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DAY ONE: Using Ladders safely

Climbing ladders

Ladders are a commonly used piece of equipment, both in the workplace and at home. It is important to know how to use ladders safely to prevent injuries or fatalities.

What are the major causes of ladder accidents?


- losing footing on rungs or steps
- failing to grip the ladder properly while climbing
- unsafe position while on a ladder
- placement of ladders on slippery surfaces, causing them to slide
- using defective ladders

What should I look for before using a ladder?

- Are there any defects in side rails, rungs or other similar parts?
- Are there any missing/loose/broken steps or rungs (they are loose if you can move them by hand)?
- Are there any cracked, split or worn rails or braces?
- Are there any missing/damaged feet?
- Are there any loose nails, screws, bolts or nuts?
- Are there any loose or faulty spreaders, locks, and other metal parts in poor repair?

Defective ladders should not be used. In the workplace, they should be taken out of service. Do not make temporary repairs to a ladder.

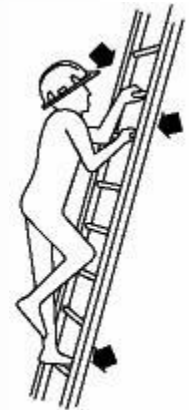
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DAY TWO: Using Ladders safely

How should I set up a ladder?

- Clear trash, construction material and other obstructions away from the base and top of the ladder.
- The base of the ladder should be safely secured to prevent accidental movement. Use a ladder with non-slip feet. Set up the ladder on a firm, level, non-slippery surface.
- The top of the ladder should be tied off or secured to prevent movement. If this is not possible, someone should hold the base of the ladder when it is being used. The person at the base of the ladder should face the ladder, with a hand on each side rail and one foot resting on the bottom rung.
- When erecting a straight or extension ladder, it should be placed one foot away from the wall for every four feet in extended height, to the point where the ladder touches the wall.
- When setting up portable ladders, check the area for live electrical power sources. Ladders made of aluminium should not be used near live electrical power sources.
- Unless barricades have been set up, ladders should not be used in passageways, doorways, driveways or other locations where they can be struck or displaced by traffic.
- Never set up ladders on boxes, carts, tables, or other unstable surfaces.
- When setting up or carrying long, heavy ladders, two or more people should share the task to avoid injury from overexertion.




3 Point Contact

How should I climb a ladder?

- Clean muddy or wet soles of shoes/boots before mounting the ladder.
- Always face the ladder when climbing up or down, or when working on the ladder. Always maintain a three point contact when ascending or descending a ladder.
- Do not carry materials in your hands when climbing a ladder. Raise materials in a hoist or attach them to your belt.
- When working from a ladder, keep your centre of gravity between the side rails. Reaching out to either side of the ladder changes your centre of gravity, which can cause the ladder to become unstable.

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DAY THREE: Using Ladders safely

How should I store a ladder?

- Store ladders where they are protected from the weather.
- Never rest a ladder on any of its rungs. Ladders must rest on their side rails.

How should I use a stepladder?


- Use a stepladder that is about one metre (three feet) shorter than the highest point you have to reach. This gives a wider, more stable base and places the shelf of the ladder at a convenient working height.
- Open the stepladder spreaders and shelf fully and lock them in place before using.
- Place the stepladder close to your work area.
- Avoid pushing or pulling the stepladder from the side. Repeated sideways movement can make ladders wobbly, since they are weaker or less stable in those directions.
- Face the stepladder when climbing up or down. Keep your body centred between the side rails. You have climbed too high if your knees are above the top of the stepladder or if you cannot maintain a handhold on the ladder.
- Do not "shift" or "walk" a stepladder when standing on it.
- Do not stand, climb, or sit on the stepladder top or pail shelf.
- Do not overload the ladder. Stepladders are meant for one person.
- Do not climb a stepladder that is leaning against a wall. Use a straight ladder instead.



How should I use an extension ladder?

- Set up an extension ladder so that the upper section rests on the bottom section.
- Raise and lower the ladder from the ground. Ensure that the locking ladder hooks are secure before climbing.
- Maintain minimum overlap of sections, as shown on ladder label.

