



# Falls: Extension Ladders

*Each year, construction workers fall from ladders and are injured or die. Most of these falls are from extension ladders and occur when the ladder slips, the supports move, or the worker loses balance.*

## Raul's Story

Raul was climbing down a 24-foot extension ladder. Suddenly the ladder slipped. He lost his balance and fell 12 feet onto a concrete surface. Raul suffered head injuries and a broken hand.

- ✘ **Have you ever fallen or do you know anyone who has fallen from an extension ladder? If so, what happened?**
- ✘ **How could this incident have been prevented?**

## Remember This

- Whenever possible, use an aerial lift or scaffold to work at heights.
- Conduct regular inspections and maintenance on extension ladders. Inspect the rails, rungs, feet, and spreaders or rung locks for defects or damage **every time** you use it. If you see any damage, **tag it** "do not use" and request another ladder.

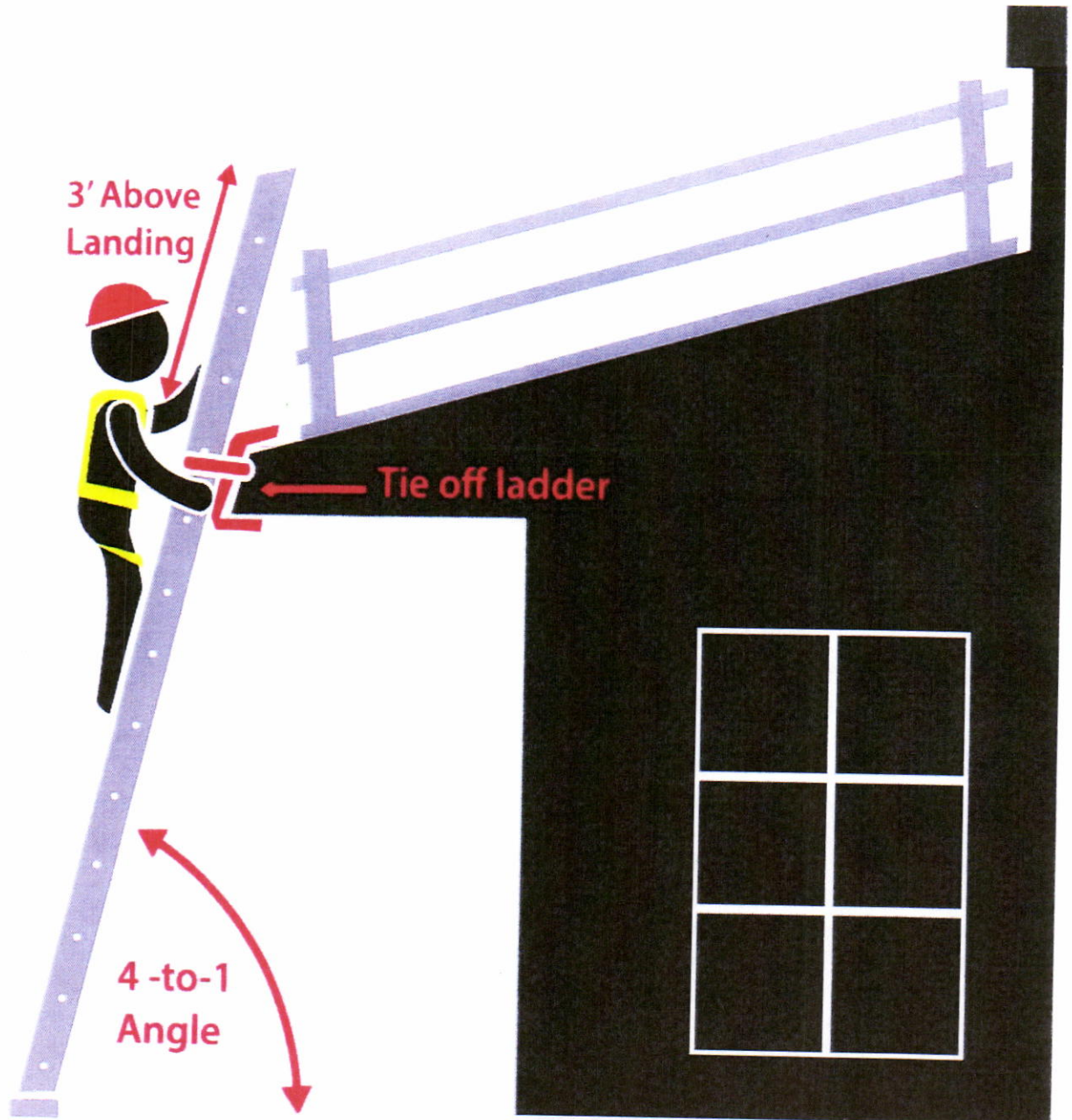
- **Always** check your ladder's duty rating to make sure it will support you and your toolbelt!
- Use both hands when climbing up and down a ladder.

## Placement tips

- Set your ladder on a solid, stable base and at the correct 4-to-1 angle: for every 4 rungs, place the ladder back 1 foot. As a check, put your feet on the feet of the ladder and extend your arms straight forward; you should just be able to touch a rung of the ladder.
- Use the NIOSH Ladder Safety app to check the placement of your ladder (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/falls/mobileapp.html>).
- Screw a 2' x 4' cleat to the ground behind the ladder's feet to prevent the ladder from slipping backward.
- Tie off the top of the ladder, and the bottom if possible, to prevent it from slipping sideways.
- Extend the ladder 3 feet above the landing.



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- ✘ Inspect your ladder for damage before use. If damaged, do not use it and ask for another.
- ✘ Set your ladder at the correct 4-to-1 angle.
- ✘ Tie off the top of the ladder to prevent it from slipping sideways.
- ✘ Extend the ladder 3 feet above the landing.