

Portable Ladders

Self-Inspection Checklist



Optional Information

Name of School:
Date of Inspection:
Career-Technical program/course/room:
Signature of inspector:

Guidelines:

This checklist covers regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) under the general industry standards 29 CFR 1910.25 (portable wooden ladders) and 29 CFR 1910.26 (portable metal ladders). It applies to wooden and metal ladders, including step ladders. It does not apply to stockroom step ladders, aisle-way step ladders, shelf ladders, and library ladders. The regulations cited apply only to private employers and their employees, unless adopted by a State agency and applied to other groups such as public employees. Please use the checklist entitled Portable Ladders for Construction for construction site situations.

Portable Wooden Ladders

1	Are all wooden ladder parts (a) sound, (b) free of sharp edges and splinters, and (c) on visual inspection, free from shake, wane, compression failure, decay, or other irregularities? [29 CFR 1910.25(b)(1)(i)]
2	Are all portable wooden step ladders 20 feet or less in length? [29 CFR 1910.25(c)(2)]
3	Is the portable step ladder of uniform step spacing and less than 12 inches apart? [29 CFR 1910.25(c)(2)(i)(b)]
4	Is the inside width between side rails of each portable step ladder at least 11-1/2 inches? [29 CFR 1910.25(c)(2)(i)(c)]
5	Is the metal spreader or locking device of portable step ladders of sufficient size and strength to securely hold the front and back sections in the open position? [29 CFR 1910.25(c)(2)(i)(f)]
6	Are all single wooden ladders 30 feet or less in length? [29 CFR 1910.25(c)(3)(ii)(a)]
7	Are all two-section wooden extension ladders 60 feet or less in length? [29 CFR 1910.25(c)(3)(iii)(a)]
8	Are all wooden ladders in good condition with the joint between the step and siderails tight? Are all hardware and fittings securely attached? Are the movable parts operating freely without binding or undue play? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(1)(i)]
9	Are the metal bearings of locks, wheels, pulleys, etc. frequently lubricated? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(1)(ii)]

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10	Is frayed or badly worn rope replaced? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(1)(iii)]
11	Are the safety feet or other auxiliary equipment kept in good condition? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(1)(iv)]
12	Are wooden ladders inspected frequently? Are those with defects withdrawn from service for repair or destruction and tagged or marked as Dangerous, do not use? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(1)(x) and (d)(2)(viii)] <i>Note: Wooden ladders with missing steps, rungs, or cleats; broken siderails; or other faulty equipment must not be used. Discarded ladders should be cut down the center of the rungs.</i>
13	Are rungs kept free of grease and oil? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(1)(xi)]
14	Are wooden ladders used and placed so that the horizontal distance from the top support to the foot of the ladder is one quarter of the working length of the ladder (the length along the ladder between the foot and the top support)? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(i)]
15	Is the ladder (a) placed to prevent slipping, (b) lashed, or (c) held in position? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(i)]
16	Is the use of wooden ladders in the horizontal position prohibited? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(i)] <i>Note: Ladders must never be used as platforms, runways, or scaffolds.</i>
17	Is only one person allowed on the ladder at one time? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(ii)]
18	Are ladders placed away from the front of doors that open toward the ladder unless the door is blocked, locked, or guarded? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(iv)]
19	Are ladders always placed on stable bases? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(v)] <i>Note: Ladders must never be placed on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases.</i>
20	Is the splicing of short ladders together prohibited? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(ix)]
21	Is the use of the tops of stepladders as steps prohibited? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(xii)]
22	When in use, do all 36-foot or less two-section extension wooden ladders have a minimum overlap of 3 feet between the two sections? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(xiii)]
23	When in use, do all 36- to 48-foot two-section extension wooden ladders have a minimum overlap of 4 feet between the two sections? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(xiii)]
24	When in use, do all 48- to 60-foot two-section extension wooden ladders have a minimum overlap of 5 feet between the two sections? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(xiii)]
25	If ladders are used to gain access to a roof, are they extended at least 3 feet above the point of support? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(xv)]
26	Are all portable rung ladders equipped with nonslip bases where a hazard of slipping exists? [29 CFR 1910.25(d)(2)(xix)] <i>Note: Nonslip bases are not intended as a substitute for care in safely placing, lashing, or holding a ladder that is being used.</i>

Portable Metal Ladders

27	Are metal ladders maintained in good usable condition at all times? [29 CFR 1910.26(c)(2)(iv)]
28	Are the rungs and steps of portable metal ladders corrugated, knurled, dimpled, coated with skid-resistant material, or otherwise treated to minimize the possibility of slipping? [29 CFR 1910.26(a)(1)(v)]
29	Are all portable metal single ladders 30 feet or less in length? [29 CFR 1910.26(a)(2)(ii)]
30	Are all portable metal two-section ladders 48 feet or less in length? [29 CFR 1910.26(a)(2)(ii)]
31	If a portable metal ladder tips over, is it inspected immediately for damage? [29 CFR 1910.26(c)(2)(vi)(a)] <i>Note: The inspection must include looking for dents, bends, or excessively dented rungs; and checking all rungs to siderail connections, checking hardware connections, and checking rivets for shears.</i>
32	If metal ladders are exposed to oil and grease, are they cleaned immediately? [29 CFR 1910.26(c)(2)(vi)(d)]
33	Are metal ladders with defects marked and taken out of service until repaired by either the maintenance department or the manufacturer? [29 CFR 1910.26(c)(2)(vii)]

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Portable Metal Ladders

34	Are metal ladders placed at the proper angle? [29 CFR 1910.26(c)(3)(i)] <i>Note: That is, the base distance from the vertical wall to the ladder is one fourth the working length of the ladder or height at which the ladder touches the wall.</i>
35	Is the use of a metal ladder as a brace, skid, guy or gin pole, gangway, or for other uses than that which the ladder was intended prohibited? [29 CFR 1910.26(c)(3)(vii)]
36	Has inspection been conducted to determine if metal ladders might contact energized conductors? [29 CFR 1910.26(c)(3)(viii)] <i>Note: The use of metal ladders should be prohibited wherever they might make contact with energized electrical conductors.</i>