

You Can Prevent Ladder Accidents

Editor's note: Our Tailgate Training Tip Sheets are [available in Spanish at www.gemplers.com](http://www.gemplers.com).

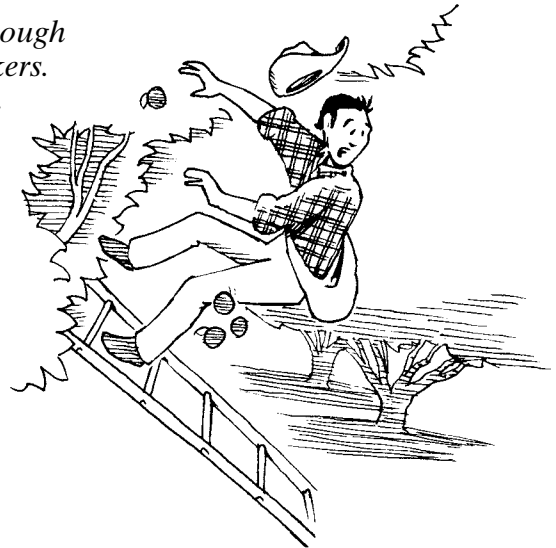
KEY POINTS:

- Carefully inspect your ladder before each use.
- Never climb a broken or damaged ladder.
- Use the right ladder for the job.

Note to trainer: Follow this script or use it to help guide you through a 10- to 15-minute tailgate training session for your ag/hort workers. You may photocopy this sheet for your employees' personal use. However, it may not be published or sold.

Why ladder accidents happen

- Ladders are pretty uncomplicated pieces of equipment.
- Yet each year, thousands of people are injured — and some are killed — when they fall from ladders, both on and off the job.
- Serious injuries and deaths also occur when people use metal ladders too close to electric power lines.
- Most ladder accidents can be prevented. They are typically caused by:
 - using the wrong type of ladder for the job
 - failing to inspect a ladder before use
 - using a ladder incorrectly



Before you use a ladder

- Be sure the ladder is the proper height. And be sure it can handle the amount of weight it will need to handle for the job.
- If you are uncertain about a ladder's height or weight capacity, ask your supervisor.
- Check to see what the ladder is made out of. Never use a metal ladder near overhead power lines.
- Closely inspect the ladder. Look for:
 - loose, missing or damaged steps or rungs
 - oily or otherwise slippery steps or rungs
 - loose nails, screws or bolts
 - broken or missing braces
 - damaged hinge spreaders
 - dents in metal ladders
 - cracks, splinters or evidence of rot in wooden ladders
 - worn nonslip bases
 - missing safety feet
- Ask your supervisor for a different ladder if you spot any problems.



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See our [full line of safety supplies](#), including respirators, eye and ear protection, coveralls, first aid and more.

You Can Prevent **Ladder** Accidents

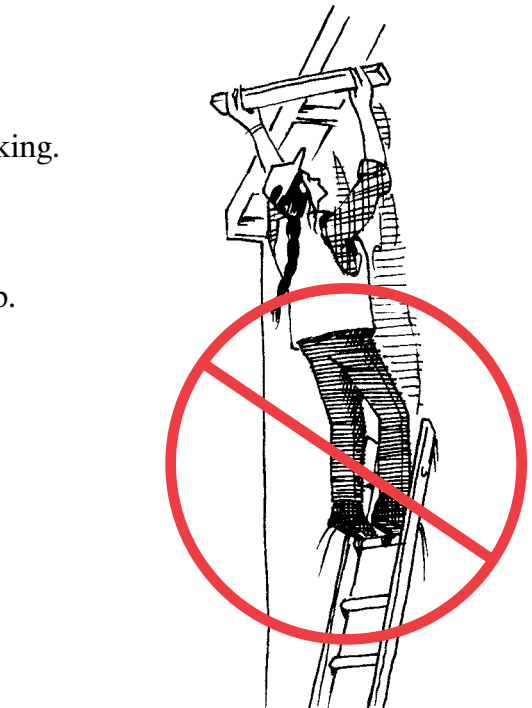
Setting up a **ladder**

- Set up a **ladder** **only** on a firm, level, nonslip surface.
- If you are resting a **ladder** against a wall, position it so it's parallel with the wall.
- The base of the **ladder** should be one foot away from the wall for every four feet of wall height.
- Be sure the **ladder** extends at least three feet beyond the top of the wall.
- Fully open all folding **ladders** and make sure locking devices are in place.
- Don't set up a **ladder** in front of a door.



Safely using a **ladder**

- Ask someone to hold the bottom of your **ladder** before you climb it.
- Check your **shoes**. Make sure they have clean, dry, nonskid soles.
- Check for dangling shoelaces or pants legs that extend below your shoes.
- Use two hands when climbing a **ladder**. Keep at least one hand and both feet on the **ladder** while you are working.
- Mount the **ladder** from the center. And stay centered on the **ladder** while you're working.
- Don't carry hand tools or other items up a **ladder**. See your supervisor if you need help getting the items up.
- Stay off of the top two steps of a **ladder**.
- Don't reach too far while you are on a **ladder**, and don't try to move the **ladder**.
- Never allow more than one person on a **ladder**.
- Don't store anything on a **ladder**.



Are there any questions?

Take time to answer trainees' questions.

*Then review the **Ladder** Safety Do's and Don'ts.*

LADDER SAFETY DO'S AND DON'TS

DO:

- Be sure the bottom of the **ladder** is secure before you climb it.
- Use a wooden or fiberglass **ladder** near power lines — not a **metal ladder**.
- Avoid reaching too far when you are on a **ladder**.

DON'T:

- Use boxes, a chair or anything else in place of a **ladder**.
- Walk under a **ladder** when someone is on it.
- Climb a **ladder** if you feel dizzy, ill or are afraid of heights.

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