



WHY?

This FACT SHEET has been created by The British Sign and Graphics Association to:

Raise Awareness:

Emphasise the importance of ladder - stepladder compliance for safety, legal compliance, and accessibility.

Guide Compliance:

Share clear, concise guidance on achieving regulatory standards.

Promote Best Practices:

Highlight creative, functional solutions that balance safety with design.

Set Standards:

Establish benchmarks for safety, quality, and accessibility within the industry.

Provide Clarity:

Support industry stakeholders to align work activities with applicable regulations and end user requirements.

DISCLAIMER:

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KNOWLEDGEHUB: LADDER - STEPLADDER COMPLIANCE



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Pre-Use Check and Inspection: WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- ⚠ **Stiles:** No bends or damage
- ⚠ **Feet:** Present, undamaged, clean, and stable.
- ⚠ **Rungs:** Secure and not worn.
- ⚠ **Locking Mechanism:** Working correctly.
- ⚠ **Stepladder Platform and Steps:** Not damaged, loose, or slippery.



It is the employers responsibility to ensure that any ladder and or, stepladder is both suitable for the operational task and, is in a safe, working condition prior to use.

CONDUCT A PRE-USE CHECK - PRIOR TO EACH USE! IF ANY DEFECTS ARE FOUND, DO NOT USE!

PRE-USE CHECKS do not need to be documented. Any areas of concern, damage, faults and or, issues should be reported **IMMEDIATELY** - inline with organisational accepted custom and practices.



Pre-use checks and inspections of ladder stability devices and other accessories should be performed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

KEY POINTS OF COMPLIANCE :

Ladders and stepladders are not banned under health and safety law. They can be a safe and practical option for low-risk, short-duration tasks when used correctly.

ONLY USE WHEN:

- ✓ Risk Assessment evidence a higher-level fall protection is not required.
- ✓ The task is low risk and short duration.
- ✓ Workplace features cannot be altered to accommodate alternative equipment.
- ⚠ **IF A TASK REQUIRES MORE THAN 30 MINUTES ON A LADDER OR A STEPLADDER - CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE EQUIPMENT.**

Ladders and **stepladders** are indispensable tools within the signage industry, frequently used for installation, maintenance, and inspection tasks.

However, improper use can lead to serious accidents. Falls from height remain one of the leading causes of workplace injuries, underscoring the importance of ladder safety.

Adhering to key regulations, such as the **Work at Height Regulations 2005** ensures that organisations and individuals operate safely, reducing risks to team members and the public whilst demonstrating professionalism and compliance (**The law - HSE**).

Key Regulations and Guidance include:

Choosing the Right Ladder: Ensure the ladder or stepladder is suitable for the task, considering factors like load capacity, length, and material. Ladders and stepladders should conform to the EN131 standard (**Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE**).

Pre-Use Checks: Prior to each use, conduct a 'pre-use' check to identify any obvious defects. Inspect the stiles, feet, rungs, locking mechanisms, and other components for damage or wear (**Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE**).

Safe Usage Practices: Use ladders and or, stepladders only on firm, level ground. Secure the equipment to prevent movement and maintain three points of contact during use. Avoid overreaching and ensure the ladder is positioned at a safe angle (**Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE**).

Securing Ladders: Whenever possible, tie the ladder to a suitable point. If this is not feasible, use a ladder stability device or securely wedge the ladder. Footing the ladder should be a last resort (**Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE**).

Training and Competence: Only individuals who are competent - or under the supervision of a competent person - should use ladders. Competence is demonstrated through training, practical experience, and knowledge of safe working practices (**Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE**).

Visit our website: Technical Guidance: **LADDER and STEPLADDER COMPLIANCE** for more information.

EN131 is the current **safety standard** for portable steps and ladders. Although **BS2037** and **BS1129** have been withdrawn, **ladders** and **stepladders** originally fabricated to these standards prior to their withdrawal - may still be used (subject to adhering to user instructions and guidance on safe use). **For more information:** visit the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** website: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/ladders/product-standards.htm>