

# Ladders

## Ladders - Inspection

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## When should you inspect ladders?

- Inspect new ladders promptly upon receipt.
- Inspect ladders before each use.
- Check the condition of ladders that have been dropped or have fallen before using them again.
- Inspect ladders before storing to make sure they are in good condition to store, or need repair, replacement or removal from the site.

Most jurisdictions require that ladders be inspected before use. Contact the [government department responsible for occupational health and safety](#) in your area for more information.

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## What should you look for when inspecting any ladder?

- missing or loose steps or rungs (they are loose if you can move them by hand)
- damaged or worn non-slip feet
- loose nails, screws, bolts or nuts
- worn or loose or faulty spreaders, locks, and other metal parts in poor repair
- rot, decay or warped rails in wooden ladders

- cracks and exposed fibreglass in fibreglass ladders
  - cracked, split, worn or broken rails, braces, steps or rungs
  - sharp edges on rails and rungs
  - rough or splintered surfaces
  - corrosion, rust, oxidization and excessive wear, especially on treads
  - twisted or distorted rails. Check ladders for distortion by sighting along the rails. Using a twisted or bowed ladder is hazardous.
  - damage or wear on other items such as spreaders, locking devices, hinges, springs or ropes. Check that these items are working properly before using the ladder.
  - missing identification labels
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## What other things should I look for when inspecting stepladders?

- wobble
  - loose or bent hinges and hinge spreaders
  - broken stop on a hinge spreader
  - loose pail shelf
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## What should you look for when inspecting extension ladders?

- loose, broken, or missing extension locks
  - defective locks that do not set properly when the ladder is extended
  - sufficient lubrication of working parts
  - defective cords, chains and ropes
  - missing or defective pads or sleeves
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## What should you do after inspecting any ladder?

- Tag any defective ladders and take them out of service.
- Clean fibreglass ladders every three months. Spray lightly with a clear lacquer or paste wax.

- Protect wooden ladders with a clear sealer or wood preservative.
  - Replace worn or frayed ropes on extension ladders.
  - Lubricate pulleys on extension ladders regularly.
  - Tag and take out of service any ladder that has defects, or is broken or bent. Destroy ladders that cannot be repaired safely by a person authorized by the manufacturer. Ladders should be destroyed in a way that makes them useless.
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## What are some things you should not do after inspecting ladders?

- Do not make temporary or makeshift repairs.
  - Do not try to straighten or use bent or bowed ladders.
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