

SAFETY MATTERS CONSTRUCTION SERIES



Misuse of Portable Ladders

Understanding the Danger

You risk falling if portable ladders are not safely positioned each time they are used. While you are on a ladder, it may move and slip from its supports. You can also lose your balance while getting on or off an unsteady ladder. Falls from ladders can cause injuries ranging from sprains to death.

Avoiding the Hazards

- Position portable ladders so the side rails extend at least 3 feet above the landing.
- Secure side rails at the top to a rigid support and use a grab device when 3 foot extension is not possible.
- Make sure that the weight on the ladder will not cause it to slip off its support.
- Before each use inspect ladders for cracked or broken parts such as rungs, steps, side rails, feet and locking components.
- Do not apply more weight on the ladder than it is designed to support.
- Use only ladders that comply with OSHA design standards [29 CFR 1926.1053(a)(1)].



Safety Matters Construction Series information is extracted directly from OSHA safety materials. For additional information consult www.OSHA.gov