

Ladders

Practical skills

The angle, the footing, and the rules that prevent most falls.

Educational reference. Falls from height are among the commonest serious DIY injuries.

1 Check the ladder

No damage, feet intact, locks engaged.

2 Set the angle

1 unit out for every 4 up — about 75°.

3 Firm, level footing

Never on soft ground, never on a box or a brick.

4 Secure the top

Tie it off, or have someone foot it.

5 Three points of contact

Two feet and a hand, at all times.

6 Do not overreach

Belt buckle inside the stiles. Move the ladder instead.

EXTENSION LADDERS

Extend at least 1 m above the landing point

Never stand on the top three rungs

Never carry heavy loads up

Educational reference. Most ladder falls happen below three metres, and most involve overreaching rather than the ladder failing.