



VCU

Safety and Risk Management

Fall Protection

Safe-Work Rules For Use of a Ladder

1. Select a ladder that is the proper length and duty rating for the intended work.
2. The leaning-ladder must extend at least 36" above the edge of a roof/mezzanine when properly installed. A step ladder must be tall enough so that you don't have to stand on the top or the top two rungs of the ladder to access your work.
3. Do not use electrically conductive (e.g. aluminum) ladders for electrical work or near live electrical parts.
4. Inspect the ladder for broken or defective parts prior to each use.
5. Remove damaged or defective ladders from use and notify department management of the problem ladder.
6. Do not place ladders where they can be accidentally struck or displaced.
7. If the ladder is used in an area where anyone could walk under it, the area must be cordoned off with a visual barrier such as yellow caution tape to alert pedestrians to the hazard of something falling from the ladder.
8. Ladders must not be placed in passageways, doorways, driveways, or any location where they may be displaced by activities conducted on any other work, unless protected by barricades or guards.
9. Tie, block, or otherwise secure portable ladders while in use.
10. Do not splice ladders together.
11. Face the ladder while ascending and descending.
12. Do not stand on the top two rungs of a single ladder, extension ladder or the top cap and top step of a step ladder.
13. Do not stand on the top three rungs of ladders unless there are members of an adjacent structure that provide a firm handhold, or the ladder user is protected by a personal fall protection system (e.g., positioning device or fall restraint system) tied off to an OSHA compliant fall protection anchor.
14. If working outside of the ladder's footprint, or when standing on the upper-most parts of the ladder as noted above, use an appropriate fall protection system as described in the UC Berkeley Fall Protection Program.
15. Do not place planks on the top cap or any other part of a ladder.
16. Do not use the X-bracing or other structures on the rear section of a stepladder for climbing unless the ladder is designed to be climbed from both sides. (See Extension Trestle Ladders and similar.)
17. Make sure that the stepladder is properly set up and that the spreader is locked in place before use.
18. Do not use the stepladder as a lean-to ladder.
19. Always use a tool belt and other 'hands-free' carrying devices when ascending and descending a ladder.
20. When working aloft secure tools and supplies so they cannot fall from the ladder.

For more information or a safety consultation, contact VCU
Occupational Safety at occsafety@vcu.edu