

# Ladder Climbing

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Climbing a ladder is often passed off as a no-brainer, but a lot of thought should be involved before stepping onto that first rung. There are several precautions that should always be taken before and during use of a ladder to ensure a safe climb. The following is a list of some safe procedures to be followed when using a ladder:

- No one should climb a ladder if height bothers him. A person needs steady nerves and a clear head on a ladder.
- Inspect the ladder before using it. Look for grease or rust on the rungs or rails. Never use a ladder that has damaged rungs or rails. Be especially careful of wooden ladders, which tend to rot and fall apart.
- Make sure there is adequate clearance on all sides of the climb. It's easy to miss a rung when concentrating on getting around or under something obstructing your climb.
- Electric wire, unless in conduit, is extremely dangerous to have within reach of a metal ladder. Your body on a metal ladder is a perfect ground for the electric current.
- In freezing weather, watch out for ice on the ladder. Be careful of water dripping from overhead surfaces and freezing on the ladder. If you must climb, be sure to be tied off at all times and try to knock the ice off as you ascend or descend.
- Before starting up a ladder, give it a good shake to make sure it is well secured. Reposition it until it is steady.
- When climbing, set your foot on the rung so your heel is snug against it and keep feet as close to the rails as possible. Grasp the rails firmly. If you have a good hold on a rail, a rung can let go under your foot and still not throw you.
- Be sure to have a good grip and stable foot before moving to the next rung, up or down.
- Avoid overreaching to either side while working from a ladder.
- Make sure the ladder top extends three feet above the point it is intended to reach. If climbing on or off a ladder, the top must be secured from movement by tying or other means.

Remember, these tips are only a few of the safe procedures you should consider when using ladders. Your safety can depend on your awareness and respect for ladder hazards.