

Safe Ladder Safety

We all have used a ladder at one point or another in our lives, and we all have tried to avoid walking under them in superstitious fear. Most of the time it is not the person walking under the ladder that is at risk, but the person *using* the ladder. **Falling from a ladder is one of the leading hazards found in the workplace.** Most accidents involving ladders could have been prevented with the proper knowledge and use of the ladder.



Choose the Right Ladder for the Job

The height you must reach and the amount of weight the ladder must support will determine the type of ladder to use.

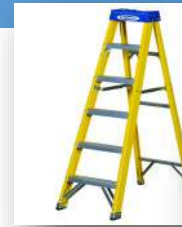
In general, the right ladder should:

- Include rungs and rails that are skid resistant and follow the OSHA regulation for spacing
- Have a metal locking device to hold the ladder open while in use
- Have slip-resistant feet to hold the ladder in place on a slippery surface

Three Main Types of Ladders

Three primary ladder types are generally used:

- **Extension Ladder** - A non-self-supporting portable ladder, adjustable in length.
- **Stepladder** - A self-supporting portable ladder, non-adjustable in length, with flat steps and hinged back.
- **Single Ladder** - A non-self-supporting portable ladder, nonadjustable in length, consisting of one section. Its size is designed by overall length of the side rail.



Ladder Safety Precautions

- Never place a ladder in front of a door; also avoid windows.
- Do not work with more than one person on the ladder unless the ladder is designed for such use.
- Always place ladders on solid or stable surfaces.
- Maintain 3 points of contact when climbing or working on a ladder; face the ladder and always have 2 hands & 1 foot or 2 feet & 1 hand in contact with the ladder.
- Extension ladders must extend three feet beyond the surface you are stepping onto.
- Do not paint or varnish ladders. Paint or varnish hides cracks or deformities.
- When setting up a ladder, maintain a 4:1 ratio, for every 4 feet in height, the ladder should be 1 foot out from the base.
- Never place a ladder against loose boxes or barrels.
- Never exceed the manufacturer's recommended weight limit. (Remember: the weight of your equipment should also be considered.)
- Do not use metal ladders near electrical wiring or energized equipment. Use fiberglass ladders. Check the sticker to ensure the ladder is rated for use near electricity.