






# Ladders and Stepladders Guidance

## Version control

The version history must reflect the current status of a document, i.e., whether it is in its draft or approval status. The table shall reflect the date issued / approved, who by, the current version, and a brief statement outlining the amendments made.

Rev:	Status / amendments	By	Date
1_01	Draft created	C. Warden	08.11.2022
1_02	Final draft issued to <b>sportscotland</b>	A. MacDonald	11.08.2023
1_03	Comments received from Health and Safety Operational Group Document amended	M. Fraser	18.10.2023

## Document creation / approval

	Signature	Title	Date
Prepared by: Christopher Warden (Amalgamate – Safety Risk Management Ltd)		Health & Safety Consultant	11.08.2023
Approved By: Jo Dixon on behalf of the H&S Committee	DocuSigned by:  889E63E8056342B...	Head of Human Resources	04-Nov-23   10:49:42 GMT
Approved By: Scott Baxter on behalf of PCS Union	DocuSigned by:  1466ED4FC7E1447...	Trade Union Representative	07-Nov-23   09:17:48 GMT

The Work at Height Regulations apply to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. They place duties on employers, the self-employed, and any person who contracts or controls the work of others.

In many circumstances stepladders and ladders have historically been used when safer and more suitable (and sometimes less expensive) equipment is available i.e., steps with platforms and handrails (mobile safety steps). Managers must now consider using safer equipment before using ladders and stepladders.

Ladders and stepladders should only be considered for use where a risk assessment has shown that the use of other more suitable work equipment is not appropriate.

**sportscotland** will ensure that only employees trained in the use of ladders and stepladders can use them and that all ladders and stepladders are regularly inspected.

We undertake to ensure that:

- Only ladders and stepladders certified to the relevant British or European standard will be provided for the use of employees;
- Contractors will be required to provide evidence that the ladders or stepladders they use are of an equivalent standard;
- All ladders and stepladders owned by **sportscotland** will be stored correctly and included on a ladder register showing when they were inspected, maintained, etc;
- No wooden ladder will be painted in such a way as to hide possible defects; and
- Only a suitable ladder, in terms of its strength, length and construction, will be selected for a particular task following the results of the appropriate risk assessment.

All ladders and stepladders in use or belonging to us will be inspected for safety on a monthly basis. This monthly inspection is to be documented. All employees are to perform a pre-use visual check prior to using any ladder or stepladder. Any equipment that does not meet the standard required to maintain safety is to be either repaired and tested or discarded.

Training and supervision is given and records of this training and supervision will be maintained.

The training will include a demonstration of the correct use of ladders and stepladders and cover the following points:

- Use of the correct type and height of ladder or steps;
- Placement of the ladder or steps on a safe, non-slip and level base and for ladders with the upper part of the ladder resting against a firm surface;

- Rungs/steps should be in good condition, clean and strong enough to bear the weight;
- Type of suitable footwear, which is to be worn;
- When to ask for assistance to 'foot' the ladder or stepladder; and
- Storage and handling: ladders and stepladders will be stored securely to avoid them falling on people or obstructing walkways or exits.

Before using ladders or stepladders, employees are to inform us if they have:

- Any problems or worries that they may have about using either ladders or stepladders;
- Any medical conditions that may affect their safe use of ladders or stepladders;
- Any history of accidents when using ladders or stepladders; or
- Any doubts that they have regarding the condition or use of ladders or stepladders.

### **Minimum requirements**

Note: Any reference to ladders in this document also relates to stepladders.

All ladders used on **sportscotland** premises must meet BS1129, BS2037 Class 1 or BSEN/131. The ladders must be clearly marked with the British Standard (see section 8 – Ladder Standards).

Class 3: Domestic Light duty ladders are suitable only for domestic and household use and are not acceptable for use on **sportscotland** premises.

Ladders will only be used for work at height if a risk assessment under regulation 3 of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations has demonstrated that the use of more suitable work equipment is not justified because of the low risk and:

- The short duration of use (i.e., under 30 minutes in total); or
- Existing features on site cannot be altered.

Employees who work or need to work from a ladder unsupervised, or where their feet are above 3 metres, must have received ladder training and hold a training record.

Untrained employees cannot work from a ladder (or stepladder) unless all the following are met:

- They have authorisation from their line manager, who has assessed the risks;
- The person's feet do not go above 3 metres from the floor whilst on the ladder;
- The ladder is footed (i.e., held secure or tied) by a competent person;

- Every ladder shall be used in such a way that a secure handhold and secure support are always available to the user; and any person working from ladders must be able to maintain three points of contact at all times, i.e., two feet and one hand or two legs and torso when both hands are required for work; and
- All other aspects of the minimum requirements on ladder use in this Policy are met.

