

DON'T TAKE THE RISK

Cutting corners can cut your life short.

Ladders can be more dangerous than you might think.

Each year there are dozens of serious incidents where workers have fallen from ladders. Most of these incidents involve a ladder being used incorrectly or inappropriately.

It only takes a minute to cross check your ladder and avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

Only use ladders for simple access jobs, or for a short duration. It's best to work from ground level whenever possible. You should also consider alternatives to a ladder, such as scaffolding or an elevated work platform.

If a ladder is your only option, the following precautions can help you avoid injury.

- Choose the right ladder for the job. It should meet Australian standards and the load requirements of the job.
- An A-frame or extension ladder may be appropriate for some tasks, but a platform ladder is safer.
- Inspect the ladder for damage before each use.
- Only use a ladder if you are physically capable of doing so.
- Always set up the ladder on a flat, stable surface. If this isn't possible then use a ladder that includes ladder safety devices like leg levellers, anti-slip gutter guards and stabilisers.
- Always maintain three points of contact when climbing or descending the ladder. This means two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand.
- Only take small items up or down a ladder - never large or heavy items such as building materials. Only carry items that allow you to maintain three points of contact.
- Never lean or reach away from the ladder while using it.
- The combined weight of the person using the ladder and any items or tools should never exceed the working load limit on the ladder.
- A-frame ladders should only be used when locked in the fully-open position.
- If you're using an extension ladder, secure it at the top, bottom or both. If this isn't possible then have someone hold the ladder in place while in use.
- Extension ladders should be angled at a ratio of 1:4. That is, position the base of the ladder 1 metre away from the structure for every 4 metres of height.
- Do not climb or work past the second-last rung of a ladder, and never straddle the top of an A-frame ladder.
- When climbing down, remain facing the ladder and climb to the bottom rung before stepping off.

If you do not feel safe, don't do it. Simply stop and speak with your employer, host trainer or field officer.

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DON'T TAKE THE RISK

Rushing on site can get you rushed to hospital.

Common sense can help prevent common mistakes.

If you lift, lower, push, pull, carry or move something, if you don't do it right you risk giving yourself a major, permanent injury. Manual handling is the biggest cause of injuries to construction workers and can be the sort of injuries that keep you out of work - and enjoying your life - for a very long time.

It's important to be mindful of how these incidents occur and what measures you can take to prevent them.

Tips to Avoid Injury

- Stop and Think.
- Grip the load firmly, never bend, twist and lift.
- Keep the load close to the body.
- Push don't pull.
- Avoid reaching.
- Wear appropriate PPE where required.
- Use mechanical aids whenever possible.
- Ask for training, instruction and supervision if you need it.
- Always follow safe work practices.

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DON'T TAKE THE RISK

Spotted something unsafe? Speak up and protect your mates.

Having a chat can be the best way to create a safe and happy worksite.

Poor communication can contribute to an unsafe or uncomfortable working environment:

- There is greater risk from not knowing how to do a task safely if you don't discuss it before you start working on it.
- Not talking through things also risks issues concerning perceived harassment and bullying or discrimination in the workplace not being raised or dealt with.

Good communication is essential for people to work as a team. Talking together helps:

- Get in place good practices to ensure everyone is working safely as a team.
- People get along and work better with each other.

It only takes a minute to talk before you work and avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

- Routinely ask and talk about safety, both before, during and after work activities. Toolbox meetings are a great place to bring up your thoughts.
- Got an Idea or Having a Problem? - don't leave it for another day, discuss it sooner rather than later as someone's safety or wellbeing may be at risk.
- Safe ways of doing things, ideas to be considered, barriers to teamwork as well as problem solving and grievances all need to be given an opportunity to be communicated.
- Who Do I Speak To? - The immediate person concerned should be your first point of contact.

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Lacerations and Puncture Wounds

DON'T TAKE THE RISK

Warning - This contains images that might be disturbing to some readers. Reader discretion is advised.

Keep your eyes open to keep them both in your head.

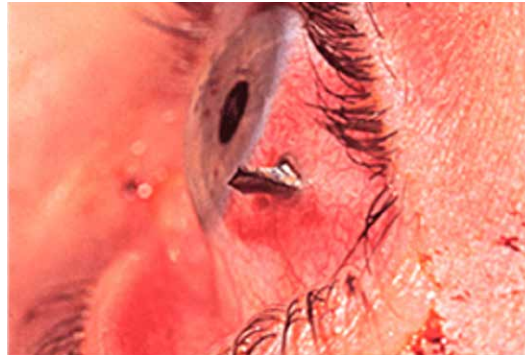
True story.

A tradie was struck in the eye by a metal fragment from a screw whilst ripping a length of second-hand timber with a circular saw. The timber had been checked, but one metal screw wasn't seen and the safety glasses were on top of the tradie's head when the metal flicked up into their eye.

