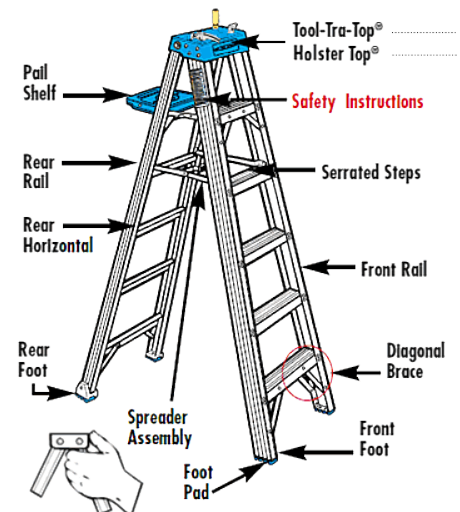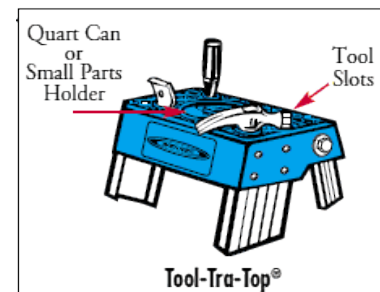# LADDERS

Stepladders are commonly used in the construction industry, but they require careful use. They are not designed for any degree of side loading and are relatively easily overturned.

Avoid over-reaching. People have been killed getting down from workplaces such as loft spaces when they have stepped onto the top step of a stepladder which then overturned.

- Ensure stepladders are positioned on level ground and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not use makeshift or home-made ladders or carry out makeshift repairs to a damaged ladder.
- Make sure all four feet of the ladder are on a firm, dry, level surface.
- Be sure to clear the ground area around the ladder before climbing.
- Check the ladder carefully for any cracks or loose pieces.
- Only use stepladders ladders in a fully open position. Lock the side braces and cross braces before climbing.
- Do not use a stepladder as a straight ladder in a folded and leaning position.
- Always wear proper footwear with good tread when climbing.
- Do not stand on the top two steps of the ladder unless they are designed for standing.
- Watch for people working under or around the ladder.
- Keep your body centered on the middle of the ladder.
- Do not lean to reach items while standing on the ladder.
- Get someone to assist you when working with a ladder.
- Avoid lifting or carrying any heavy items while climbing up or down the ladder.
- Use a ladder made out of non-conductive material for electrical work.
- Do not use stepladders to support work platforms.

Review Questions: True or False

1) Do not lean to reach items while standing on the ladder.
TRUE: As a rule of thumb, keep your belt-buckle between the rails.
2) Do not use a step ladder in a folded and leaning position in place of a straight ladder.
TRUE: Step ladders should only be used in a fully open position with side braces and cross braces locked.
3) Two stepladders can be used to support a work platform.
FALSE: Stepladders should not be used to support work platforms.