



# Safe use

safeproducts

## Ladder Safety

***Using a ladder is much safer than balancing on boxes or chairs to gain height. But don't risk injury from falling because of incorrect assembly, ladder placement, or unsafe use.***

### Before you buy

- Discuss what you will use the ladder for with a skilled retailer so they can advise the best ladder to meet your needs.
- Check your ladder meets a relevant safety standard (AS/NZS 1892.1:1996 is the most common standard).
- Ask the retailer to demonstrate proper use in the store before you buy. Pay particular attention to features that indicate when hinges are locked.

### Before you use

- Read the instructions carefully and practise opening and closing the ladder until you are confident that it is operating correctly and safely.
- If in doubt, do not use your ladder – go back to the retailer or seek professional advice.
- Check the condition of your ladder – if it is rusty, parts are missing, or security bars or clips aren't working properly, do not use it.
- Assembly: Check you have assembled the ladder correctly, and read the instructions for use. Make sure all locking clips are secure. A stepladder should have its two stay bars firmly in place.
- Placement: Stand the ladder on a firm, level base. If the ground is uneven, use a suitable block or board to keep the ladder upright and stable.
- Electricity: Keep metal ladders and metal parts well away from live electricity outlets. Have your electricity retailer shut off the power if you need to work close to electric lines. Remember, metal ladders or wooden ladders with metal parts conduct electricity.

### Climbing and Descending

- Face the ladder when climbing and descending.
- Do not use the top two steps of the ladder.
- Have a helper hold the lower part of the ladder whenever possible.
- Keep your body centred between the rails of the ladder at all times or you may lose your balance.
- Move the ladder to continue a task – do not over reach.
- Remember the “one in four” safety rule if you are leaning the ladder: the bottom should be one measure out for every four measures in height.
- Maintain three points of contact when climbing up or down – use two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand.

### General Tips

- Wear sturdy shoes, and do not use a ladder when barefoot.
- Lock any doors you are working around so nobody can open a door into your ladder and tip you over.
- Keep children safe – store your ladder away after use.
- Keep your house safe – do not leave your ladder outside.

### Maintenance

- Keep your ladder clean and dry.
- Tighten any loose bolts.
- If parts are worn or not working properly, repair or replace them.

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