



GBCA SAFETY TOOLBOX TALK

LADDER SAFETY: THE BASICS

This Toolbox Talk looks at a common fall hazard on the construction site and at home: **Falls from Ladders**. Whether at home or the construction job site, there are correct and safe ways to use ladders.

Following these lists of basic ladder use rules will help you be safer at work and at home.

Always inspect a ladder before use. Pay attention for the following items:

- Look for faults, such as broken rungs or rails.
- For an extension ladder, inspect the pulleys, ropes, and locks for excessive wear.
- Make sure that all footings and pads still provide a non-skid surface.
- Check that all factory stickers are clear and legible, as per ladder inspection and OSHA requirements. Unmarked ladders need to be removed from service.

If any defects are found, the ladder should be tagged as defective/unsafe and taken out of service.

When using a ladder, remember the following tips:

- Make sure that you're using the right type of ladder for the application. For example, closed "A" frame ladders should not be leaned up against walls and used like straight ladders.
- When setting up a ladder, make sure the ground it is set upon is level and stable. Do not use other objects to raise the height of the ladder. If the ladder is not tall enough, get a taller one.
- Always face the ladder when ascending or descending, and use both hands to grasp it securely. If you need tools, carry them in a tool belt or pull them up with a rope after you reach your destination.
- Remember the 3-Point Rule: At least two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand, should be in contact with the ladder at all times.
- Keep your body between the side rails of the ladder: avoid over-reaching. This reduces the chance of the ladder tipping over and/or the user falling off.