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. Choose 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.
- Choose 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.
- Choose a ladder that is capable of supporting your weight and the weight of any materials you will be using. See the chart below.

## 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 multipurpose.

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.

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### TYPE | WEIGHT RATING | DUTY RATING
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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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