

### Student Handout

#### Stepladders

Stepladders are in almost every workplace and home, so most people treat them as a safe convenience rather than the hazard that they are. Every year in British Columbia, hundreds of workers are injured in falls from stepladders that are either placed or used inappropriately.

#### Examples of Hazards

- tipping over
- falling from the ladder
- stepladder collapsing
- fingers caught when folding up the ladder

#### Safety tips

- Position the ladder properly.
- Fully open the ladder on a level surface, and lock the spreaders in place.
- Never use a stepladder folded up and leaning against a surface.
- Maintain 3 points of contact with the ladder (e.g. 1 hand and 2 feet).
- Do not use the shelf or top 2 steps.
- Stay between the rails – don't lean to one side.
- Never carry heavy, bulky, or awkward objects that may make going up or down the ladder unsafe.





If possible, brace yourself with your free hand.

Check the ladder before you use it to ensure no parts are broken, cracked or missing.

Fully open the ladder and place it on a firm, level surface.

Move the ladder instead of reaching to the side to pick up or place heavy objects – keep your weight between the ladder side rails.

The top two steps and bucket shelf are not safe to stand on.

Climbing or standing on the rear part of the ladder can cause it to collapse or tip over.

Make sure the areas around the base and top of the ladder are clear of obstructions.



Stepladders should never be used folded up and leaning against a surface.