Ladders with any obvious defects must not be used.

Only one person to work on any ladder at any one time.

All ladders must be inspected by a competent person on a regular basis. Frequency of inspection will depend on the use of ladders; line managers must assess this matter and instigate appropriate inspection periods. A formal check must be completed at least every six months.

Ladders owned by **sportscotland** must not be loaned to any persons not employed by **sportscotland**.

All stored ladders and stepladders must be adequately secured to prevent them from falling, or being used by unauthorised persons.

Persons with a disability or serious health problem that could affect their work on a ladder must inform their manager, who can then make the necessary adjustments under the Equalities Act.

## **Types of ladder**

### **Stepladders**

This ladder is used the most in the industry. This type of ladder is self-supportable meaning it does not have to be leant against any type of support to be used. As a result, this ladder can be used in the middle of the room or locations where support is not available.

There are two major varieties of step ladders – front stepladder and twin stepladder.



### Front stepladder

On this ladder, you will find rungs on one side of the ladder and the other side is designed only for support and is not used to climb on.

### Twin stepladder

This ladder is much more popular as it provides rungs on either side of the ladder allowing you to climb up whichever side is more convenient and allows you and a friend to climb the ladder at the same time.



### Step stools

This ladder is simply a mini ladder that you can be used to reach something quite high.

### Platform ladders

A platform ladder is a front step ladder with a platform as its top step. There are usually rails around the platform to provide safety while working.





### Extension ladders

Similar to the above, however it consists of two or three sections coupled together and extended by sliding over or inside each other. Longer multi-stage ladders are extended by means of a rope and pulley. It has to be leant against a type of support (e.g., wall, tree, house etc) before it is used. A three-section ladder fully extended may reach 20 metres.

## Inspection of ladders

Ladders should carry an identification mark. A written record should be kept of inspections, defects, and repairs, and of issue and return to stores. Ladders should not be used if defective, and if it is damaged beyond repair, it should be destroyed.

An example of an inspection label can be found to the right.

Aluminium ladders should carry a warning 'Not to be used near electrical equipment or supply'.

Timber ladders must not be painted or otherwise treated in such a way as to conceal defects. They may be treated with a transparent non-conductive coating such as varnish, shellac or clear preservative.

Inspection checks should report any:

- Damaged or worn stile;
- Broken, missing, loose or worn rungs;
- Mud or grease on rungs;
- Rungs or treads supported by nails or spikes etc;
- Decayed timber, corrosion of fittings;
- Insecure tie-rods;
- Warping, sagging or distortion; or
- Defective ropes, cords, pulleys, hinges, and other fittings.

**LADDER INSPECTION RECORD**

Ref No. \_\_\_\_\_

Ladder to be used for (tick ✓):

Professional  Non professional

Inspection Period \_\_\_\_\_

**INSPECTION PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 12 MONTHS**

Next Inspection Due:

Date	Signature

**LADDER INSPECTION CHECKLIST PRE-USE CHECKS**

- ✓ Look for any wear, decay, dents, cracks, splines or warping.
- ✓ Look for any loose or missing rungs.
- ✓ End of the stiles to be sound and in good condition.
- ✓ Metal toe ends to be in place under rungs on wooden ladders.
- ✓ Ladders must be clean, free of oil, grease, dirt and any other contaminant.
- ✓ Wooden ladders should not be painted (staircase may be ladders).
- ✓ All anti-slip feet to be in place and worn components to be replaced.

**IN USE CHECKS**

- ✓ Ladders to be on a sound base.
- ✓ Ladders to be at an angle of 75° ratio of one out to four vertical.
- ✓ Use ladders for light duty, short duration work.
- ✓ Maintain three points of contact with the ladder at all times.
- ✗ **DO NOT OVER REACH** - Move the ladder.
- ✓ The ladder should be tied to prevent it slipping.
- ✓ If it is impossible to secure the ladder, get a second person to foot the ladder.
- ✗ Do not carry any material or equipment when climbing a ladder. Provision must be made for materials and/or equipment to be carried in a tool belt or shoulder bag or use a hoist line.
- ✓ When using step ladders, the rungs must face the work activity - do not work side on.
- ✓ Step ladders must be used on a firm and level surface.

Please turn insert over for ladder provider and to use checks

**Laddertag**  
Tel: +44 (0) 845 989 4000 | www.laddertag.com  
© Brady Corp Ltd 2018  
EITL 12