

# LADDER SAFETY

## Choosing the correct ladder:

### Non-Conductive Ladder:

- FM employees are only allowed to use fiberglass portable ladders on construction sites, or when conducting electrical work
- Fiberglass or composite rail ladders (non-conductive) are recommended to be used by Harvard employees
- FM employees are prohibited from using wooden ladders

### Step Ladder:

- Employees are never to stand on the top two rungs of a step ladder
- A step ladder must be used with the spreaders fully opened and secured

### Straight or Extension Ladders:

- If accessing an elevated surface, extend the ladder 3 rungs above the leading edge and secure the top of the ladder to prevent slipping
- Never fasten two straight ladders together unless both ladders are specifically designed to do so

### Inspect the ladder before use:

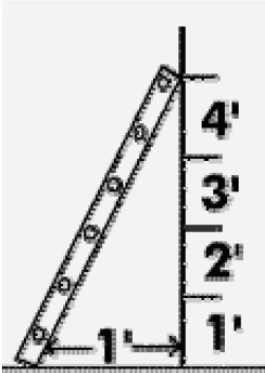
- Ensure rails and rungs/steps are not cracked, bent, loose or covered in oily debris
- Ensure step ladders have two spreaders (hold the ladder open) that are not damaged and that open and close properly
- Ensure the fly section of an extension ladder extends properly and securely locks into place
- 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 climbing up or down a 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)



Straight ladders must be set at a 4:1 angle ratio



The use of metal ladders is prohibited when working with electrical equipment



FM-OHS:

[fm-ohs@virginia.edu](mailto:fm-ohs@virginia.edu)

(434) 297-6379