

Always choose the correct ladder for the job or task to be performed.

There are many types of ladders, ranging from simple wooden job-built ladders to specialty ladders used for specific jobs. Ladders may be made of timber, aluminum, or fiberglass.

There are three main types of ladders used in the construction industry:

1) extension, 2) step, and 3) multi-purpose.

Keep the following in mind when choosing the right ladder for your job:

- For indoor use, stepladders or multi-purpose ladders are usually recommended. For outdoor work, taller stepladders, multi-purpose, or extension ladders are generally more appropriate.
- Do not use aluminum ladders when working around electricity. Chose a ladder made out of non-conductive material for electrical work, such as when working near overhead power lines.
- Make sure that the ladder is the proper length to do the job safely. Chose a ladder that is designed for how you intend to use it. For example, do not use step ladders in a folded and leaned position in place of a straight ladder.
- Chose a ladder that is capable of supporting your weight and the weight of any materials you will be using. *See the chart below.*

Type	Weight Rating	Duty Rating
1-AA	375 pounds	Super Heavy Duty
1-A	300 pounds	Extra Heavy Duty
1	250 pounds	Heavy Duty Industrial
2	225 pounds	Medium Duty Commercial
3	200 pounds	Light Duty Household



Inspect Ladders Carefully!

All ladders must be inspected periodically by a competent person, and after any occurrence that could affect their safe use.

Inspect ladders before each use, any defective and/or damaged ladders must either be immediately marked in a manner that readily identifies them as defective/damaged, or be tagged with a "Do Not Use" tag or similar language. Defective and/or damaged ladders must not be used and must be removed from service until repaired.

Look for warning signs. Check all ladder components for signs of wear, corrosion and structural failure before each use. **These inspections should include:**

- Rungs** - Check for broken split, cracked, corroded or missing rungs.
- Side Rails** - Check for broken, split, cracked, corroded or missing side rails.
- Cracks** - Check carefully for cracks; they are hard to see. Cracks weaken ladders.
- Excessive Bends** - Check for rungs or side rails with excessive bends. Bent areas are greatly weakened and may fail during use.
- Hardware** - Check for ladders with loose, corroded, or weakened fasteners and hardware.
- Feet** - Check ladders for missing or damaged feet. Ladder feet may have both non-skid pads for use on hard surfaces (concrete), and metal feet for soft surfaces (dirt).
- Coatings or Paint** - Check for paint or other coating hiding defects. Wood ladders shall not be painted or coated with any opaque covering, except for identification or warning labels which may be placed on one face only of a side rail. When other types of ladders are painted it is very hard for the user to observe defects/damage such as cracks or dents and painted areas must be inspected carefully for hidden damage.
- Oil, grease, and other slipping hazards** - Inspect ladders for oil, grease, moisture or other slippery materials before use and clean as necessary.
- Capacity** - Check the capacity label and make sure the ladder has sufficient capacity to hold you and everything you are wearing/carrying.

DO...use the right ladder for the job. Ladder classification and capacity should be clearly labeled on the side rung of the ladder.

DON'T...use step ladders in place of extension ladder or stand above highest "safe standing level" prescribed by the ladder's manufacturer.

DO...look overhead before placing a ladder, with special attention to power lines and other electrical hazards.

DON'T...use ladders less than 10 feet away from electrical lines and assume the area above the ladder is clear of hazards.

DO...set up the ladder on the ground, floor or other level, stable surface and make sure it's properly footed and secure before climbing.

DON'T...use ladder on uneven ground.

DO...take your time climbing and always use the 3-point contact system when working.

DON'T...hurry up a ladder or overreach beyond the side rails. Keep your hips inside the rails.

DO...face the ladder while ascending and descending.

DON'T...turn your back to the ladder at any time.

DO...use a belt designed for ladder work to carry tools or use a bucket to lift objects to the work area.

DON'T...carry heavy objects or tools up the ladder or carry tools in hand.

DO...use a barricade to keep traffic or activity away from the ladder.

DON'T...leave the ladder unattended