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For more information on health and safety in construction go to www.hse.gov.uk/construction/

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1207

Ladders

Ladder

There are rules and procedures in force that may require the person responsible for this equipment to carry out a specific risk assessment.
This leaflet is not a substitute for a properly executed risk assessment.

1. Plan your work and think ahead to make sure you will always be working safely.
2. This ladder is designed to be used only as a leaning ladder, at the correct angle of "one out for four up".
3. Work at height should only be done by people who have the necessary knowledge, skill and resources to do the job safely.
4. This ladder can cause injury or damage if it slips or if you fall. It can also cause injury or damage if it slips or if you fall. It can also cause injury or damage while it is being moved or erected. Use it in a careful and controlled way.
5. If you have not used a ladder of this type or size before, familiarize yourself with erecting, adjusting and securing it before you start work.
6. You must have a least the following items of personal protective equipment: Safety helmet (EN397 or B55240); Safety boots (EN345 or BS1870/4972) or strong shoes with soles that will not slip; Sensible clothing.
7. The ladder must not be used by minors, or by anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
8. The ladder is designed for use by an able bodied adult. Anyone with either temporary or permanent disability must seek expert advice before using it.

WORK AREA AND CONDITIONS

1. Make sure that the area is clear and safe and that no one is near to you or could distract you.
2. Prevent other people or vehicles from colliding with the ladder. Warn others to keep away: put up warning signs or barriers around your work area.
3. Check all of your work area for any overhead electric cables: you must keep well away from them. If you need to move your ladder through any area where there are overhead cables, you must carry it horizontally.
4. Check for overhead obstructions high up where you will place the top of your ladder.
5. If the chute is to be fixed to a scaffold, the scaffold erector must be told in advance that a rubbish chute is to be used in order that provision can be made for it.

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6. Erect the ladder on firm level dry ground whenever possible. Do not use it on slippery surfaces. On soft ground place a large flat wooden board under the ladder's feet and tie the bottoms of the stiles to the stakes driven into the ground. This will prevent the ladder slipping or sinking.
7. Do not position your ladder up against any structure that is not strong enough to support it, for example guttering. You should use a stand off – contact the hire company if you need to hire one.
8. Do not erect or use the ladder in windy or wet conditions.

OPERATORS

1. The following items of personal protective equipment (ppe) are the minimum that should be worn whenever you are using the ladder. Particular jobs or environments may require a higher level of protection.
2. You should wear a safety helmet (EN397 or BS5240) whenever you are working at height, or near a raised working platform. On a construction site you must wear a helmet at all times.
3. You should wear safety boots (EN345 or BS1870/4972) or strong shoes with non-slip soles.
4. Make sure that you have no loose or flapping clothing that could catch on the ladder, or get in your way when climbing and descending.
5. Anybody who is working near to you will also need to wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

LADDER – CHECKING AND SELECTING

1. Check your equipment, including the stiles (the uprights of the ladder), rungs, and fittings. Do not use anything found damaged – contact the hire company.
2. Make sure the rungs are clean, and not slippery.
3. Your ladder must be long enough so that you can reach your work position without standing on the top three rungs. Use these top rungs to hold onto.
4. If you plan to use the ladder to get on a roof, or on to a scaffold platform, you must have at least the top three rungs extending beyond the roof, or on to a scaffold platform, you must have at least the top three rungs extending beyond the roof, or platform. The "stepping off" rung should be at the same height as the platform.
5. If you are using an extension ladder, you must not extend it beyond its safe limit.
   - For an extension ladder up to five metres long when closed allow at least two rungs overlap.
   - For an extension ladder between five and six metres long when closed allow at least three rungs overlap.
   - For an extension ladder over six metres long when closed allow at least four rungs overlap.
6. All leaning ladders must be set and used at the correct angle of one out for four up. This means the base of the ladder should be one measure away from the wall, with the top four measures up the wall. For example, a ladder that rests of a wall at 4m above ground needs to be 1m away from the wall at the base. This angle minimizes the risk of the base of the ladder slipping outwards, or the top falling backwards.

7. Do not erect ladder on top of blocks or supports, or on platforms to gain extra height: when you climb them they will become unstable. Contact the hire company if you need a longer ladder or any other access equipment.
8. You must only have one man climbing or working on the ladder at any one time.

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5. If tying in is impractical, use a reliable work mate to foot the ladder all the time that someone is using them. The person footing should stand facing the ladder as if to climb, placing one foot or both feet firmly on the bottom rung and grasping a stile firmly in each hand. They must stay alert and attentive at all times.
6. A ladder which is being tied in at the top should have someone footing it while it is being secured.

