

# LADDER SAFETY TIPS

Ladders are an integral piece of equipment in many industries and workplaces, but they also are a major hazard if not be used properly. According to OSHA, falls from portable ladders are one of the leading causes of occupational deaths and injuries.

## Specifications

- Ladder rungs, steps, and cleats must be parallel and spaced uniformly, between 10 and 14 inches apart, says OSHA.
- Portable ladders should have a minimum clear width of 11.5 inches, and 16 inches for fixes ladders, and this should be measured out before the ladder safety systems are installed.



## Maintenance

- Ladders should be used only for the purpose for which they were designed.
- Inspect ladder before initial use during each work shift, and as frequently as possible to identify potential defects or hazards that may endanger the users.
- Any ladder that is found to have structural issues or any other kind of defect should be tagged “Dangerous: Do Not Use” immediately, or with similar verbiage that follows OSHA’s standard.
- Ladders should not be used by anyone until they have been repaired or replaced.

## Using Ladders

- Employees should face the ladder when going up or down and have at least one hand always grasping the ladder.
- On portable ladders, maintain three-pointed contact, meaning two hands and a foot, or two feet and one hand, on the ladders all the time
- Keep your body toward the middle of steps.
- Do not carry any object or load while going up or down that could cause you potentially lose your balance and fall off.



## Portable Ladder

- The rungs should be corrugated, knurled, dimpled, coated with skid-resistant material, or treated to minimize the risk of slipping and falling.
- Use them on stable, level surfaces, unless secured to prevent displacement, and do not load beyond the maximum intended weight.
- OSHA requires that extension or straight ladders used to access a higher surface must extend at least 3 feet above the point of support, and employees should not stand on the three top rungs.