

# How to Choose and Set Up Your Ladder

Toolbox Talk 

If you're in a hurry, there's more chance of choosing the wrong ladder or setting it up incorrectly. Take the time to choose and use the right ladder safely.

## Choosing Your Ladder

**Step stool** - Don't use a step stool or small step ladder if you can perform your task a different way, with a paint roller extension pole, for example.

**Step ladder** - A step ladder is a self-supporting, portable ladder used for a wide variety of tasks. They are easily overturned and are not designed to support side weight or work platforms. Side braces must be locked before climbing.

**Platform ladder** - Platform ladders function similar to step ladders, but unlike stepladders, you may use the top platform to perform a task.

**Telescoping ladder** - Telescoping ladders can be rearranged to act as an extension or step ladders. Some have a component that may be elevated to support a platform. Avoid pinch points during setup and takedown.

**Extension ladder** - Extension ladders are commonly used to reach rooftops or elevated walls. Setup is especially important for extension ladders which have feet that can slip or slide out from under the user.

**Job-made ladder** - This ladder is made out of wood at the construction site and is not portable. Correct construction is important for preventing falls.



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## Discussion

What types of ladders are suitable for your tasks?

What surfaces will you be using ladders on and how can you stabilize the feet?

What weight capacity does your task require? For tasks that require more weight on your ladder, how do you determine if the ladder is strong enough?

What types would be dangerous to use or use incorrectly for your job?

## Ladder Inspection

Inspect your ladder before you use it. Note its intended use and weight capacity.

DO NOT USE THE LADDER IF YOU FIND:

- Structural damage such as split or bent side rails
- Missing safety devices or broken rungs or steps
- Grease, dirt or other substances that could cause slips or falls
- Paint, tape or stickers, except warning labels, that could hide defects



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### Ladder Setup

#### STRENGTH

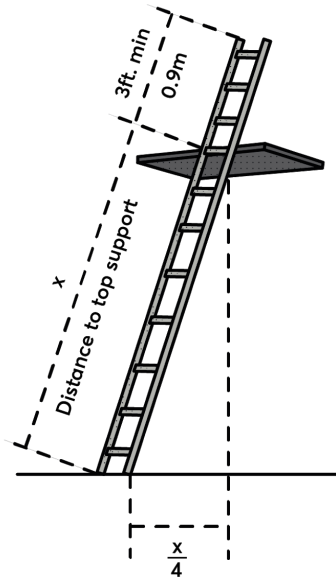
1. Select a ladder that's the correct material, height, and duty rating for the job

#### SURFACE

1. Place the ladder on a stable and level surface.
2. Secure the feet of your ladder using a 2x4 cleat to the deck behind the ladder's feet. In addition to establishing a level base, make sure the feet can't slip backward. On soft ground, flip up the ladder shoes so the spurs poke into the ground

#### STABILITY

1. Extension ladders must be one foot back for every four feet of height (4:1 rule). Extension ladders used to access upper levels must extend at least three feet above the roof edge.
2. Tie off the top of an extension ladder. Do not hang objects at the top of any type of ladder.
3. Ensure the ladder's length will allow you to reach the work area without shifting your "belt buckle" outside of the rails.
4. Be sure the load rating can support the weight of the user and the job materials. Hoist job materials up. Do not carry them.
5. Keep the area around the top and bottom of the ladder clear. Block doors that could present a hazard to ladder stability.



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Given By:

On (MM/DD/YY):

At (Name of Jobsite):

Attendee Name (Print)	Signature
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