

# Top tips for ladder and stepladder safety



## Set-up for leaning ladders

- Do a daily pre-use check (include ladder feet)
- Secure it
- Ground should be firm and level
- Maximum safe ground side slope  $16^{\circ}$  (level the rungs with a suitable device)
- Maximum safe ground back slope  $6^{\circ}$
- Have a strong upper resting point (not plastic guttering)
- Floors should be clean, not slippery

## Leaning ladders in-use

- Short duration work (maximum 30 minutes)
- Light work (up to 10 kg)
- Ladder angle  $75^{\circ}$  – 1 in 4 rule (1 unit out for every 4 units up)
- Always grip the ladder when climbing
- Do not overreach - make sure your belt buckle (navel) stays within the stiles and keep both feet on the same rung or step throughout the task
- Do not work off the top three rungs – this provides a handhold

## Set-up for stepladders

- Daily pre-use check (feet included)
- Ensure there is space to fully open
- Use any locking devices
- Ground should be firm and level
- Floors should be clean, not slippery

## Stepladders in-use

- Short duration work (maximum 30 minutes)
- Light work (up to 10 kg)
- Do not work off the top two steps (top three steps for swing-back/double-sided stepladders) unless you have a safe handhold on the steps
- Avoid side-on working
- Do not overreach – make sure your belt buckle (navel) stays within the stiles and keep both feet on the same rung or step throughout the task

## Further information

*Safe use of ladders and stepladders: An employers' guide* INDG402 HSE Books 2005 (single copy free or priced packs of 5 ISBN 0 7176 6105 9)

More information can be found at:  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/falls/index.htm>

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This pocket card contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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