



Owner: SFG (NW) Ltd – Shopfront Group Health and Safety.  
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Target: All SFG work at height colleagues.

## Safe Use of Ladders and Stepladders – Minimise the Risk of Fall

### Minimise the Risk of Fall from a Ladder.

Once your pre-checks are all complete and satisfactory, understand the simple precautions you can take to prevent a fall.

- Only carry light tools and light materials up the ladder.
- Don't overreach from the ladder. Stay within the stiles, and if you find you need to reach over to carry out the task then come down and move the ladder.
- Ensure that the ladder comfortably reaches the task. Don't be tempted to access the top 3 rungs under any circumstance to reach the task. Get a bigger ladder or arrange alternative safer Work at Height equipment.
- Use the 1 in 4 rule when leaning a ladder against a wall. 1 unit out for every 4 units up. Or an angle of 75-degrees.
- Always keep a good grip on the ladder while ascending or descending, and never slide down the stiles.
- Do not try to move or extend the ladder while stood on it. Get down and move it safely.
- Ladders should always be on solid level ground, never anything that can move such as bricks, pallets, tower scaffolds, moving elevating platforms, vans, flatbed trucks etc.
- Maintain 3 points of contact when climbing, and at the work position wherever possible. (a hand and two feet). Where you cannot maintain a handhold for more than a moment consider an alternative safer method of working.
- For a leaning ladder have a strong flat resting point, avoiding things like plastic gutters or fascia boards, and secure the ladder by tying to prevent outward and sideways movement. Also consider the use of upper and lower stability devices.

### When Using a Stepladder.

- Check all four feet are in contact with the ground.
- Check the steps are level, clean and in good condition.
- Only use stepladders for lightweight jobs.
- Don't overreach.
- Avoid standing on the top three steps unless there is a suitable extended hand hold rail.
- Where possible position the stepladder to work face on rather than sideways on where exerting pressure (i.e. drilling a wall) may cause you to topple the stepladder. This is known as side loading.
- Maintain 3 points of contact in the working position.

## Ladder Standards.

In the workplace or on any building or maintenance site, the use of domestic ladders of any sort is forbidden. Remember, domestic ladders and step ladders are just that, to be used very occasionally in a domestic situation. They are much lighter than commercial ladders and have a much lower weight tolerance.

If you are providing or using ladders in any workplace or commercial situation, then your ladder or stepladder must meet or exceed the requirements of EN131 which has replaced the BS2037 and BS1129 standards.

Damage or defects would require you to take the ladder out of service and have it repaired or replaced. Do not attempt to use it or let anyone else use it. (Even if they insist it'll only be for 2-minutes!)

**Safety First.** If in any doubt over the safety of the ladder/stepladder or any components – **DO NOT USE** and seek advice.

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Information and credit. Ladder Association ~ <https://ladderassociation.org.uk>

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