

Ladder safety: set it up right

A ladder is a work platform of last resort. Most ladder incidents trace back to the set-up, not the ladder itself.

Key points

- Set the ladder on firm, level footing and make it long enough for the job.
- A non-self-supporting ladder should lean at about 75 degrees from horizontal (roughly one unit out for every four up).
- When the ladder is used to reach an upper landing it should extend about 1 m (3 ft) above that landing, and be secured so it cannot move.
- Do not carry heavy or bulky items up or down a ladder. Hoist them or use another method.
- If the work cannot be done safely from a ladder, use a work platform instead.
- Face the ladder and keep three points of contact (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand).

Ask the crew

- Is there a safer way to do this task than a ladder?
- Who checks the ladder for damage before use?
- Where will we secure it today?

Where this comes from

OHS Regulation, ss. 13.5 and 13.6 (portable ladders) (Part 13 Ladders, Scaffolds and Temporary Work Platforms)
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation/part-13-ladders-scaffolds-and-temporary-work-platforms>

Your site's own procedures and the equipment manufacturer's instructions always apply. This sheet is general information, not legal advice.

Sign-off sheet

Date: _____ Location: _____ Presented by: _____

Name (print)	Signature	Date