

TOOL TYPE **FORM**
GEOGRAPHY **ALL**

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SOURCE: HARVARD
 SCHOOL OF
 PUBLIC
 HEALTH

STEP LADDER SAFETY CHECKLIST

BENEFITS

Step ladders are a common piece of equipment used by many workers on the job. But if workers use them improperly, they could get hurt. For example, a step ladder that isn't fully open and locked could collapse under a worker's weight. So make sure you take steps to ensure that workers properly use step ladders in the workplace.

HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Adapt this step ladder safety checklist for the ladder requirements in your jurisdiction's OHS laws, your OHS program and your ladder safety training. Supervisors can use it to ensure that workers are properly setting up, moving on and working from step ladders.

OTHER RESOURCES:

[Preventing Falls from Ladders in Construction, a Guide to Training Site Supervisors, Harvard School of Public Health, Department of Environmental Health](#)

[LADDERS: 6 Key Facts about Complying with Portable Ladder Requirements](#)

[Ladder Inspection Checklist](#)

[Ladder Safety Quiz](#)

[Extension Ladder Safety Checklist](#)

STEP LADDER SAFETY CHECKLIST

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
LADDER CONDITION			
Are there cracks in any of the steps or supports?			
Are the beams/rails bent or dented?			
Are there sharp spurs that can catch on clothing or cause a laceration?			
Are the steps, rails and other structural components in good condition?			
Does it have locking stays?			
Is it Type I? (All Type I ladders are for industrial use; Types II and III are for household use.)			
Is it the correct Type I ladder for the job based on its weight capacity?			
Does the ladder have its type designation and warning labels or have they been removed or worn off due to wear and tear?			
LADDER SETUP			
Is the ladder on a flat, stable and hard surface?			
Are all four feet touching the ground so that it doesn't rock?			
Is the surface hard enough to prevent it from settling once it's loaded?			
Is the ladder set up on an elevated platform, such as scaffolding, a ladder jack, etc.? (It shouldn't be.)			
Is the bottom of the ladder clear of loose materials that can create a trip or slip hazard when stepping on/off the ladder?			
Is the ladder clear of any doors that can swing open and hit it?			
Are both spreaders that create the A-frame fully open, engaged and locked?			
If the ladder is being used in a public area, is the work area marked off to warn passers-by?			
Is the setup clear of any electrical hazards?			
Is the ladder clean of loose debris?			

Is the ladder dry?			
Is the ladder free of anything that could increase the risk of slipping on the rungs?			
MOVING ON A LADDER			
Does the worker face the ladder when moving up and down it?			
Does the worker stay off the top steps of the ladder?			
Does the worker maintain 3-point contact with the ladder?			
Is only one worker on the ladder at a time?			
Does the worker's belt buckle remain between the two rails of the ladder?			
Does the worker keep his center of gravity over the steps within the two rails of the ladder?			
Does the worker move slowly and deliberately rather than rush up and down the ladder?			
Does the worker pay attention to how he's moving and to the various aspects of his contact with the ladder?			
Are the worker's hands free of any tools or materials?			
Is the worker using a tool belt for a small number of tools and other means to support a greater number of tools and materials?			
Is the worker getting on and off the ladder only from the bottom?			
Before climbing, does the worker check the ladder's stability?			
WORKING FROM A LADDER			
Is the length and location of the ladder such that the worker doesn't have to complete the task with an extended reach over his head?			
Does the worker get off the ladder before repositioning it?			
Does the worker face the ladder when moving up and down it?			
Does the worker stay off the top steps of the ladder?			
Is there only one worker on the ladder at a time?			
Does the worker keep his center of gravity over the steps within the two rails of the ladder?			
Does the worker only handle one tool at a time while on the ladder?			

Does the worker store unused tools in a tool belt or on a shelf on the ladder rather than holding multiple tools?			
Does the worker minimize forces to complete the task?			
If forces are high, does he complete the task in a stable manner?			
If the worker is working above the height at which fall protection is required, is he tied off or otherwise wearing appropriate fall protection equipment?			