Toolbox talk

Ladders

Setting up at the right angle, three feet above the landing, climbing with a free hand, and taking bad ladders out of service.

Ladders look simple, and that's why they get set up wrong. This talk covers checking the ladder, setting it up, climbing it, and the stepladder mistakes that put people on the ground.

Key point **Set it at 4 to 1, 3 feet past the landing, and keep one hand on it every step.**

Check it first

A competent person inspects ladders on a regular basis and after anything that could damage them. Look yours over before you climb.

A broken rung, a split rail or bad feet takes it out of service. Tag it or remove it from the job right away. Near exposed energized equipment, use a ladder with nonconductive side rails.

Set it up right

Set an extension ladder so the base is about 1 foot out for every 4 feet of working length. Put it on stable, level ground, or secure it so it can't slide.

When it's your way up to a landing, the rails go at least 3 feet past the edge, or the top gets tied to something solid.

Climb it right

Face the ladder going up and coming down, and keep at least one hand on it. Don't carry anything that could throw off your balance. Use a rope or a tool bag for material.

Never move or extend a ladder with someone on it.

Stepladders

Open it all the way. Don't stand on the top or the top step, and don't climb the cross braces on the back. If you're reaching, get a taller ladder or move it.

Show me Set up an extension ladder together and measure the base: 1 foot out for every 4 feet up to the top support.

Ask the crew

1. Which ladder are you using today, and when did you last look it over?
2. Where does it need to be tied off or footed?
3. What material are you planning to carry up, and how?

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.1053(b)(1), (b)(5)(i), (b)(6), (b)(11), (b)(12), (b)(13), (b)(15), (b)(16), (b)(20), (b)(21), (b)(22)

Crew sign-in

Ladders

Date _____ **Site or project** _____

Presented by _____ **Company** _____

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Signing means you attended this talk and had the chance to ask questions.