

Toolbox Talk Training: Transporting Portable Ladders Safely

A damaged ladder is an unsafe ladder, and many portable ladders are damaged not during use, but while being moved to, from, or around the jobsite. Proper handling and transport are essential to keeping ladders in safe working condition. Today we'll review several important practices to help prevent transport-related damage.

- **Never drag a ladder.** Do not drag a portable ladder across the ground or slide it out of a truck bed, rack, or trailer in a way that allows it to drop or hit the ground. This can damage the ends of the ladder and weaken its structure. If a ladder is too heavy or too long to handle alone, always get help.
- **Watch for blind spots while carrying.** When moving a ladder around corners or through tight areas, slow down and stay alert. This helps prevent striking other workers, equipment, or materials that may be just out of sight.
- **Secure step ladders before transport.** When folding a step ladder for carrying, tie or secure the sections together using rope, twine, or wire. This prevents the ladder from opening unexpectedly and helps protect your hands and fingers from pinch points.
- **Lower extension ladders before moving.** Before carrying or repositioning an extension ladder, fully lower the fly section. This reduces weight imbalance and minimizes leverage, helping prevent strain or injury while handling the ladder.
- **Do not throw ladders into vehicles.** Always place ladders carefully into truck beds or trailers. Avoid dropping or tossing them, and make sure they are not resting on objects that prevent them from lying flat.
- **Secure ladders properly during transport.** When using a ladder rack or pipe rack, ensure the ladder is fully supported along its length. Use straps or ropes to secure it tightly so it cannot bounce or shift during transport. Padding such as rubber, foam, or carpet can help reduce vibration damage during travel.
- **Avoid overhanging loads.** Do not transport ladders that extend too far beyond the truck bed or rack. Excess overhang can cause the ladder to flex, bow, or become permanently damaged while driving.
- **Inspect after transport.** After unloading and setting up a ladder, always perform a quick visual inspection to ensure no damage occurred during transport before putting it into service.

As always, follow the manufacturer's instructions and warnings related to transporting your specific ladder.

Does anyone have additional tips or experiences to share about safely transporting portable ladders? Thank you for your participation. Please remember to sign the training certification form before leaving so you receive credit for attending today's training session.

