






Ladder Safety

RMI takes every injury – big or small – very seriously. However, falls are among the most common serious injuries every single year. Whether if falls are at the same level or falls from working at heights, they can cause injuries. When working off ladders, it is important to note what type of ladder and the condition that the ladder is in. Below are differences in ladder types as well as a ladder pre-use inspection:

Type	Rating (Pounds/lbs.)	Picture
Type IAA (Extra Heavy Duty)	375 lbs.	
Type IA (Extra Heavy Duty)	300 lbs.	
Type I (Heavy Duty)	250 lbs.	
Type II (Medium Duty)	225 lbs.	
Type III (Light Duty)	200 lbs.	

Ladder Duty Rating				
TOTAL MAX WEIGHT				
Type III Grade 3	Type II Grade 2	Type I Grade 1	Type IA Grade 1A	Type IAA Grade 1AA
200 lbs	225 lbs	250 lbs	300 lbs	375 lbs
Light Duty Household Use	Medium Duty Tradesman and Farm	Heavy Duty Construction/Industrial	Heavy Duty Construction/Industrial	Heavy Duty Max Durability

A lot of facilities nowadays only allow for Type IA (300 pounds) and above ladders to be utilized onsite to eliminate any overweight usage. However, as you go up in weighted capacity, the ladders can get more expensive. Aluminum ladders are also prohibited at many facilities to reduce the risk of being electrocuted.

Ladder Types



Depending on what your task is, ladder selection is very important to ensure adequate safety on the job. According to OSHA's regulation, 29 CFR 1910.28(b)(1)(i), employers must ensure that if an employee is working 4 feet or higher above the ground without protected sides or edges, then fall protection systems must be in place. Just because you are on a ladder, does not make you exempt from fall protection devices. Furthermore, if you cannot maintain three points of contact while on the ladder, fall protection devices must be worn as well.

Inspect the ladder before use:

- Ensure rails and rungs/steps are not cracked, bent, loose or covered in oily debris
- Ensure step ladders have two spreaders (hold the ladder open) that are not damaged
- and that open and close properly

- Ensure the fly section of an extension ladder extends properly and securely locks into place
- Discard and mark any damaged portable ladders

Proper set up of a ladder:

- Secure or barricade the work site if in a high traffic area (doorways etc.)
- Place the ladder on a firm level surface
- Straight or extension ladders must be angled at a 4 to 1 ratio
- (For every 4 ft of elevation the ladder must extend 1 ft from the base)
- Proper use of a portable ladder:
 - Maintain 3 points of contact when working on the ladder
 - Face the ladder when climbing up or down
 - Keep ladder free of oil/grease and other slipping hazards
 - Don't over-reach while on the ladder
 - Don't shift, move or extend a ladder while in use
 - Don't load ladder beyond the maximum intended load (see manufacturer label)

