

# **GROUNDWORKS** **STEEL LADDERS** User Guide

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# Steel Ladders

## Work at height regulations 2005

The work at height regulations 2005, contains specific requirements for the use of ladders. Regulation 8(e) states that "Every employer shall ensure that, in the case of a ladder, Schedule 6 is complied with." The parts of Schedule 6 (Requirements for Ladders) applicable to Steel Ladders are as follows:-

1. Every employer shall ensure that a ladder is used for work at height only if a risk assessment under regulation 3 of the Management Regulations has demonstrated that the use of more suitable work equipment is not justified because of the low risk and -
  - (a) the short duration of use; or (b) existing features on site which he cannot alter.
2. Any surface upon which a ladder rests shall be stable firm, of sufficient strength and of suitable composition to safely support the ladder so that its rungs or steps remain horizontal, and any loading intended to be placed upon it.
3. A ladder shall be so positioned as to ensure its stability during use.
4. A suspended ladder shall be attached in a secure manner and so that, with the exception of a flexible ladder, it cannot be displaced and swinging is prevented.
5. A portable ladder shall be prevented from slipping during use by -
  - (a) securing the stiles at or near their upper or lower ends. (b) an effective anti-slip or other stability device; or (c) any other arrangement of equivalent effectiveness.
6. A ladder used for access shall be long enough to protrude sufficiently above the place of landing to which it provides access, unless other measures have been taken to ensure a firm handhold.
7. Where a ladder or run of ladders rises a vertical distance of 9 metres or more above its base, there shall, where reasonably practicable, be provided at suitable intervals sufficient safe landing areas or rest platforms.
8. Every ladder shall be used in such a way that -
  - (a) a secure handhold and secure support are always available to the user.
  - (b) the user can maintain a safe handhold when carrying a load.

# Identification of Components

## Identification

Generation UK can provide Zinc Alloy Coated (silver colour) Steel Ladders details of which are:-

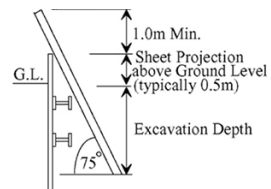
Code	Overall Length (m)	Number of Rungs	Weight (kg)
309011	3.00	10	10
309013	4.00	13	18
309014	5.00	1	23
309015	6.00	20	28
309016	7.00	23	32
309017	8.00	26	37

## Usage

### Safe Use

When used for access to excavations a helpful guide for selecting a minimum ladder length is:

Depth of Excavation & Sheet Projection above G.L. (m)	Minimum Ladder Length Required (m)
1.5	3.00
2.5	4.00
3.5	5.00
4.5	6.00
5.5	7.00
6.5	8.00



These length's are based on a safe working angle of 75 degrees (4:1) & a projection above the top of the sheet of at least 1.0m

# Usage

## Ladder Inspection Before and During Use on Site

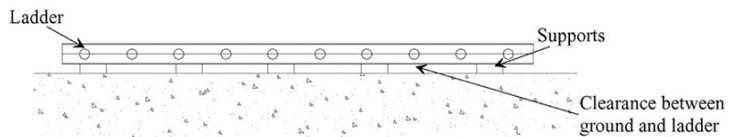
Ladders are inspected by Generation UK before issue to site and a 'Record of Inspection' form will be issued with each delivery. Whilst on hire it is the responsibility of the user/ hirer to ensure that the ladder undergoes pre-use checks and detailed and interim inspections as required, depending upon the task, site conditions and duration of hire. Refer to the safety checklist for ladders before first using the ladders and regularly during site usage.

## Transportation and Storage on site when not in use

Ladders should be stored indoors if possible or covered and stored clear of the ground in a dry, protected, well ventilated area.

Store level on the stiles.

Ensure there are sufficient supports to prevent sagging. Ladders must not be hung from the rungs or stiles.



## Overhead Power lines

Ladders should not be taken into the vicinity of overhead power lines unless a permit to work has been issued.

