



Platform ladder characteristics

- A platform ladder is a self-supporting portable ladder that is non-adjustable in length, with a platform provided at the highest intended standing level.
- The top platform is surrounded on three sides by a railing that is at least 20 inches higher than the platform surface.
- Platform ladders range in size from 2 ft. to 18 ft. in length as measured from the bottom along the side rail to the top of the platform.
- The maximum work height is established by adding the user's height and reach to the highest standing level of the platform ladder.



Ladder maintenance

- Clean the climbing and gripping surfaces if they have been subjected to oil, grease or slippery materials.
- Ladders should be maintained in good condition.
- If a ladder tips over, it must be inspected for damage (bends or dents, loose rivets or joints, etc.).
- Periodically lubricate the spreader bars.
- Ladders should not be painted because this could obscure essential safety issues.

Common platform ladder hazards

- Improper or unstable base.
- Overloading, not knowing the load rating for the ladder.
- Not using three points of contact while climbing the ladder.
- Reaching out too far from the side of the ladder causing the ladder to tip.
- Carrying too many objects by hand while climbing ladder.
- Not wearing appropriate type of footwear.

Using platform ladders

1. Face the ladder when going up or down or when working from it.
2. Platform ladders require level ground support for all four of its side rails.
3. Platform ladders must not be used unless the base is fully open and the spreader bars are locked.
4. Inspect ladders before using them for cracks, loose rivets, or damaged steps.
5. Is the platform ladder tall enough to reach safely?
6. Never overload platform ladders.
7. Anti-slip feet at the bottom of the platform ladder side rails must be present and in good condition prior to using the ladder.
8. Never place a platform ladder on top of other objects such as boxes, barrels, scaffolds, or other unstable bases in an effort to obtain additional height.
9. Materials should not be stored on the steps.

EHS can assist with ladder training and provide example ladder checklists.