

KEEPING YOUR CLIMB SAFE

Each year, millions of workers are injured by falls. Many falls happen when people choose a ladder that's not intended for a particular job, or because their equipment is faulty or inadequately maintained.

Workers can face a risk of serious injury while climbing if they:

- Select the wrong ladder for the task
- Reach too far to one side
- Use a ladder improperly
- Improperly position a ladder
- Use a ladder with defective parts
- Hand-carry loads while climbing or descending

Industry standard recognize three general classes of stepladders:

1. **Industrial (Type I)** - three to 20 feet, for heavy duty use requiring no more than a 250 lb. load capacity. Usually for maintenance, construction, or heavy duty work.
2. **Commercial (Type II)** - three to 12 feet, for medium duty use requiring no more than a 225 lb. load capacity. Typical use includes painting and other medium duty tasks.
3. **Household (Type III)** - three to six feet, for light duty use requiring no more than a 200 lb. load capacity. Commonly used for general household tasks, these ladders are not for use with planks or platforms.

There are two primary types of ladders:

Fixed Ladders

Fixed ladders of unbroken length may be constructed of either steel or wood. General requirements for fixed ladders:

- Minimum rated capacity of 200 lbs.
- Minimum rung diameters
 1. 3/4 inch for metal
 2. 1 1/8 inches for wood
- Rungs uniformly spaced, maximum of 12 inches apart
- Cages provided for ladders higher than 20 feet, to a maximum unbroken length of 30 feet
- Landing platforms provided for each 30 feet of height when fixed ladders extend beyond 20 feet
- Fixed ladders should be protected from deterioration

Portable Ladders

- **Stepladders** (maximum 20 foot length)
- **Extension ladders** (8 foot, 16 foot, 24 foot, and 30 foot lengths)
- **Straight ladders** (maximum 30 foot length)

General requirements for portable ladders:

- Stepladders should be equipped with a metal spreader or locking device of sufficient size and strength to securely hold the front and back sections in an open position
- Ladders should be inspected frequently and defective ladders should be withdrawn from service for repair or destruction, and marked, "Dangerous! Do not use"
- The top of a ladder used to access a roof should extend at least three feet above the point of contact
- Non self-supporting ladders should be erected on a sound base, with the base of the ladder set at a distance from the wall or upper support equal to one-quarter the length of the ladder, and placed on a non-slip surface

Two-section ladders should have the following overlap for the two sections:

Height of Ladder	Overlap
Up to and including 36 feet	3 feet
Over 36 feet up to and including 48 feet	4 feet
Over 48 feet up to and including 60 feet	5 feet



LADDER SAFETY	
Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure the ladder firmly on the ground or floor surface • Face the ladder when you climb up or down • Keep equipment in good repair at all times • Use both hands to grasp ladder when climbing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place a ladder in front of door openings or against weak surfaces or windows • Place a ladder on boxes, barrels, or other unstable objects to reach additional heights • Tie or fasten ladders together • Use ladders in a horizontal position, in place of a platform, runway, or scaffold • Climb a ladder if another person is on it • Use metal ladders near live electrical lines • Reposition a ladder while standing on it

**Find additional information on ladder safety in OSHA's General Industry Standards:
 1910.25 - Portable Wood Ladders • 1910.26 - Portable Metal Ladders • 1910.27 - Fixed Ladders**



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