



COLBURN
GROUP

playing it safe

Safety and health tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance and safety specialists at Colburn Group.

Ladder Safety

Tips for climbing with caution

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that over 300 people in the U.S. die from ladder injuries sustained while on the job annually. Most of these incidents occur because victims violate the basic rules of ladder safety. To help prevent ladder injuries, be sure to practice the following safety tips.

Set up Safely

- Make sure you select the right ladder for the job – check length and duty rating. Proper length is a minimum of three feet extending over the roofline or working surface.
- Metal ladders conduct electricity; use a wooden or fiberglass ladder near power lines or electrical equipment.
- Inspect your ladder before each use for loose or damaged steps/rungs, spreaders, rung dogs, safety feet, etc.
- Clear the area where you will be setting up – don't place a ladder in front of a door that isn't locked, blocked or guarded.

- Check that all locks on extension ladders are properly engaged.
- Place your ladder on a steady surface (not a table, truck, etc). The ground underneath should be level and firm – large, flat wooden boards braced underneath a ladder can help level it on uneven or soft ground. Straight, single or extension ladders should be set up at about a 75-degree angle.

Use Caution

- Always use caution when using a ladder – they are tools. Don't use a ladder for any other purpose than intended. Follow instruction labels regarding proper use.
- Take your time. Don't be in a rush to finish a job.
- Make sure the weight your ladder is supporting doesn't exceed its maximum load rating (user plus materials) –

only one person should be on a ladder at a time.

- Keep your body centered between the rails of the ladder at all times. Don't lean too far to the side while working.
- Don't step on the top step, bucket shelf, or attempt to climb or stand on the rear section of a stepladder.
- When done with your job, store your ladder in a safe, dry place.
- Never leave a raised ladder unattended.
- Stay off or step down from a ladder if you feel tired or dizzy.



Step Safely...

Ladders pose special safety hazards, but by following proper safety guidelines, worksite injuries and deaths caused by ladder misuse can be significantly reduced.