

Working Safely with Ladders

Toolbox Talk



Select the Right Ladder for the Job

- Use a ladder tall enough to reach the height you need
- Make sure it's rated to handle the combined weight of you and your equipment
- Ladders are rated I-A (holds 300 pounds); I (250 pounds); II (225 pounds); III (200 pounds - not usually used on a job)

Inspect Every Ladder before Using It

- Don't use a ladder that has any missing or broken parts
- If so, remove it from service and immediately mark as defective or tagged with "Do Not Use" or similar language
- Don't try to fix a ladder yourself

A ladder should have:

- No missing parts
- Firmly attached slip-resistant steps, rungs, or cleats free of grease or oil
- Tight support braces, bolts, screws, and spreaders
- Safety feet
- Rope in good condition (not worn or frayed)
- No bent parts in metal ladders.

Set Up a Ladder Firmly and Properly

- Survey the area for potential hazards
- Place it on level flooring or ground, if possible
- Extend the ladder at least three feet above the top support
- Anchor the top
- The distance from the ladder's base to the wall should equal one-fourth the ladder's length
- Allow sufficient room to step off the ladder safely - keep the area around the bottom and the top ladder clear
- Secure ladder to prevent movement
- If ladder is placed in front of a door, always block off the door

Climb and Work on Ladders Safely

- Allow only one person at a time on a ladder
- Climb up and down facing the ladder and holding both side rails
- Maintain a 3-point contact (two hands and a foot or two feet and a hand) when climbing/descending a ladder
- Carry tools in a tool belt or raise tools up using a hand line - never carry tools in your hands while climbing up/down a ladder
- Don't stand on the top two stepladder steps or top four ladder rungs
- Move slowly and cautiously on a ladder
- Center your body on the ladder so your belt buckle is between the side rails

TAKE THE TIME TO CHOOSE, INSPECT, AND USE A LADDER SAFELY.

Working Safely with Ladders Quiz

1. Ladders rated below _____ lbs. are not usually used on the job.
 - a. 200
 - b. 250
 - c. 300
 - d. 100
 - e. None of the above
2. If a ladder is found that is in need of repairs, you should try and fix it yourself.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. A ladder should have:
 - a. Safety Feet
 - b. Tight support braces, bolts, screws, and spreaders
 - c. Firmly attached slip-resistant steps, rungs, or cleats that are free of grease/oil
 - d. No missing parts
 - e. All of the above
4. The distance from the ladder's base to the wall should equal 1/4 the ladder's total length.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. When climbing ladders, you should:
 - a. Climb up & down facing the ladder and holding both side rails
 - b. Not stand on the top two stepladder rungs and the top four ladder rungs
 - c. Allow only one person at a time on the ladder
 - d. Climb the ladder as quickly as possible so others behind you can use the ladder
 - e. A, B, C only

Answer Key

1. A; 2. B; 3. E; 4. A; 5. E