

GET A GRIP

on ladder safety



Guide to ladder safety

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GET A GRIP

on ladder safety essentials

1

LADDERS ARE PRACTICAL AND VERSATILE

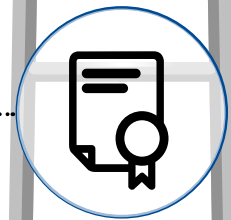
While they may not always be your first choice, there are many situations where a ladder is the most suitable equipment for working at height. Ladders can be appropriate for **low risk** and **short duration** tasks (no longer than 30 minutes).



2

USE THE RIGHT LADDER

Use a ladder in good condition that meets the new EN 131 professional standard, the previous EN 131 standard, or BS 1129 and BS 2037 (class 1) standards - these ladders are intended for the workplace. Read [our guide](#) to ladder standards for more information.



3

WORK SAFELY

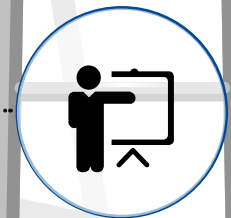
Make sure your work is planned, organised and that you have undertaken a risk assessment before starting work. Before use, position the ladder correctly, ensuring the ladder is deployed at the correct angle and height, and that the task can be completed without overreaching. Use the belt-buckle test to avoid this. If your belt buckle is outside the sides of the ladder or stepladder, you're overreaching.



4

COMPETENCE IS FOR EVERYONE

A competent person is someone who has the necessary skills, training and experience at the appropriate level to work at height or supervise someone else working at height. Demonstration of competence is a key requirement of the current Work at Height Regulations. By successfully completing a Ladder Association training course, delegates are awarded a LadderCard. Valid for five years, it is an effective and widely recognised way of showing proof of training for work at height from ladders and can help you to demonstrate competence as required by the Regulations.



GET A GRIP

on using a leaning ladder



Assess if it's right to use a ladder. Ladders can be appropriate for **low risk** and **short duration** tasks (no longer than 30 minutes).



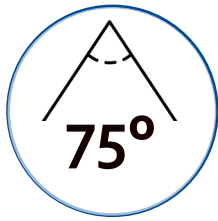
Make sure the ladder is long enough for the task being carried out.



Always read the manufacturer's instruction manual.



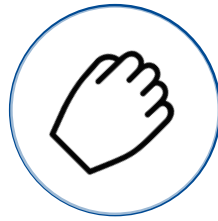
Do not overload. Think about the worker's weight as well as equipment or materials being carried.



Position a leaning ladder at a 75 degree angle



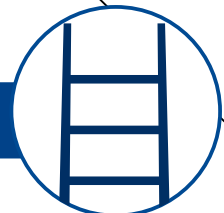
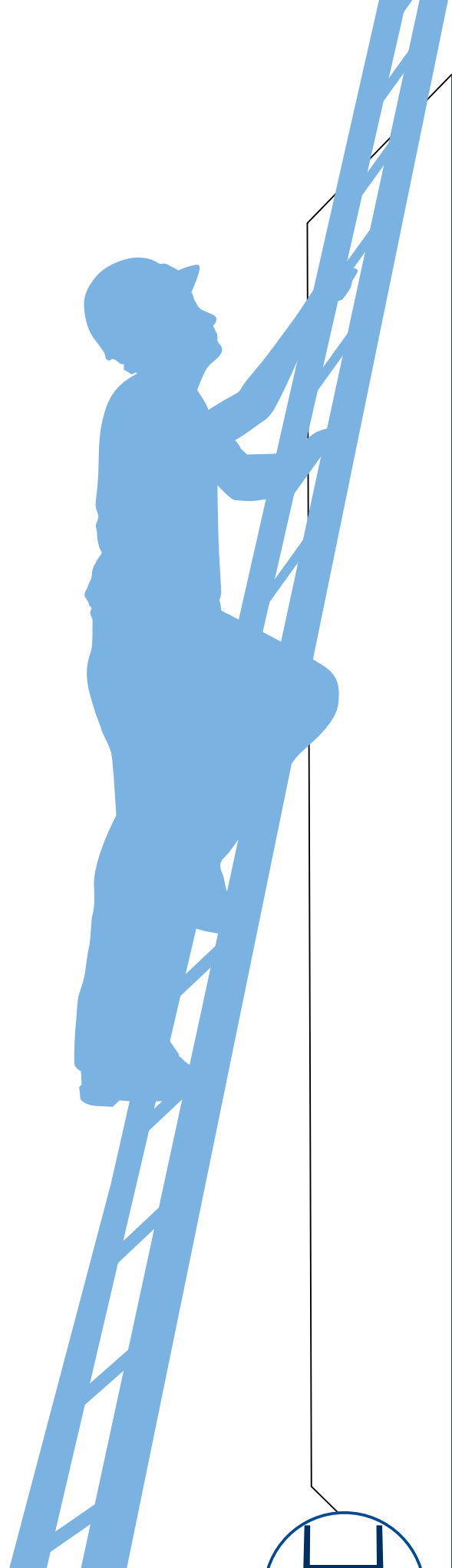
Consider overhead powerlines when working. Consult HSE guidance for more information on minimum safe distances.



