

Reason: Ladders are probably the most used and misused piece of access equipment.

Why: Mess around with ladders and they won't forgive.

Outline: This talk will cover before use checks, use of ladders and hazards.



Before Use Checks

- Ladders must be stored correctly and inspected regularly.
- Check for splits or cracks in the stiles and rungs.
- Ensure that none of the rungs are missing or loose.
- Do not use painted ladders, this can hide damaged parts.
- Report defects, label as defective and remove from site.

Q: What checks should you carry out prior to use?

Use Of Ladders

- Work should only be carried out from a ladder when the job is of short duration and can be carried out safely.
- Ladders should be set on a firm base and leaning at the correct angle which is one unit out to four units up.
- Ladders must be tied near top and extend a safe distance above landing stage, unless a hand hold is provided.
- If it can't be secured at the top, secure it at the bottom.

Q: What angle should a ladder be placed at?

- For added safety, if possible and necessary, the base of the ladder should be staked or buried to prevent slipping.
- Ensure your footwear is free from excessive mud or grease before you climb up the ladder.
- Use both hands-on stiles, up and down. Always face the ladder.

NOTES

This image shows a single page from a notebook or ledger. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire surface, providing a guide for writing. The margins are uniform on all sides. There is no handwriting, printed text, or other markings on the page.

TOOLBOX TALK #39

Ladders

NOTES

- Do not overreach from a ladder, always move it.
- If using extension ladders each section must overlap:
 - 2 rungs – for ladders up to 5 metres (closed length)
 - 3 rungs – for ladders 5 – 6 metres (closed length).
 - 4 rungs – for ladders over 6 metres (closed length)

Q: How can the stability of the ladder be improved?

Hazards

- Do not stand a ladder on a drum, box or other unstable base.
- Never attempt to repair broken ladders.
- Never carry loads up ladders – hoist it up.
- Ladder rungs must not be used as improvised ramps.
- When using metal or metal reinforced ladders make sure there are no electrical hazards in the near vicinity.

Q: What precautions should you take when using a metal ladder?

Do you have any questions for me?

Questions for you

Q: What would you do on finding a defective ladder?

Q: What is the correct way to climb a ladder?

REMEMBER:

THE VAST MAJORITY OF LADDER ACCIDENTS OCCUR BECAUSE THE LADDER IS NOT TIED AT THE TOP

Sources: [Using ladders safely - HSE](#) [Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE](#)
[Health and safety in construction - HSE](#) [Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE](#)

For more information

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