

## Ladder Safety

Falls are the leading cause of death in construction and annually make up nearly a third of those deaths. Employers can prevent most ladder fall hazards by taking the following safety measures:



**PLAN. PROVIDE. TRAIN.**  
Three simple steps to preventing falls.

### PLAN Ahead to Get the Job Done Safely.

- Deciding how the job will be done.
- What tasks will be involved.
- What safety equipment may be needed to complete each task.
- Before starting work, survey the area for potential hazards.
- A competent person must visually inspect all ladders before use for any defects.

**PROVIDE** the Right Ladder for the Job with the Proper Load Capacity. Select a ladder based on the expected load capacity (duty rating), the type of work to be done and the correct height. There are five categories of ladder duty ratings.

Type	Duty Rating	Use	Load
IAA*	Special Duty	Rugged	375 lbs.
IA	Extra Duty	Industrial	300 lbs.
I	Heavy Duty	Industrial	250 lbs.
II	Medium Duty	Commercial	225 lbs.
III	Light Duty	Household	200 lbs.

Source for Types IA, I, II, III: Subpart X—Stairways and Ladders, Appendix A (American National Standards Institute (ANSI)) 14.1, 14.2, 14.5 (1982) of OSHA's Construction standards. Source for Type IAA: ANSI 14.1, 14.2, 14.5 (2009), which are non-mandatory guidelines.

## NIOSH Ladder Safety App

### Climbing for work?

The Ladder Safety App is designed to improve extension and step ladder safety - a concern for those working in construction or any other task that requires ladder use. To learn more, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/falls/mobileapp.html> or scan QR code.



### March is National Ladder Safety Month:

Every step matters: From step stools to extension ladders, make sure you're putting the right foot forward. Remember bringing it up to a toolbox talk.



**TRAIN** Workers to Use Ladders Safely. Employers must train each worker to recognize and minimize ladder-related hazards.

### Common Ladder Hazards

- Damaged.
- Ladders on slippery or unstable surface.
- Unlocked ladder spreaders.
- Standing on the top step or top cap.
- Loading ladder beyond rated load.
- Ladders in high-traffic location.
- Reaching outside ladder side rails.
- Ladders in close proximity to electrical wiring/equipment.



### Safe Ladder Use - DO:

- Maintain a 3-point contact (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) when climbing/ descending a ladder.
- Face the ladder when climbing up or descending.
- Keep the body inside the side rails.
- Use extra care when getting on or off the ladder at the top or bottom. Avoid tipping the ladder over sideways or causing the ladder base to slide out.
- Carry tools in a tool belt or raise tools up using a hand line. Never carry tools in your hands while climbing up/down a ladder.
- Extend the top of the ladder three feet above the landing.
- Keep ladders free of any slippery materials.

### Safe Ladder Use - DO NOT:

- Place a ladder on boxes, barrels, or unstable bases.
- Use a ladder on soft ground or unstable footing.
- Exceed the ladder's maximum load rating.
- Tie two ladders together to make them longer.
- Ignore nearby overhead power lines.
- Move or shift a ladder with a person or equipment on the ladder.
- Lean out beyond the ladder's side rails.
- Use an extension ladder horizontally like a platform.