

BEST LADDERS FOR THE JOB



When choosing working at height equipment, it might seem like a simple decision, and you may think a ladder is the right option for every job. However, with falls from height being the leading cause of workplace fatalities in the UK, here are some key things you should consider when selecting the right equipment.



1. HEIGHT

Height is the number one consideration when choosing the access equipment you'll be using for your job. You need to think about what height you'll be working from and what height you can safely reach. Always read the manufacturer's information to find out what height and load your ladder is applicable for.



EXTENSION LADDER

The maximum standing height is four rungs down from the top of an extension ladder.



STEP LADDER

The maximum standing height is three steps (includes the top) down from the top of a swingback step ladder. For a platform step ladder, the maximum standing height is the platform.

If you're unable to always maintain three points of contact, or need to be able to pivot 360 degrees, then you may be better choosing a ladder that is guardrailed or a alternatively, a Mobile Access Tower.

For light trade jobs and light use around the home a stepstool can come in handy, and for more unique applications such as working on a roof or accessing a loft, consider using a more specific ladder such as a roof ladder or loft ladder.

COMBINATION LADDER

The maximum standing height is four rungs down from the top when used in the stairwell or freestanding extension ladder position with extending ladder at the top.

2. APPLICATIONS

The equipment you use should always be rigorously tested to check it meets safety standards. Always take care to choose the correct standard of ladder for the job in hand. Professional users should always use ladders that have been tested for professional use.

If you're using a ladder for commercial purposes, you must use ladders that have been tested for Professional Use with a load capacity of 150kg.

Ladder Category	Classification	Maximum Load
Stepladders	EN131 Professional	150kg
Combination Ladders	EN131 Non-Professional	150kg
Extension Ladders	ANSI	136kg
Stepstools	EN14183	150kg
Loft Ladders	EN14975	150kg

3. JOB SUITABILITY

Using the wrong kind of equipment can result in a fall or serious injury. The most common types of ladders are step ladders and extension ladders. However, there are many other different types and styles available such as swing back, platform, telescopic, fibreglass and combination ladders. Each type of ladder offers specific features and benefits that make them ideal for certain jobs.

Making sure you're using the right ladder or work platform for the job helps to minimise accidents and makes the task easier.