

Toolbox Talk: Ladder Safety

Choosing the Right Ladder

Always choose the correct ladder for the job or task to be performed.

There are many types of ladders, ranging from simple wooden job-built ladders to specialty ladders used for specific jobs. Ladders may be made of timber, aluminum, or fiberglass. There are three main types of ladders used in the construction industry: 1) extension, 2) step, and 3) multi-purpose.

Keep the following in mind when choosing the right ladder for your job:

- For indoor use, stepladders or multi-purpose ladders are usually recommended. For outdoor work, taller stepladders, multi-purpose, or extension ladders are generally more appropriate.
- Do not use aluminum ladders when working around electricity. Chose a ladder made out of non-conductive material for electrical work, such as when working near overhead power lines.
- Make sure that the ladder is the proper length to do the job safely.
- Chose a ladder that is designed for how you intend to use it. For example, do not use step ladders in a folded and leaned position in place of a straight ladder.
- Chose a ladder that is capable of supporting your weight and the weight of any materials you will be using. See the chart below.

Type	Weight Rating	Duty Rating
1-AA	375 pounds	Super Heavy Duty
1-A	300 pounds	Extra Heavy Duty
1	250 pounds	Heavy Duty Industrial
2	225 pounds	Medium Duty Commercial
3	200 pounds	Light Duty Household



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Discussion leader duties:

Obtain a ladder that you or an employee can use during the discussion to demonstrate key points.

What this Toolbox Talk covers:

This toolbox talk reviews how to choose the correct type of ladder.

Discussion notes:

Emphasize the importance of choosing the right ladder for the job. Note that 129 employees were killed in 2005 due to falls from ladders.

Review Questions:

1) What are the three main types of ladders?

Answer: Extension, step, and multi-purpose.

2) What ladders are good to use around electricity?

Answer: Fiberglass.

3) When are aluminum ladders not appropriate for use?

Answer: When working around electricity.

Talk Given By: _____ **Date:** _____
Company: _____ **Location:** _____

Printed Name	Signature

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