

Ladder Safety

FOLLOW THESE BASIC RULES:

- Never use a ladder that is damaged in any way – always inspect it before you use it
- Always use safety features (safety feet, spreaders, locking devices), and don't use the ladder if safety features are missing or damaged
- Don't exceed the weight limit – there should be a label to show the maximum weight
- Face the ladder when going up or coming down
- Never try to move a ladder when you're on it
- Don't use a metal ladder when working near live electrical wires

EXTENSION LADDERS CAN BE ESPECIALLY TRICKY:

- Use the "4 to 1" Rule – the base of the ladder should be one foot from the wall for every four feet of distance between the ground and the support point
- The top of the ladder should extend at least three feet from the support point
- Never place a ladder against a door, window, or other weak support point
- Stay centered between the ladder rails
- Don't work on a ladder if it's very windy

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE – *True or False*

1. Ladder accidents rarely result in serious injuries.
2. It doesn't matter what kind of ladder you use as long as it's in good condition.
3. Before you use a ladder, you should make sure it is the right height for the job and will support your weight.
4. You can safely use an extension ladder with a loose rung or frayed rope as long as you know about the problem and are careful.
5. It's safe to climb to the top step of a ladder or the top rung of a straight ladder to get extra height as long as you have a good sense of balance.
6. If you can't reach a spot while up on a ladder, try to reposition it without wasting time and getting down to move it.