## Carrying a Ladder

A short ladder may be carried comfortably by having it vertical against the shoulder and holding one of the lower rungs, using the other hand to hold the stile. Longer ladders should be carried horizontally on the shoulders by 2 people, one at either end. Care should be taken in negotiating corners and obstacles.

## Erecting and Lowering Pole Ladders

The procedure for erecting a ladder is as follows :-

When the ladder is flat on the ground one person stands on the bottom rung, while the other takes position at the head and takes hold of the top rung, raising the ladder off the ground.

## Usage

Then, rung by rung, that person moves towards the top, lifting as he goes.

The person at the foot grasps the lower rungs as soon as possible and draws the ladder towards them, whilst steadying it.

The sequence is reversed when lowering.

Short ladders may be raised by one person, placing the foot of the ladder against a wall or fixture and pushing the ladder from the top.

### Use of Ladders

- A ladder must not be used as an access to, or egress from, a workplace unless it is reasonable to do so taking into account the work being carried out, its duration, and the risks to the safety of any person arising from the use of the ladder. See schedule 6 of the Work at Height Regulations 2005.
- A ladder must be of the correct class for the intended use, of sufficient strength, suitable for the job that is to be done, and be so erected that it does not become displaced.
- The ladder should be suited to the purpose for which it is to be used and free from any defects.
- Ladders should be set on a firm, level base strong enough to support the ladder and any load that may be placed upon it. There should be no makeshift use of bricks, blocks, timber packs, etc to gain extra height or to level up the stiles.
- Ladders should be sited clear of any excavation, and in such a position that they are not causing a hazard, or placed anywhere where they may be struck or dislodged. Barriers should be placed around the foot as added protection where necessary.
- Ladders must be properly maintained, of sound construction and materials, free from any defects and kept in good repair. If a rung is missing or damaged, the ladder must not be used.
- Ladders must be supported on each stile and prevented from sagging or swaying.
- Ladders should not be placed so that they are resting against any fragile surface or fitting.
- Ladders must not be secured by their rungs; lashings should be around the stiles, or ladder ties may be used.
- When using a ladder, secure handholds and secure support must always be available.

## Usage

- Lashing or clamping, at the mid point of a ladder, may be necessary to prevent sway on ladders which are over 6m high.
- A Ladder must not be placed in such a position that any adjacent scaffold tubes interfere with the footing of the person on the ladder.
- If the vertical height of a ladder is over 9m, safe landing areas or rest platforms shall be provided at suitable intervals.
- Only one person should be on a ladder at any one time.
- Always face the ladder when climbing or descending it.
- When climbing or descending a ladder, both hands must be kept free for holding onto the ladder, and free of any other items.
- Footwear worn by persons using a ladder must be suitable for maintaining a satisfactory grip. Tools and materials required for work can be carried in a shoulder bag, on a special belt, or be hoisted up or lowered afterward.
- Tools not in use should be hooked or otherwise secured to the ladder.
- Over-reaching leads to over balancing. The most satisfactory method for working safely on a ladder is for both thighs and hips to be kept between the stiles and one hand always holding the ladder. The working position should be not less than five rungs from the top of the ladder.
- The top of the ladder must not be repositioned, by jumping, while standing on rungs.
- When a ladder must be left standing after working hours, a board must be lashed between the rungs to prevent unauthorised access.
- Ropes or lashings which are used to secure a ladder must be in good condition.
- As far as possible, ladders must be placed so that there is adequate space behind each rung for a proper foothold.
- Ladders must extend at least 1 metre (approx 5 rungs) above the landing place, unless an alternative, secure handhold is available.
- Ladders must not be painted or otherwise treated in any way that would hide or conceal any defects. They may be treated with a transparent coating such as varnish, shellac or clear preservative.

## Usage

- All ladders should, in the interests of safety, be securely fixed or lashed to prevent slipping, either near the top or, if this is not possible, at the bottom.
- HSE research has shown that footing a ladder is not an effective way of stopping it from slipping. Where a ladder is footed, the person doing so must have both feet on the ladder at all times.

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