

Ladder Safety



What's wrong with this picture?

Safety Hazard #1: Over-reaching – Over-reaching is one very common mistake people make when working on ladders. Don't do it. If you can't reach it without over-extending yourself and your center of gravity, move the ladder!

Safety Hazard #2: Standing at the very top of the ladder – The very top of the ladder was not designed to be used as a step. You can easily lose your balance and fall when standing at the very top.

Safety Hazard #3: Fewer than three points of contact – It's very important to maintain three points of contact on a ladder. For example, use two feet and one hand, or use two hands and one foot. Never try to balance yourself on only one foot on a ladder.

Safety Hazard #4: Ladders with broken or missing rungs or feet – Inspect all ladders for defects before using them. A safe ladder is one that's in good shape.

Safety Hazard #5: Uneven surfaces – Place the ladder on a sturdy, level surface. Don't use blocks, bricks, or pieces of lumber to level or stabilize a ladder. These can cause extreme instability which can easily result in a fall.

And a few more ladder safety tips:

Set up extension ladders using the 4 to 1 rule. The distance from the wall to the base of the extension ladder should be 1/4 of the distance from the base of the ladder to where it touches the wall higher up.

When climbing onto a roof, make sure the ladder extends at least three feet above the roofline. Tie the extension ladder down to prevent it from slipping.

Never assume a new or young worker has used a ladder before. Take time to properly instruct all new or young employees on safe ladder use.