What happened?

Two mistakes led to this injury:

- The screw was visible but the timber wasn't checked carefully enough so it wasn't noticed.
- Safety glasses weren't being worn at the time.



It only takes a minute to plan and avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

- Always thoroughly inspect the material prior to cutting as even new timber may contain foreign material of some kind.
- Discuss any hazards associated with the task and get agreement on what to do.
- Wear your Personal Protective Equipment - appropriate eye protection (glasses / goggles / face shields) whenever using a circular saw as there will always be the potential for injury from flying objects.
- If anything goes into your eye get it promptly attended to; avoid rubbing the eye; flush the eye using an approved eyewash; never attempt to remove an object embedded in the eye; seek medical attention for incidents involving chemicals, metallic objects (grinding dust), cuts, punctures etc.

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Circular saws can be deadly.

True story.

When an apprentice was ripping timber the circular saw 'kicked back' and caused horrific cuts to their wrist.

What happened?

Three mistakes led to this injury:

- The timber pinched the saw blade causing it to "kick back" over the apprentice's hand.
- Both the apprentice's hands were not holding the saw whilst making the cut.
- The timber was not adequately secured whilst being cut.



It only takes a minute to plan and avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

- Always make sure the material being cut is properly secured. This is of critical importance when cutting small or flexible pieces of timber or when ripping.
- Keep Both Hands Clear. Make sure you use both hands when operating the saw and don't place them either immediately in front of, behind or under the saw when making the cut.
- Talk to your boss about safer ways to do the job - such as the use of portable table saws or having larger quantities pre-cut off-site
- Training / Instruction / Supervision - always ensure you have received an adequate explanation, guidance, direction and are following safe work practices. If you haven't received training in that tool don't use it.

You should be aware of this

Legally you have an obligation to help keep the worksite safe by identifying any potential hazards associated with the job you are doing and sort them out before you start working. Please utilise all the safety equipment and clothing you are given and do everything reasonably practical to eliminate hazards and control the risks to the health and safety of yourself and those around you.

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DON'T TAKE THE RISK

Watch where you're going.

Worksites need housework.

Keeping the workplace clean and tidy can minimise injuries resulting from slipping over, tripping up or bashing into something because you haven't watched where you are going.

It's not just you and your mates that are at risk, poor standards of workplace housekeeping are also potential hazards to members of the public.

It will only take a minute to check out these tips that could help avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

You should expect your boss to provide a workplace that is safe from injury and risks to health.

Acceptable standards of housekeeping, however, should be common sense. Good waste and materials management make for improved productivity, maximise available storage space and most importantly, significantly reduce the likelihood of an accident happening.



- Pre-Plan. Assess how the site is working - where things are placed (such as temporary work benches, materials etc.) in relation to how you are using the equipment, access and what else is happening on site (eg: scaffolding / movement within site).
- Make sure you do end-of-day clean-ups.
- Always wear your PPE - appropriate head protection (hard hat) and foot protection (safety boots), should be worn at all times where required / instructed.



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Don't fall asleep on the job

Fatigue can cause you to be distracted or to miss something obvious. Often a number of factors combine to increase fatigue to the point where you could be putting your own or someone else's safety at risk.

What is fatigue? Fatigue is more than feeling tired and drowsy. In a work context, fatigue is a state of mental and/or physical exhaustion which reduces a person's ability to perform work safely and effectively. It can occur because of prolonged mental or physical activity, sleep loss and/or disruption of the internal body clock. Fatigue can be caused by factors which may be work related, non-work related or a combination of both and can accumulate over time.

Why is fatigue a problem in the workplace? Fatigue may increase the risk of incidents because of a lack of alertness. Fatigue may result in a slower reaction to signals or situations and affect the ability to make good decisions. The effects of fatigue can reduce your:

- Ability to make decisions.
- Ability to use power tool and equipment safely.
- Ability to do complex planning.
- Ability to safely work at heights.
- Communication skills.
- Productivity and performance.
- Attention.
- Ability to handle stress.
- Reaction time.
- Ability to recall details.
- Ability to respond to changes in surroundings.

Take a minute to check you're not too tired to work and avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

To reduce the risk of being involved in a work incident caused by fatigue, you should:

- Understand your sleep, rest and recovery needs and obtain adequate rest and sleep away from work.
- Seek medical advice and assistance if you have or are concerned about a health condition that affects your sleep and/or causes fatigue.
- Assess your own fitness for work before commencing work.
- Monitor your level of alertness and concentration while you are at work.
- Maintain hydration (drink water).
- Do some stretching or physical exercise, adjust the work environment (lighting, temperature).
- Talk to your boss if you foresee or experience being impaired by fatigue likely to create a health and safety risk e.g. because of a health condition, excessive work demands or personal circumstances.

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