

Ladders

Overview

This document covers pre-use checks, use of ladders, the associated hazards and restrictions.

Pre-use checks

- 1) Ladders must be stored correctly and inspected regularly.
- 2) Check for splits or cracks in the stiles and rungs and that none of the rungs are missing or loose.
- 3) Don't use painted ladders as paint can hide damaged parts.
- 4) Report defects, label as defective and remove from site.

Safe use of ladders

- 1) Only light work of a short duration, with low risk of falling, should be carried out from a ladder.
- 2) Ladders should be set on a firm base and lean at the correct angle (one unit out to four units up).
- 3) Ladders must be tied near the top and extend a safe distance above the landing stage, unless a separate handhold is provided (usually one metre or five rungs).
- 4) If it can't be secured at the top, it may be possible to secure it at the bottom.
- 5) Ensure your footwear is free from excessive mud or grease before you climb up the ladder.
- 6) When climbing up or down, use both hands on the stiles. Always face the ladder.
- 7) Don't overreach from a ladder. Always move it.

Hazards

- 1) Never stand a ladder on a drum, box or other unstable base.
- 2) Never attempt to repair broken ladders.
- 3) Never carry loads up ladders – use a hoist.
- 4) Ladder rungs must not be used as improvised ramps.
- 5) When using metal or metal-reinforced ladders, make sure there are no electrical hazards nearby.

Restrictions

- 1) The law requires that careful consideration is given before the use of a ladder is approved.
- 2) You may not be allowed to use a ladder to do a job for which you have used one in the past.

Stepladders

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- 1) Use a mobile scaffold tower or MEWP, if possible, instead.
- 2) Check treads, stiles, hinges and restraining rope before use.
- 3) If the step ladder is damaged tell your supervisor and place it where no – one else can use it.
- 4) Only ever use on a firm, level base and don't work higher than two thirds up the step ladder (handheld).
- 5) Do not place boards between pairs of stepladders to form an improvised working platform.
- 6) Wooden steps should not be painted; it might hide defects.
- 7) Don't over-reach or apply a sideways loading to stepladders – return to ground level and move them.
- 8) Ensure steps are fully extended before you go up.

Health and safety

Always make sure you check the ladder before you use it for any broken parts do not repair it yourself. Do not carry loads up a ladder either.

Summary

Make sure you're checking the condition of the ladder before you use it and you know how to safely use the ladder. The law requires careful consideration before allowing someone to use a ladder so think carefully.

TOOL BOX TALK RECORD

Project Name:		Phase:	
Site Address:			
Job No:		Date of talk:	
Name of person giving Tool Box Talk:			
Person giving Tool Box Talk employed by:			
Start Time			
End Time			
Name (Capitals)	Signature	Trade	Employer

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Feedback arising from Talk



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