



# LADDERS

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## Falls from portable ladders (step, straight, combination and extension) are one of the leading causes of occupational fatalities and injuries.

Before you climb a ladder it should be inspected for missing rungs or steps and check their condition for:

- Breaks
- Worn areas
- Cracks
- Damage by heat
- Splits
- Corrosive damage
- Dirt, oil, grease, or any other slip hazard

If the ladder is found to be damaged, it must be tagged and removed from service until it can be repaired, if it cannot be repaired it must be discarded.

**The second step to ladder safety is having a proper set-up. Key guidelines to ladder safety:**

- Make sure that there are no overhead obstructions or power lines in the way.
- Use a guard or barricade when using a ladder in a traffic area .
- Lock or block nearby doors.
- Keep the area around the ladder base free of clutter.
- Rest the ladder base on a solid, level surface.
- Do not use a self-supporting ladder (e.g., stepladder) as a single ladder or in a partially closed position.
- Do not place a ladder on boxes, barrels or other unstable bases to gain additional height.
- Make sure the ladder is about one foot away from the vertical support for every four feet of ladder height. (75 degree angle)
- An extension or straight ladder used to access an elevated surface must extend at least 3 feet above the landing.
- Tie the ladder three feet above all landings.
- Make sure the ladder extends three feet beyond the roof's edge or support point when using a ladder to reach a roof or platform.
- Make sure stepladders are fully open and the spreader is fully locked.
- Never use a ladder outside during strong winds.
- Do not exceed the maximum load rating of a ladder. Be aware of the ladder's load rating and of the weight it is supporting, including the weight of any tools or equipment.

The following actions can cause loss of balance, traction or grip such as:

- Improper footwear/gloves
- Not having a good grip in the first place
- Carrying items while climbing a ladder
- Not seeing or thinking about the hazard

These actions are the primary reasons injuries occur on ladders. **“Think before you act.”**