



Toolbox TALK



LADDER SAFETY

Fall hazards are consistently the top violation OSHA cites, and ladder use hazards are among the most common fall hazards at work and home. The National Safety Council finds falls account for approximately 25 percent of all work-related injuries involving lost workdays, making proper ladder selection and use education important to all employees.

LADDER SELECTION

The three most common ladder types are extension, step, and multipurpose. Keep the following in mind when choosing the right ladder for your job:

- Stepladders, or multipurpose ladders (e.g., Little Giant®), are usually recommended for indoor use. Taller stepladders, multipurpose, or extension ladders are generally more appropriate for outdoor use.
- Choose a ladder made from a non-conductive material, such as fiberglass, when working around electricity.
- Choose a ladder based on its intended use, and make sure it is the proper length to perform the job safely.
- Choose a ladder designed to support your weight and any materials you will be using. Check the ladder for the appropriate weight rating.

LADDER USE

General guidelines:

- Do not use makeshift or homemade ladders, and never place ladders on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.
- Use a barricade to keep traffic or activity away from the ladder.
- Make sure weather conditions are suitable for ladder work.
- Face the ladder while ascending and descending, and always carry tools in a work belt.
- Do not lean or reach for items while on a ladder.

LADDER SAFETY

A competent person must inspect ladder components before each use or if a ladder sustains suspected damage. These inspections should include:

- Rungs - Check for broken, split, cracked, corroded, or missing rungs.
- Side Rails - Check for broken, split, cracked, corroded, or missing side rails.
- Cracks - Check carefully for cracks. Cracks are often hard to see and weaken ladders.
- Excessive Bends - Check for rungs or side rails with excessive bends. Bent areas are greatly weakened and may fail during use.
- Hardware - Check for ladders with loose, corroded, or weakened fasteners and hardware.
- Feet - Check ladders for missing or damaged feet. Ladder feet may have non-skid pads for use on hard surfaces or metal feet for soft surfaces.
- Coatings or Paint - Check for paint or other coating defects. Wood ladders should not be painted or coated with an opaque covering. Place identification or warning labels on only one face of a side rail.
- Slipping Hazards - Inspect ladders for oil, grease, moisture, or other slippery materials before use and clean them as necessary.

STEPLADDER SAFETY

- Never stand on the top two steps.
- Position the ladder on level ground, and use it in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not use stepladders to support work platforms.

EXTENSION LADDER SAFETY

- Do not take ladders apart, and never tie one ladder to the top of another.
- Secure the ladder, ensuring it is equally supported (e.g., level and tied off or held in place by coworker).
- Take your time climbing, and always use three-point contact while working.
- Ensure the ladder is 3 feet above the top landing of the surface. The base should be 1 foot out for every 4 feet of height to the point of support.

Date:

ATTENDANCE RECORD

SUPERVISOR:

CREW MEMBERS PRESENT:

COMMENTS/FEEDBACK:
