



Safety Talk



Ladder & Step Stool Safety

Definition of a Ladder

A ladder is a vertical or inclined set of rungs or steps. Ladders of different types work in different ways and are designed for specific tasks. Ladders and step stools are to be used as access only and for short term use.

Different Grade of Ladders and their purpose:

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard Z11-12 recommends different lengths for different rating (or grades) of step ladders.

Grade	Description of Grade	Maximum Length
1AA	Construction and industrial use; special duty with load rating of 170 kg (375 lbs)	3.6 m (12 ft)
1A	Construction and industrial use; extra heavy duty with load rating of 136 kg (300 lbs)	6 m (20 ft)
1	Construction and industrial use; heavy duty with load rating of 113 kg (250 lbs)	6 m (20 ft)
2	Tradesmen and farm; medium duty with a load rating of 102 kg (225 lbs)	3.6 m (12 ft)
3	Household; light duty with load rating of 91 kg (200 lbs)	2 m (6.5 ft)

** Grade 3 ladder is not acceptable in the workplace

What to avoid when using a ladder:

- Do not overreach. Move a ladder when needed.
- Do not "shift" or "walk" a ladder when standing on it.
- Do not stand, climb, or sit on the stepladder top or pail shelf.
- Do not stand on or above the top two rungs or steps of the stepladder.
- Do not overload. Stepladders are meant for one person.
- Do not use ladders on slippery or uneven surfaces
- Do not climb the back of a stepladder.
- Do not push or pull stepladders sideways.
- Do not use ladders in passageways, doorways, driveways or other locations where a person or vehicle can hit it. Set up suitable barriers or lock doors shut.
- Do not use a damaged ladder, it should be taken out of service.

How to check a ladder before use:

- Check the load rating that is marked on the stepladder.
- Use a stepladder that is about 1 m (3 ft) shorter than the highest point you have to reach.
- Open the stepladder spreaders and shelf fully and lock the braces.
- Check stability. Ensure that all ladder feet are on a firm, level and non-slippery surface.
- Place a stepladder at right angles to the work.
- Keep the stepladder close to the work.
- Face the stepladder when climbing up or down. You have climbed too high if your knees are above top of the stepladder or if you cannot maintain a handhold on the ladder.
- Maintain a firm grip. Use both hands when climbing.
- Check rails and rungs for dents, cracks and breaks
- Ensure the rope is on an extension ladder



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