



## Step Carefully!

Many tasks require ladders or step stools to be accomplished, but improper selection, use, and/or care of these important tools can lead to higher risk of injury. Following are a few pointers to ensure your safety.

**Make sure the ladder or step stool is in good condition BEFORE you use it!** It should not have any of the following; if you find any of these defects, you must take the ladder OUT of service and select a different ladder:

- ✓ Loose, split, cracked, or missing rungs;
- ✓ Lost or damaged feet (non-slip);
- ✓ Cracks on any section;
- ✓ Signs of corrosion;
- ✓ Loose rivets, fastenings;
- ✓ Grease or anything slippery on the rungs.

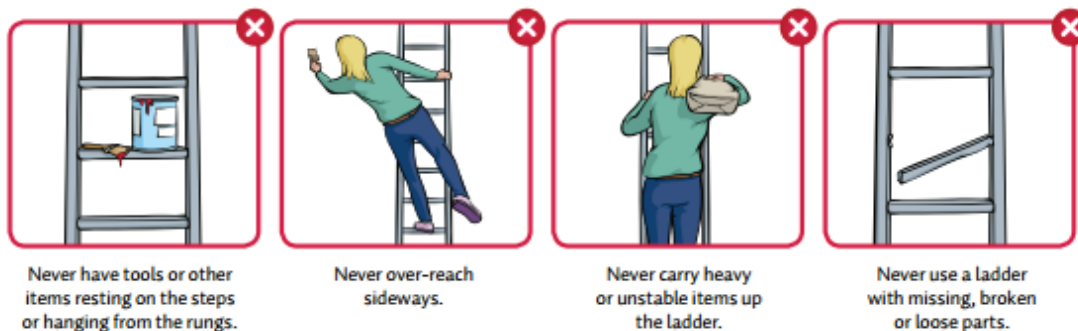
### Properly place the ladder.

- ✓ Open the ladder or step stool all the way, on a firm, flat surface;
- ✓ Make sure the ladder/step stool sides are all the way open;
- ✓ Lock the the spreader bar (see arrow in the picture at right).



### Safely climb the ladder.

- ✓ Keep three points of contact on the ladder at all times – two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand – while climbing, and two feet and one hand when working;
- ✓ Climb facing the ladder with your body centered between the rails;
- ✓ Don't step on the top rung or the very top of the ladder;
- ✓ Don't twist your body while climbing;
- ✓ Don't climb with hands full of gear;
- ✓ Do not lean out or around ladder uprights;
- ✓ Keep your belly button between ladder uprights;
- ✓ Do not "skip a rung" to attempt to jump – you could injure your joints and/or fall.



Never have tools or other items resting on the steps or hanging from the rungs.

Never over-reach sideways.

Never carry heavy or unstable items up the ladder.

Never use a ladder with missing, broken or loose parts.