Maintain a firm handhold of the ladder. Only let go of a handhold briefly when it's not possible to maintain it for the task, e.g. starting to knock in a nail



You should secure a leaning ladder wherever possible at both top and bottom. If that's not possible, seek advice from the manufacturer on stabilisation. As a last resort, ask another person to foot the ladder. Use a strong upper resting point rather than, for example, plastic gutters.



RECOMMENDED COURSE: LADDERS AND STEPLADDERS FOR USERS

GET A GRIP

on ladder inspection

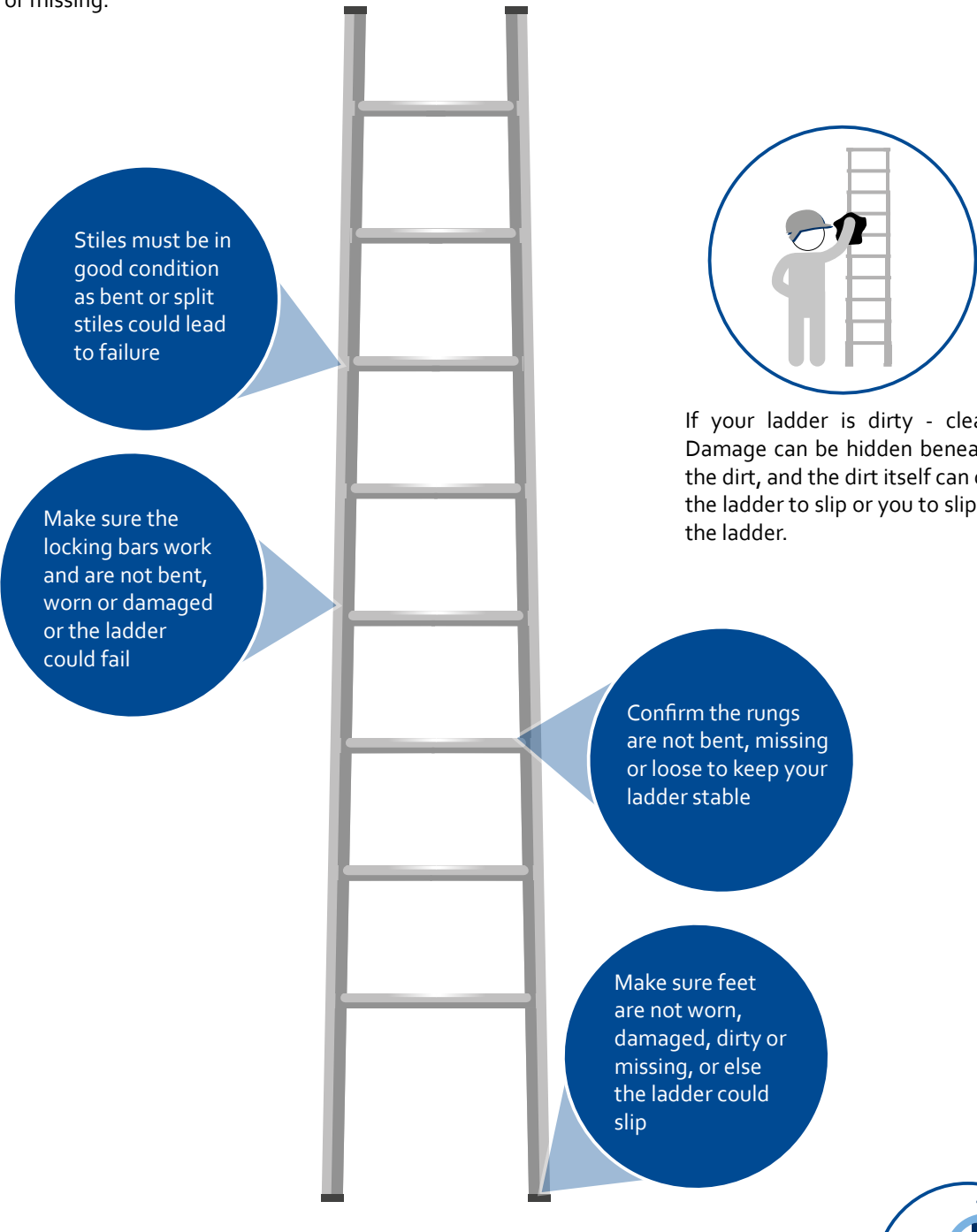
INSPECTING YOUR LEANING LADDERS

Pre-use checks

The aim of a pre-use check is to quickly establish whether a ladder is safe to use NOW. A user must carry out a pre-use check prior to setting up a ladder (this may only need to be done once a day for frequently used ladders).

