

DON'T FALL FOR IT!

Fact Sheet #2

Choosing and Inspecting Ladders



"You really got to weigh what you're going to get. You're taking a chance on this bad ladder for a day's pay. Maybe you'll get the day's pay if you get away with it. But if you don't get away with it, what's gonna happen to your family, to you, to the people around you?"

Bill Millea, Roofer whose stepfather was injured in a fall when two men climbed an old ladder at once.

Building and construction workers use ladders every day. Yet, like any piece of equipment that's not properly maintained, used, and respected, they can let you down.

Whenever you reach for a ladder, your **first step** should always be to think about which ladder is right for the job.

Choose Your Ladder Based On:

Type

There are two types of ladders: fixed and portable. Fixed ladders are in place on buildings; portable ladders are movable. If you require a portable ladder, assess whether you need a self-supporting ladder, like an "A" frame, or a straight or extension ladder.

Length

To determine the maximum working height on a portable ladder, check its duty rating sticker for the highest standing level and add 5 feet.

Duty Rating

Check the duty rating sticker to be sure the ladder can support you and your tools. Construction jobs should use a Type 1, 1A, or 1AA, which hold up to 250, 300, and 375 pounds, respectively.

Material

Be sure your ladder is made of a safe material for the environment you're working in. Use a fiberglass ladder if there's a chance of contact with electricity. When using a wooden ladder, be sure it's treated but not painted.

Ladder Inspection Checklist

OSHA Regulations Made Simple

1

Check for cracks, bends, splits, or corrosion.

2

Check all rungs and step connections.

3

Make sure the ladder's feet work properly and have slip-resistant pads.

4

Make sure rung locks and spreader braces are working.

5

Be sure all bolts and rivets are secure.

6

Make sure steps, rungs, and other ladder parts are free of oil, grease and other materials.

7

On extension ladders, make sure the rope and pulley work and the rope is not frayed or tangled.

If you find ANY damage to a ladder, label it "DO NOT USE" and remove it from the work site for repair or disposal.