



Provide. Extension Ladders and Fall Prevention

What is an Extension Ladder?

Also known as “portable ladders,” extension ladders usually have two sections that operate in brackets or guides allowing for adjustable lengths. Because extension ladders are not self-supporting they require a stable structure that can withstand the intended load.

PLAN Ahead to Get the Job Done Safely

- To determine the correct ladder, consider your weight plus the weight of your load. Do not exceed the load rating and always include the weight of all tools, materials and equipment.
- A competent person must visually inspect all extension ladders before use for any defects such as: missing rungs, bolts, cleats, screws and loose components. Where a ladder has these or other defects, it must be immediately marked as defective or tagged with “Do Not Use” or similar language.
- Set the ladder at the proper angle. When a ladder is leaned against a wall, the bottom of the ladder should be one-quarter of the ladder’s working length away from the wall. For access to an elevated work surface, extend the top of the ladder three feet above that surface or secure the ladder at its top.
- Set the base of the ladder so that the bottom sits securely and so both side rails are evenly supported. The ladder rails should be square to the structure against which it is leaning with both footpads placed securely on a stable and level surface.
- Secure the ladder’s dogs or pawls before climbing. • When using a ladder in a high-activity area, secure it to prevent movement and use a barrier to redirect workers and equipment. If the ladder is placed in front of a door, always block off the door.

PROVIDE the Right Extension 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.

To avoid falls, 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.
- 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.