Detailed visual inspections

Detailed inspections of work equipment, as required by Work at Height Regulations, are more in-depth visual and functional inspections than pre-use checks and need to be carried out by competent persons. For example, in a pre-use check you would check that rivets were not missing. In a detailed inspection you would check that rivets were not loose or missing.



Stiles must be in good condition as bent or split stiles could lead to failure

Make sure the locking bars work and are not bent, worn or damaged or the ladder could fail

Confirm the rungs are not bent, missing or loose to keep your ladder stable

Make sure feet are not worn, damaged, dirty or missing, or else the ladder could slip

If your ladder is dirty - clean it. Damage can be hidden beneath all the dirt, and the dirt itself can cause the ladder to slip or you to slip from the ladder.

GET A GRIP

on using a stepladder



Assess if it's right to use a ladder. Ladders can be appropriate for **low risk** and **short duration** tasks (no longer than 30 minutes).



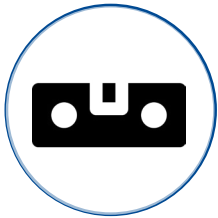
Be careful of the dangers of side-on loading, like drilling from the side. Aim to be facing the work. Where side-on loadings cannot be avoided, you should prevent the steps from tipping over, e.g. by tying the steps



Always read the manufacturer's instruction manual



Ensure that the restraining strap/bar is deployed and locks correctly.



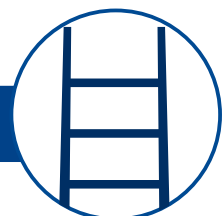
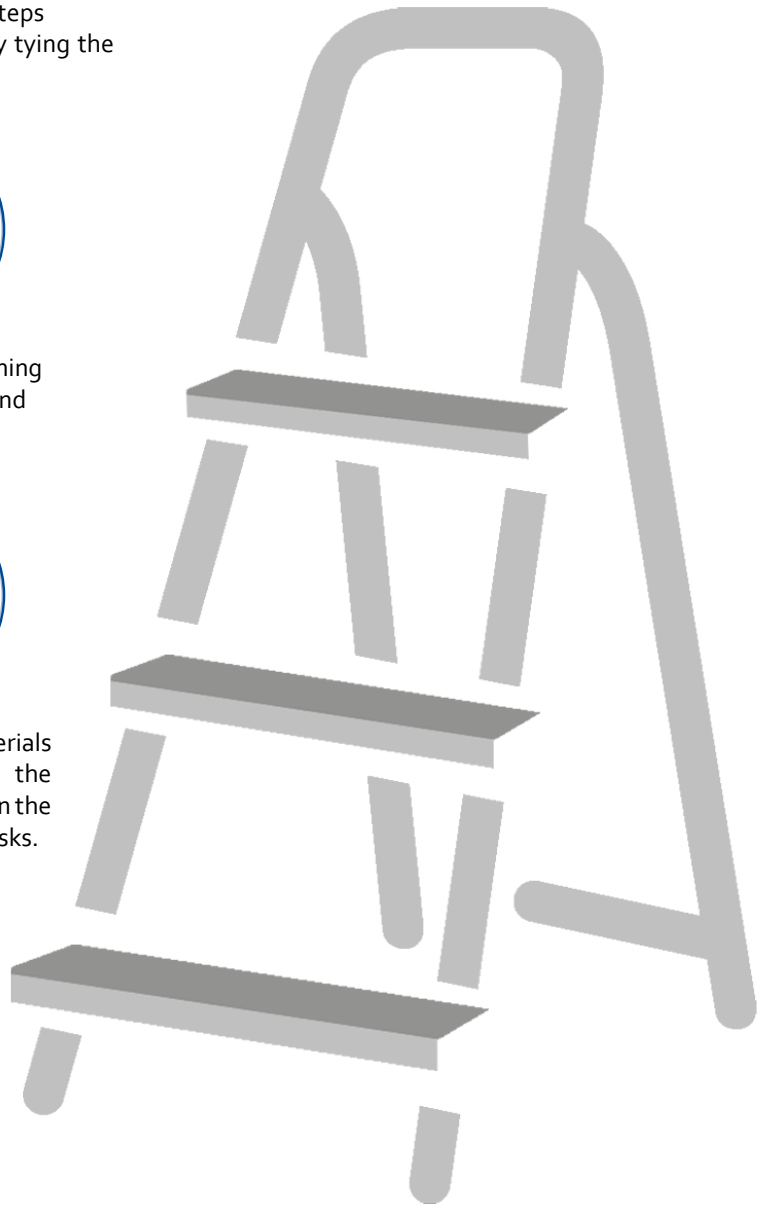
Check all four feet of the stepladder – they must all be in contact with the ground, and the steps should be level.



only carry light materials and tools – read the manufacturers' labels on the ladder and assess the risks.



Maintain a firm handhold of the ladder. Only let go of a handhold briefly when it's not possible to maintain it for the task, e.g. starting to knock in a nail



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on stepladder inspection

INSPECTING YOUR STEPLADDERS

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