



# SAFETY WARNING

Read the safety warnings on the ladder and follow the manufacturer's advice.

Never use a ladder if you are alone and cannot get assistance if you have an accident.

If you are a senior citizen or a person with a disability you may be eligible for assistance with home maintenance from either your council or local agencies.

## Caution

Don't take risks by taking a short cut.

- Never lean a ladder on an unstable or slippery surface.
- Do not 'walk' the ladder while still on it, climb down and reposition the ladder closer to the work.
- Do not push or pull against other objects when up the ladder unless the ladder is properly secured—these forces can destabilise the ladder.
- Do not use a ladder if you are working in wind or rain.
- Do not use a ladder if you are affected by medication or if you have a medical condition that can cause you to lose your balance.
- Never have more than one person on the ladder at a time.

## Remember

- Work within arm's reach from the ladder and never lean out too far.
- Only climb as far as the second step from the top of a step ladder or the third step from the top of a straight ladder.
- Place the ladder on dry, firm and level ground.



Australian  
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### For further information contact

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**Important notice.** The information in this brochure is general in nature and may not be relevant to your specific circumstances. While the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has made every reasonable effort to provide current and accurate information, readers should be aware that the ACCC accepts no liability for any loss or damage whatsoever attributable to reliance upon any of that information. Nothing in this book should be taken to displace the need to seek professional advice. The ACCC recommends that users exercise their own skill and care with respect to its use.

# SAFETY ALERT USING A LADDER



# STAY SAFE

# DEATH AND INJURY RISK WORKING ON A LADDER

You don't have to fall far off a ladder to be seriously injured: 1–2 metres can be enough. Fractured limbs, spinal cord damage, severe brain injury or even death can result.

At least 83 Australians, mainly men, have died after falling from a ladder over the past five years. Thousands more have been seriously injured while using a ladder for home repairs and renovations, as well as gardening tasks.

Men at or nearing retirement age are in the highest risk category for this type of accident.

**Protect yourself—follow the safety guidelines in this brochure.**



*Do not carry items weighing more than 5 kilograms up or down the ladder; have someone pass them to you.*

## PLAN TO STAY SAFE

### SAFETY GUIDELINES WHEN USING A LADDER

#### CHECK THE LADDER BEFORE USE

- ✓ The ladder is in good condition without signs of warping, rust, corrosion or missing rivets.
- ✓ No loose or cracked rungs or hinges.
- ✓ Non-slip safety feet are fitted and in good condition.
- ✓ The ladder's height is right for the job—if using an extension ladder to access a roof or work area, the top of the ladder should extend at least one metre over the top of the surface it is resting on.

#### SET UP

- ✓ Place the ladder on dry, firm and level ground—if the soil is too soft, place a hard board under the ladder's feet to stop it sinking.
- ✓ Engage all locks and braces—step ladders should be fully opened.
- ✓ Keep the ladder clear of powerlines and exposed electrical wiring.
- ✓ The foot of an extension ladder should be placed at a distance from the wall equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the length of the ladder.



*Place a ladder on dry, firm and level ground*

#### CLIMB SAFELY

- ✓ Wear well fitting, enclosed, slip-resistant footwear—not sandals or thongs.
- ✓ Have someone hold the ladder at the base while you are using it.
- ✓ Hold the ladder with both hands as you climb and carry tools in a tool belt.
- ✓ Stay in the centre of the ladder as you climb.
- ✓ Only climb to the second rung from the top of a step ladder or the third rung from the top of an extension ladder.
- ✓ Secure the top of an extension ladder into position before starting work.

#### WORK SAFELY

- ✓ Work within arm's reach from the ladder—if you cannot easily reach, climb down and reposition the ladder.
- ✓ Always hold the ladder with one hand.
- ✓ Be careful when pulling items from shelves/gutters/roofs as this may cause you to lose your balance.

When you are finished store the ladder in a dry place to prevent warping or corrosion.