

BE CAREFUL . . . AND SAFE!

With the right ladder and proper use, working above ground level should be no problem! I mention this because I've had a request to provide some information on how to determine the right ladder . . . and how to use it to prevent and serious injury! This is the perfect time to share this information because as the fall, gutters will need to be cleaned and soon it will be time to hang those holiday lights and decorations!



There are 3 basic portable ladders:

1. TYPE I: Industrial, heavy-duty with a load capacity of no more than 250 pounds.
2. TYPE II: Commercial, medium-duty with a load capacity of no more than 225 pounds
3. TYPE III: Household: light-duty with a load capacity of no more than 200 pounds.

Ladders come in three materials. Aluminum is the most durable but will conduct electricity so may be dangerous for use around electricity. Wood may rot. Fiberglass is the best combination of durability and non-conductivity but it's the most expensive.

Here's how to use a ladder:

1. Make sure the ladder is suited for the job you plan (see type above)
2. Before using the ladder, inspect for cracks and broken joints if it's been in the garage for a while.
3. Place your ladder on a stable, even, flat surface. NEVER place it on top of another object. A good practice is to have a helper hold the bottom of the ladder.
4. Use the 1:4 ratio to ensure a stable working platform. Place the base of the ladder 1 foot away of whatever it leans against for every 4 feet of height to the point where the ladder contacts the top.
5. When using an A-frame ladder, make sure the brace is locked in place.
6. If climbing onto another surface, make sure that the ladder extends at least 3 feet PAST the platform you're climbing onto.
7. Secure tall ladders by lashing or fastening the ladder to prevent movement
8. Always FACE the ladder when climbing or descending.
9. Keep both feet on the ladder. Never put one foot on the rung and another on another surface. Keep your body centered between the rails of the ladder. Don't lean too far to the side while working.
10. Never climb higher than the 2nd rung on stepladders or the 3rd rung on straight or extension ladders.
11. Don't place a ladder in front of a door that is not locked, blocked or guarded!
12. Never leave a raised ladder unattended! Kids love to climb!