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DAY Four: Basic Climbing Techniques

Method 1 of 2: Basic Technique (www.wikihow.com)



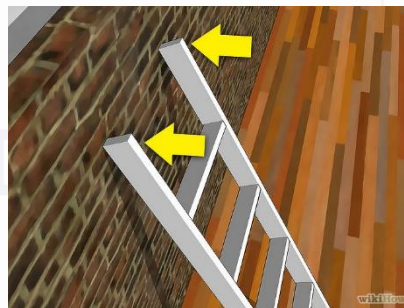
1.

1 Set the ladder at the proper angle by creating a right triangle with your body, as shown in the photo.




2.

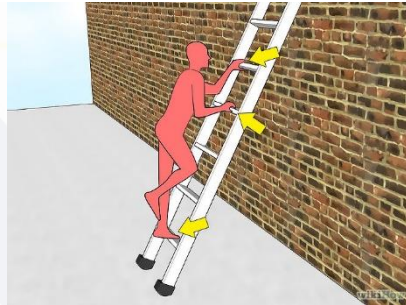
2 Make sure the feet of the ladder can't slip backward. On soft ground, flip up the ladder shoes so the spurs poke into the ground. On decks, screw down a cleat.



3.

3 Make sure the top of the ladder is resting on a flat surface and doesn't slide or wobble when you put weight against it.

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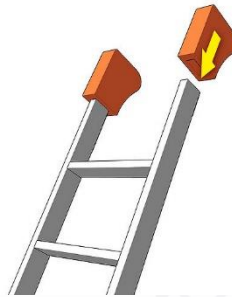


4.

4

When climbing the ladder grab onto the rungs of the ladder using a hand over hand method never letting go of one rung before grabbing the next. Sliding your hands up the beam (side) of a ladder is unsafe because you may not have as secure a grasp as you would when using the rungs to climb with.

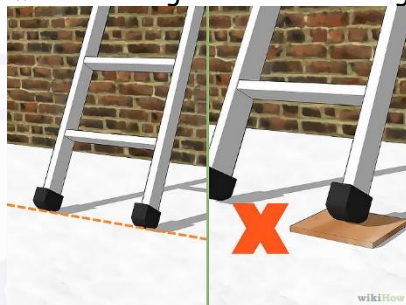
Method 2 of 2: Additional Precautions



1.

1


Use add-on accessories to help stabilize the top of ladders. Rubber or soft plastic "mitts" that slip over the top of the ladder rails provide a good grip on the siding and protect it from ladder damage. Ladder stabilizers are another great add-on accessory. The large rubber pads grip almost any surface to keep the top from slipping sideways and help spread out the load to prevent damage to fragile siding materials like vinyl or aluminium. Stabilizers also span window openings and hold the ladder away from the building to allow work on gutters and overhangs.



2.

2

Level the feet. Note that even with the ladder at the correct angle, it can still tip sideways if the feet aren't level with each other and on solid ground. It's unsafe to stack boards under one of the feet to level the ladder. Instead, scrape out a shallow trench under the high-side foot. The claw of a hammer is perfect for this task.

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3. Finished. Make sure you use the proper shoes - sandals are not acceptable.


Tips

- Before climbing a ladder, which is set on the ground, jump up and down on the first rung to firmly plant it in the soil.
- If you are leaning the ladder against a second story roof or gutters, tie the ladder to roof jacks, clip it to the gutter with bungee cords, or rope it to eyebolts in a 2 x 4 screwed to the fascia. Otherwise, wind can blow the ladder over.

