

SafetyToolboxTalks

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4 Rules for Ladder Safety Part 1

Four rules cover safe use of ladders. They are:

- Pick the right ladder for the job you are going to do.
- Make sure the ladder is in good condition.
- Set up the ladder correctly.
- Work safely on the ladder.

Let's examine these rules one at a time.

Pick the right ladder:

The ladder should be of the correct type and length. You will probably use an ordinary straight ladder for most purposes. An extension ladder may be required for high work. A step ladder is used when you need a free-standing ladder or one with a tool tray. Some situations may not require a ladder at all. Instead, you may need a scaffold. Never use a metal ladder around any electrical installation.

Check the condition of the ladder:

Never use a damaged ladder. Make sure all parts of the ladder are in good working order, free from corrosion, rust, rot, cracks and other defects. Check the rungs, side rails, braces, hinges, ropes and pulleys. See that the rungs are free of slippery substances such as oil. Never use a painted ladder because the paint can hide defects. To protect it, use a clear preservative instead of paint.

Make sure that the non-slip rubber feet are in good condition. Check overall for any signs of warping or twisting.

Tomorrow we'll look at setting up the ladder.