



# Toolbox Talks

## Extension Ladders



Construction tasks often require workers to be on working surfaces that are above ground level. The use of an extension ladder provides easy access to those elevated areas. **If improperly used, extension ladders can lead to serious injuries or even fatal incidents.** Remember, always use the ladder as intended and follow all manufacturer's warnings for the specific type of ladder you are trained to use.

There are five common categories of duty ratings used by manufacturers of ladders. Always look for the rating of the ladder on the stickers and warning labels of the specific ladder used.

Type	Duty Rating	Use	Load
IAA	Special Duty	Rugged	375lbs
IAA	Extra Duty	Industrial	300lbs
IAA	Heavy Duty	Industrial	250lbs
II	Medium Duty	Commercial	225lbs
III	Light Duty	Household	200lbs

Never exceed the ladder's maximum load rating. Always include the weight of all tools, materials, equipment, and the individual using the ladder when selecting which type of ladder to use.

***OSHA Standard 1926.1053(b)(3) Ladders shall not be loaded beyond the maximum intended load for which they were built, nor beyond their manufacturer's rated capacity.***

Ensure extension ladders are placed at a proper angle before climbing up and when in use. For every four feet high, the base of the extension ladder should be one foot out away from the wall or other surface it is leaning against.

**ALWAYS** lean the extension ladder on a stable structure that can withstand the intended load when in use. **Do Not** lean extension ladders against unstable surfaces such as stacked boxes or materials.

- Never attempt to extend or raise the height of an extension ladder while a worker is on the ladder!
- Avoid using extension ladders in front of aiseways, doors, or driveways. A ladder can become displaced by doors being opened or foot and equipment traffic can cause workers to fall off the ladder. If you must use ladders where people or equipment could get near the ladder, set up barricades, warning tape, and safety signs.
- If the extension ladder is too heavy or long to handle safely by yourself, ensure there are at least two people available to move the ladder.
- If transporting extension ladders with vehicles, consider using assistive devices like a drop-down ladder rack to make it easier to load and unload the ladder.
- To prevent potential back injuries, avoid overreaching or twisting your body when lifting an extension ladder

