

LADDER SAFETY TIPS

Avoid climbing a ladder if possible

- If possible, hire a professional if ≥ 55 years or inexperienced in ladder use

Ladder inspection

- Do not use a ladder if timber steps are splintered or cracked, or if metal steps are twisted or warped
- Check the ladder for any loose screws, hinges or rungs
- Clean off any mud, grease, oil, or other slippery liquids that may have accumulated on the ladder
- Do not make temporary repairs of broken or missing parts, as these may fail during climbing

Ladder set-up

- Never place a ladder on uneven ground or flooring
- Use the 4-to-1 rule: ensure that the ladder is 1 metre away from the wall at the base for every 4 metres that the ladder rises. The upper and lower sections of an extension ladder should overlap to provide stability
- Do not place stepladders or single/extension ladders on boxes, countertops or unstable surfaces to gain additional height
- Before using a stepladder, ensure that it is fully open and that the braces between the two sections are fully extended and locked
- Ensure that the ladder is leaning against a stable structure, which cannot break or move away

Ladder safety

- **Wear a helmet when climbing a ladder**
- Ensure that shoes have slip-resistant soles
- Maintain 3 points of contact on the ladder at all times ie. two feet and one hand, or two hands and one foot
- Do not over reach – descend and move the ladder if required
- Leaning too far to one side, or reaching too far overhead can destabilise the ladder. Your umbilicus should not go beyond the sides of the ladder
- Have someone stand at the base of the ladder to brace it and observe the climber
- On a single or extension ladder, never stand above the third rung from the top and never climb above the point where the ladder touches the wall or vertical support
- The highest standing level on a stepladder should be two steps down from the top
- Do not stand on the top plate, side braces or back section of a step ladder
- Do not overload the ladder. Use only light weight hand tools whilst standing on the ladder
- Avoid using a ladder after drinking alcohol
- Avoid using a ladder if prone to fainting, or are taking medications that predispose to dizziness
- Avoid using a ladder in wet or windy conditions