CONSTRUCTION SITES

On construction sites, the Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996 place duties on the users of ladders, according to what the ladders are used for

1. In all cases, the use of ladders is only allowed if it is reasonable having regard to work, duration and risks. All ladders must be erected so as not to be displaced.
2. When used as access to a place of work from an area which is not place of work, ladders over 3m when in use should be sufficiently secured to prevent slipping and falling, or if this is not practical then they are to be footed.
3. When used for access from one place of work to another place of work, ladders should be sufficiently secured to prevent slipping and falling.
4. When used a s a place of work, ladders over 3m when in use should be sufficiently secured to prevent slipping and falling, or if this is not practical then they are to be footed.
5. You must always wear a safety helmet (EN397 or BS5240) on a construction site.

USING THE LADDER

1. Wear your protective equipment, including your safety helmet.
2. Take care when carrying the ladder that the end does not swing out of control and injure someone or cause damage.
3. When climbing up or down use both hands on the stiles or on the rungs. Do not try to carry tools or equipment: use a toolbelt, pouch or shoulder bag. Alternatively, tools could be lifted by rope once you are in position.
4. Always face the ladder when working: do not twist around to work facing away from the ladder.
5. When working, you must always keep one hand and both feet firmly on the ladder and work with the other hand.
6. Do not overreach sideways. You should climb down and move the ladder.
7. Whenever you move the ladder you should check that it is set to the correct angle: one out for four up.
8. Do not climb higher than the fourth rung from the top, or the ladder may become unstable. The top three rungs can be held on to, but not stood on.
9. Always climb down properly one rung at a time: never slide or jump.
10. If the ladder is to remain in position when unattended, for example overnight, then you should make it secure to prevent unauthorised use.
11. If the ladder is to remain in position for long periods, inspect it for safety and damage each time you come to use it, and at least once a week.
12. If you ladder is faulty or appears to be damaged, do not attempt to repair it. Contact the hire company.
13. You may want to read this leaflet again. Please keep it until you finish work.

Please keep this leaflet safely. It may be required for further information

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9. Do not hold extra tools in your other hand: use a special tray which hooks onto the rungs to carry paint pots or small tools. Contact the hire company if you need this equipment.
10. Make sure that you understand the hazards and precautions before you start work.

ERECTING THE LADDER

1. If you are using a short ladder you can erect it yourself. To erect a long ladder safely, you need two or three people.

SHORT LADDER

1. Lay the ladder flat with the base against the wall you are going to climb.
2. Lift the other end above your head and walk towards the base, raising the ladder by moving your hands from rung to rung until the ladders are upright.
3. Rest the top of the ladder against the surface and move the base out to give the correct angle of one out for four up.
4. Take the ladder down by following these instructions in reverse order.

LONG LADDER

1. Lay the ladder flat with the base at the spot where it will be when erected. A reliable person should stand at the base and put one foot, or both feet, firmly on the bottom rung. You should then lift the top end of the ladder above your head and walk down towards the base, raising your end of the ladder by moving your hands from rung to rung until the ladder is upright. Take care not to harm your back while doing this.
2. As soon as your work mate can reach the ladder without straining he should assist in raising the ladder upright.
3. Rest the top against the surface and check that the ladder is secure at the correct angle of one out for four up.
4. You should tie or foot your ladder before use – see the section headed "Tying in or footing".
5. Take the ladder down by following these instructions in reverse order.

EXTENSION LADDER

1. An extension ladder must only be extended from the ground. Never attempt to climb part way up a ladder and then extend it.
2. If you need to extend a push-up extension ladder by less than 2 metres, you can erect it as for a short ladder, following the instructions given from 1. above for a short ladder. You should then extend the ladder from ground level, and adjust the base to give you the correct angle of one out for four up.
3. If you need to extend a push-up extension ladder by more than 2 metres, lay the ladder flat, with the base at the spot where it will be when erected. Extend the ladder to the required length, making sure that the extension hooks are properly engaged on the rungs. Then erect following the instructions from 1. Above for a long ladder.
4. A rope operated extension ladder should be erected following the instructions given from 1 above for a short ladder, or 1 above for a long ladder. You can then extend the ladder, and move the base out to give the correct angle of one out for four up.

TYING IN OR FOOTING

1. The ladder will be more secure and much safer if it is secured against movement. This may be essential in some situations or for some tasks. There are regulations relating to some uses of ladders: see the section headed "Construction sites".
2. Ideally the ladder should be tied or strapped by the stiles at the top to a substantial part of the supporting structure.
3. Alternatively, ropes tied one to each stile about five rungs high, then carried across and tied to the structure, can help stop the ladder from slipping.
4. The bottom of the ladder can be tied to stakes driven into the ground. This can prevent the bottom from slipping out but is unlikely to stop the top slipping sideways.

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Useful Reference Points • www.hae.org.uk/businessguard