

OSHA[®] GUIDELINES

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- Part Number: 1926
 - Part Title: Safety and Health Regulations for Construction
 - Subpart: X
 - Subpart Title: Stairways and Ladders
 - Standard Number: [1926.1050](#)
 - Title: Scope, application, and definitions applicable to this subpart.
 - GPO Source: [e-CFR](#)
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[1926.1050\(a\)](#)

Scope and application. This subpart applies to all stairways and ladders used in construction, alteration, repair (including painting and decorating), and demolition workplaces covered under 29 CFR part 1926, and also sets forth, in specified circumstances, when ladders and stairways are required to be provided. Additional requirements for ladders used on or with scaffolds are contained in subpart L--Scaffolds. This subpart does not apply to integral components of equipment covered by subpart CC. Subpart CC exclusively sets forth the circumstances when ladders and stairways must be provided on equipment covered by subpart CC.

[1926.1050\(b\)](#)

Definitions. *Cleat* means a ladder crosspiece of rectangular cross section placed on edge upon which a person may step while ascending or descending a ladder.

Double-cleat ladder means a ladder similar in construction to a single-cleat ladder, but with a center rail to allow simultaneous two-way traffic for employees ascending or descending.

Equivalent means alternative designs, materials, or methods that the employer can demonstrate will provide an equal or greater degree of safety for employees than the method or item specified in the standard.

Extension trestle ladder means a self-supporting portable ladder, adjustable in length consisting of a trestle ladder base and a vertically adjustable extension section, with a suitable means for locking the ladders together.

Failure means load refusal, breakage or separation of component parts. Load refusal is the point where the structural members lose their ability to carry the loads.

Fixed-ladder means a ladder that cannot be readily moved or carried because it is an integral part of a building or structure. A side-step fixed ladder is a fixed ladder that requires a person getting off at the top to step to the side of the ladder side rails to reach the landing. A *through fixed ladder* is a fixed ladder that requires a person getting off at the top to step between the side rails of the ladder to reach

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the landing.

Handrail means a rail used to provide employees with a handhold for support.

Individual-rung/step ladders means ladders without a side rail or center rail support. Such ladders are made by mounting individual steps or rungs directly to the side or wall of the structure.

Job-made ladder means a ladder that is fabricated by employees, typically at the construction site, and is not commercially manufactured. This definition does not apply to any individual-rung/step ladders.

Ladder stand. A mobile fixed size self-supporting ladder consisting of a wide flat tread ladder in the form of stairs. The assembly may include handrails.

Lower levels means those areas to which an employee can fall from a stairway or ladder. Such areas include ground levels, floors, roofs, ramps, runways, excavations, pits, tanks, material, water, equipment, and similar surfaces. It does not include the surface from which the employee falls.

Maximum intended load means the total load of all employees, equipment, tools, materials, transmitted loads, and other loads anticipated to be applied to a ladder component at any one time.

Nosing means that portion of a tread projecting beyond the face of the riser immediately below.

Point of access means all areas used by employees for work related passage from one area or level to another. Such open areas include doorways, passageways, stairway openings, studded walls, and various other permanent or temporary openings used for such travel.

Portable ladder means a ladder that can be readily moved or carried.

Riser height means the vertical distance from the top of a tread to the top of the next higher tread or platform/landing or the distance from the top of a platform/landing to the top of the next higher tread or platform/landing.

Side-step fixed ladder. See "Fixed ladder."

Single-cleat ladder means a ladder consisting of a pair of side rails, connected together by cleats, rungs, or steps.

Single-rail ladder means a portable ladder with rungs, cleats, or steps mounted on a single rail instead of the normal two rails used on most other ladders.

Spiral stairway means a series of steps attached to a vertical pole and progressing upward in a winding fashion within a cylindrical space.

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Stairrail system means a vertical barrier erected along the unprotected sides and edges of a stairway to prevent employees from falling to lower levels. The top surface of a stairrail system may also be a "handrail."

Step stool (ladder type) means a self-supporting, foldable, portable ladder, nonadjustable in length, 32 inches or less in overall size, with flat steps and without a pail shelf, designed to be climbed on the ladder top cap as well as all steps. The side rails may continue above the top cap.

Through fixed ladder. See "Fixed ladder."

Tread depth means the horizontal distance from front to back of a tread (excluding nosing, if any).

Unprotected sides and edges means any side or edge (except at entrances to points of access) of a stairway where there is no stairrail system or wall 36 inches (.9 m) or more in height, and any side or edge (except at entrances to points of access) of a stairway landing, or ladder platform where there is no wall or guardrail system 39 inches (1 m) or more in height.

[55 FR 47687, Nov. 14, 1990; 56 FR 47687, Jan. 23, 1991; 58 FR 35184, June 30, 1993; 75 FR 48135, Aug. 9, 2010]