

The ladder is a simple tool used for climbing up or down. If used improperly, this simple tool can result in a serious injury or death. Portable ladder falls are one of the leading causes of workplace injuries and fatalities. Choosing the right ladder is the “first step” in ladder safety and depends on the task, related hazards, and work location awareness.

Ladder Material and Selection

Most ladders are made of these common materials which have distinct advantages:

- Wood: Ideal when working around electricity.
- Fiberglass: Rugged, durable, and acceptable to work around electricity when equipped with nonconductive side rails.
- Aluminum: Light weight and rugged though not appropriate for work around electricity.



Inspection

Always inspect the ladder before use! Use the tag at the right (or a similar one) to detail the condition of the ladder and secure it to the ladder. Complete a tag for each ladder. Additionally,

- Ensure ladder has the proper duty rating.
- Confirm ladder is the right length for the task.
- Keep climbing and gripping surfaces clean.
- Inspect all ropes for wear.

LADDER INSPECTION	
<input type="radio"/> STEP	<input type="radio"/> EXTENSION No. _____
INSPECT UNIT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING INSPECTION RECORD	
YES	NO
STEPS, RUNGS, UPRIGHTS & BRACES	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> LOOSE FASTENERS OR OTHER METAL PARTS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> CRACKED, BROKEN, SPLIT OR WORN
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> SLIVERED
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> DAMAGED/WORN NON-SLIP BASES
HINGES	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> LOOSE HINGE
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> LOOSE/BENT SPREADER
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> SPREADER STOP BROKEN
LOCKS & ROPE	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> LOOSE, BROKEN OR MISSING LOCK
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> IMPROPERLY SEATED WHEN EXTENDED
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> WORN OR ROTTED ROPE
GENERAL	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> WOBBLY
SEE OTHER SIDE	

Safety Tips

- Use footwear having clean soles.
- Read all ladder information labels.
- Never stand on the top two rungs.
- Place the ladder on firm and level ground.
- Always descend the ladder before moving it.
- Ask for help when moving extension ladders.
- Avoid using the ladder in inclement weather.
- Ensure all spreaders are extended and locked.
- Guard nearby doors, walkways, and driveways.
- Use a toolbelt or a towline to transport materials.
- Extend the ladder three rungs beyond the roofline.



What I need to do...

- ✓ Choose the right ladder for the task.
- ✓ Thoroughly inspect the ladder before use.
- ✓ Make sure the ladder has stable footing.
- ✓ Wear appropriate footwear (and PPE).
- ✓ Maintain three points of contact at all times (see extension ladder illustration).
- ✓ Always face the ladder when climbing up or down.

NOTE: NEVER USE A DAMAGED LADDER! Tag it and remove from service immediately!



Additional Information

Cal-OSHA Portable Ladder Safety eTool

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/etools/08-001/care.htm>

American Ladder Institute

www.americanladderinstitute.org/?page=BasicLadderSafety

OSHA Quick Card - Portable Ladder Safety

https://www.osha.gov/Publications/portable_ladder_qc.html

Consumer Product Safety Commission - Ladder Safety 101

<http://onsafety.cpsc.gov/blog/2011/12/03/ladder-safety-101/>