Warnings

- Don't reach off to the side - move the ladder instead. This will entail climbing down and up again and will take much longer. However, keep in mind that most ladder falls occur when the climber reaches too far to the side.
- A fully-extended ladder is top-heavy. Lower it before moving it or you could lose control of it, especially in a wind

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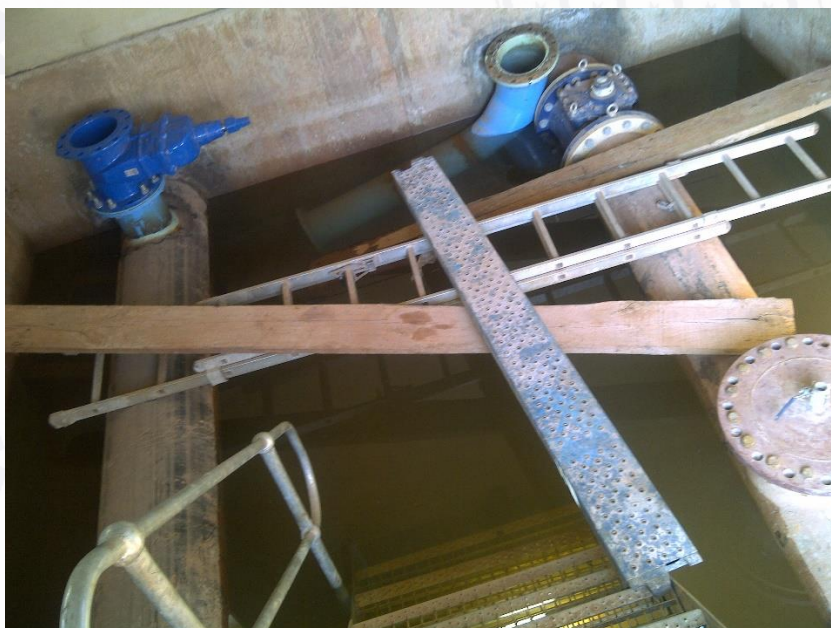
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DAY FIVE: Summary (Page 1 of 2)

Ladders are generally used by both main contractor and subcontractors on site. Not all ladders are safe and of sound construction. Before using the ladder check the ladder using the following checklist or the checklist provided by your safety department.

Use the following checklist to determine if the ladder in the picture is safe?

CHECKLIST	
1. Unsafe condition?	
2. Steps to loose?	
3. Steps damaged?	
4. Uprights damaged?	
5. Non-skid feet?	
6. Unstable joints?	
7. Damaged hinges?	
8. Loose screw/bolts?	
9. Bars damaged?	
10. Free from cracks/splinters?	
11. Extension lock defective?	
12. Retraction rope defective?	
13. Wooden ladder free from paint?	
14. Comply with GSR13A?	



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DAY FIVE: Summary (Page 2 of 2)

<p style="text-align: center;">Face Ladder Going Up & Down</p> <p>When climbing any ladder, you must face it. Never turn out or away.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Keep Centered</p> <p>Follow the "belt buckle rule" by keeping your body centered within the ladder's side rails.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Use 3-Point Contact</p> <p>3-point contact means you have 2 hands and 1 foot or 1 hand and 2 feet in contact with the ladder at all times. It is the safest and most sensible way to go up and down a ladder, and you'll always be sure to have at least one hand on the ladder.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Carry No Loads</p> <p>Carry only small objects in a tool kit on your belt. You cannot carry any load that could cause you to lose your balance. Use hoists or chain falls to lift materials.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">One Person at a Time</p> <p>Wait for the person who went up the ladder first to get all the way off at the top. Then you can climb. This applies when coming down the ladder, too.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Avoid Exerting Force</p> <p>To maintain stability while on the ladder, don't pull, lean, stretch, or make sudden moves. These could all cause you to lose your balance. And, never try to take a shortcut by "walking" a ladder over to a new position.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Be aware when getting on and off</p> <p>Be especially careful as you step onto and off of the ladder. To make sure you have the proper foothold at the top of the ladder, you should be able to fit your foot on the step closest to the upper landing without your toes hitting the wall.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">No standing on top or top step of stepladder</p> <p>On an A-frame or stepladder, climb no higher than the second step from the top. Never climb on the cross bracing. And never sit on any step, including the top.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">No standing on top 3 rungs of straight or extension ladder</p> <p>On straight or extension ladders, you can climb up only to the fourth rung from the top.</p>	 <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">DON'T FALL FOR IT!</p>

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