

Guidance

G3188

Safe use of ladders and step ladders

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1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on the safe use of ladders and step ladders.

2 Scope

This Guidance applies to London Underground (LU) staff working in the Chief Operating Officer's (COO) Directorate.

3 Guidance

This guidance covers:

- The planning work at height activities using ladders and step ladders
- Pre-use checks
- Positioning of ladders and step ladders
- Securing ladders

3.1 Planning the work

Prior to the commencement of any work activity involving work at height activity a risk assessment must be carried out. The risk assessment should be completed by a competent person.

The risk assessment will identify:

- The hazards
- The risks
- The control measures required to minimise the risk of injury from the work at height activity such as training and experience of staff, maintenance of work equipment

The selection of control measures should be based on the HSE hierarchy of control measures for working at height. These are:

1. Avoid the need to work at height, for example by using extending equipment from the ground
2. Prevent falls using appropriate access equipment such as work platforms, rope access or ladders
3. Reduce the distance and consequences of a fall should one occur.

A ladder is therefore only to be used for work at height if a risk assessment has demonstrated that the use of other types of access equipment, such as a mobile elevated work platform (MEWP) is not justified, because of the low risk.