

Ladders

Ladders - Portable

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What are portable ladders?

A portable ladder is a ladder that can be easily moved or carried. Portable ladders are available in various grades: light duty or grade 3; medium duty or grade 2; heavy duty or grade 1.

What should you know about portable ladders before using them?

Falls from portable ladders are a major source of serious injury. Be aware of the hazards and take proper precautions to prevent falling.

Incidents involving ladders are usually caused by:

- Using the wrong ladder for the specific job.
- Using ladders that are defective or in poor condition.
- Improper care or use, including incorrect positioning, not securing the ladder properly, placing on poor footing, etc.
- Workers not being trained adequately to maintain, use or work from ladders safely.

What should you do before using a portable ladder?

- Use a ladder designed for your task. Consider the strength, type, length and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approval.
- Read and follow all the labels and markings on the ladder.
- Make sure the load rating is indicated on the ladder and is appropriate for the user, equipment, and task.
- Inspect the ladder before and after each use.
- Reject and tag any ladders that have defects. Have faulty ladders repaired or thrown out.
- Get help when handling a heavy or long ladder.
- Keep ladders away from power wires, and if electricity is a hazard, a fibreglass ladder should be used.
- Tie off extensions or straight ladders at the top and secure bottom to prevent them from slipping.
- Set up barricades and warning signs when using a ladder in a doorway or passageway.
- Before mounting a ladder, clean the boot soles if they are muddy or slippery. Avoid climbing with wet soles. Ensure that footwear is in good condition.
- Face the ladder when going up or down and when working from it.
- Keep the centre of your body within the middle of the side rails.
- Consider having another worker hold and support the base of the ladder when needed

Refer to safety regulations for specific measurement requirements. Refer to the CSA Z11-18 (R2022) Portable Ladders standard or the most current version for more requirements.

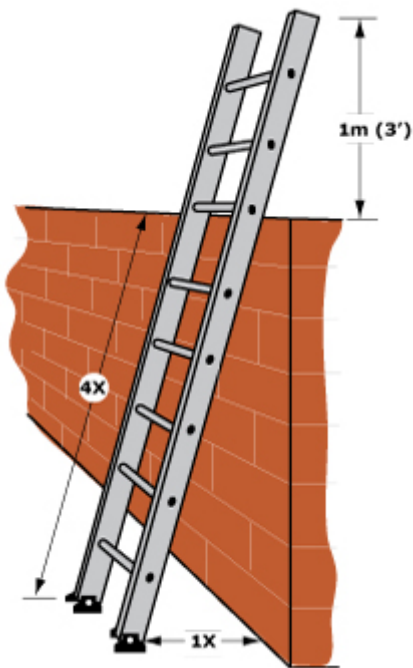
What should you avoid when using a portable ladder?

- Do not use a ladder in a horizontal position as a scaffold plank or runway.
- Do not carry objects in your hands while on a ladder. Hoist materials or attach tools to a belt.
- Do not work from the top three rungs. The higher a person goes on a ladder, the greater the possibility that the ladder will slip out at the base.
- Do not use items such as a chair, barrel or box as a makeshift ladder.
- Do not use a portable ladder when other types of equipment and safe means of access are available. Replace a ladder with a fixed stairway or scaffold.

- Do not join two short ladders to make a longer ladder. Side rails are not strong enough to support the extra load.
- Do not paint wooden ladders. The paint may hide defects. Wood preservatives or clear coatings may be used.

How should you set up the ladder?

- Make sure to set up the ladder at the required angle, using the 4-to-1 Rule: For every 4 feet (1.2 metres) up, place the base of your ladder 1 foot (0.3 metres) from the wall or upper support it rests against. This placement will set up the ladder with a pitch of 75 degrees, creating the ideal angle for climber balance, ladder strength, and helps prevent the ladder from slipping.
- Make sure always to follow the instructions provided by the manufacturer.



- Extend the ladder at least 1 m (3 ft) above the landing platform or the point of support.
- Place the ladder on a firm, level footing. Use a ladder with slip-resistant feet or secure blocking. Brace or tie the bottom of the ladder.
- Rest both side rails on the top support and secure the ladder to prevent slipping.

What should you know about climbing portable ladders?

- Check for overhead power lines and other hazards before setting up a ladder.

- Clear the area around the base and top of the ladder of debris, tools and other objects.
- Wear a safety harness and tie the lanyard off to a proper anchor (e.g., designed fixed support, temporary fixed support, or existing structural feature or equipment) when working 3 m (10 ft) or more off the ground or when working with both hands. Make sure that you have been trained on how to use [fall protection](#) devices safely.
- Ensure that only one person is on a single-width ladder. Only one person is allowed on each side of a double-width ladder.
- Maintain three-point contact by keeping two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand on the ladder at all times.
- Grasp the rungs when climbing a ladder, not the side rails. If your foot slips on a ladder, holding onto rungs is easier than holding onto the side rails.



3 Point Contact

- Wear protective footwear with slip-resistant soles and heels.
- Ensure that all electrical equipment used during ladder work is in good condition and properly grounded.
- Rest frequently to avoid arm fatigue and disorientation when the work requires you to look up and reach above your head.
- Drape your arms over a rung and rest your head against another rung or side rail if you become dizzy or panicky. Climb down slowly.

What should you avoid when climbing portable ladders?

- Do not use ladders when a safe means of access is available and practical.
- Do not use a ladder in passageways, doorways, driveways, or other locations where a person or vehicle can hit it. Set up suitable barricades or lock the doors shut.
- Do not place a ladder against flexible or moveable surfaces.

- Do not straddle the space between a ladder and another object.
- Do not erect ladders on boxes, carts, tables, scaffolds, or other unstable surfaces.
- Do not use ladders on ice, mud, or other slippery surfaces.
- Do not stand a ladder on any of its rungs. Ladders must rest on both side rails.
- Do not allow anyone to stand under a ladder.
- Do not support ladders on their rungs.
- Do not overreach from a ladder; move as required.
- Do not use any type of ladder near overhead power lines unless the safe distance is maintained. Check with your [local jurisdiction](#) as this distance may be regulated in your

area. 



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