

Safe Work Procedure - Ladders

Using ladders, and using them correctly, is a very important step towards keeping yourself safe while working. Anytime that you need some extra reach you must use a ladder. Standing on chairs, desks, tables or other items not designed as an approved ladder is prohibited. Employees have been injured throughout the province as a result of using furniture, rather than ladders, to reach high.

Only NFPA, CSA or ANSI Standard approved heavy duty ladders should be used. Always ensure that your ladder and work practices comply with Part 13 of the WorkSafeBC Regulations. Aluminum ladders should never be used near electrical lines or equipment because they can become electrical conductors. You must also consider the load capacity of the ladder/stapladder that you are using.

Procedure:

Before using the ladder you need to ensure that it will be safe to use. Check the ladder for any visible defects, clear any material/debris away from the base of the ladder, make sure that the ladder is level and that the ladder is on a firm surface.

Step Ladders

- Step ladders are not designed to be used folded up and leaning against a surface, do not use them in this fashion.
- A step ladder must be fully opened with its spreaders properly in place.
- A firm and level surface is mandatory.
- The top two steps of a step ladder are not for standing on.

Straight/Extension Ladders

- Raising the ladder:
 - Place the feet of the ladder against the wall.
 - Starting at the top, lift the ladder and 'walk' your way under the ladder until it is vertical.
 - Lean the ladder against the wall at the proper angle, generally considered to be 4:1.
 - For stability the ladder needs to extend 1 metre above the work surface.
- For stability:
 - Use non-slip feet or having a partner heel the bottom of the ladder.
 - Anchor the ladder at the top.
- If you are using an extension ladder you must also:
 - Use rope/lanyard to extend the ladder to the desired height and then tie the rope/ lanyard to the lower section of the ladder.
 - Ensure dogs on extension ladder are correctly position prior to using ladder.
 - On slippery surfaces, tying the ladder or nailing cleats to the floor can also prevent slipping.
- If descending from the roof top:
 - Grasp the ladder with both hands.

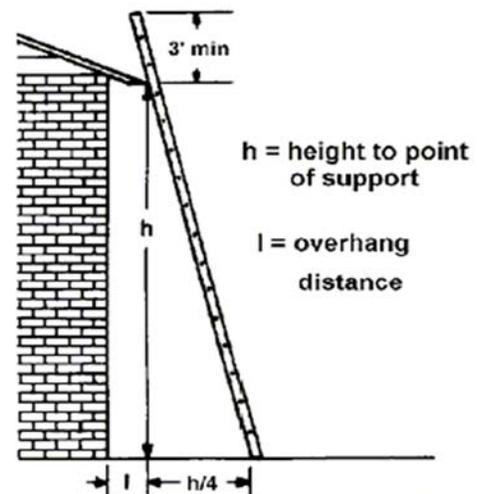


Figure 2. The base of a straight ladder should be one foot out of every four of height to the point of support

- Swing one leg around the ladder and place your foot on a rung below the ladders point of contact with the roof edge.
- Carefully place other foot on ladder rung and descend using the 3 points of contact method.

Safety for All Ladder Types

- Use the right ladder for the job, and sometimes no ladder is suitable.
- Ladders must be inspected prior to use, looking for any defects or damage.
- Ensure rungs are clean.
- Always keep 3 points of contact (as an example, 1 hand and 2 feet).
- Never overreach or lean out to one side while using a ladder.
- Never carry heavy or awkward equipment/objects on the ladder with you.
- If you discover a ladder that is damaged, remove it from service until it is repaired.

Post Use

- When you have finished using a ladder for the day, inspect it before returning it to storage. Ensure all ladders are returned in good working order.

Summary

- Wear all required PPE
- Ensure the work area is safe to work in
- Use the right ladder for the right job
- Never stand on the top rung
- Inspect for defects before use
- Never use anything in place of a ladder that was not designed to be a ladder!