15. Never stand any higher than on the third rung from the top of a ladder.
16. Keep metal and wet wooden ladders away from live electrical circuits.
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18. Put the ladder up correctly. Follow the "4 to 1" rule. One foot back for each four feet up. When you set up the ladder, count the number of rungs up to the point where the ladder touches the wall. The bottom of the ladder must be one rung's length out from the wall for every four rungs up the wall.
19. In aisles or where there may be the danger of traffic, have someone hold the ladder. Post a warning sign, if necessary.

#### Maintenance

We will establish a program for regular maintenance of ladders, which includes: inspecting for common defects such as broken rungs, split side rails, worn or broken safety feet, and oil or grease which can make climbing surfaces slippery. Destroy any ladders that cannot be safely repaired. Prohibit repairs, which include tying or binding with wire. Prohibit the painting of ladders, as this can hide cracks or other weak points. All ladders will be inspected each month as part of our monthly inspection checklist.