

## When and How to Use a Rolling Ladder

### What Is a Rolling Ladder?

A [rolling ladder](#) (also known as a platform ladder) is a ladder that is equipped with casters (wheels that are free to swivel in any direction) and can be easily moved from place to place. Typically constructed with lightweight, noncorrosive metals (such as steel and aluminum), rolling ladders have multiple applications in industrial settings. Stock rooms, maintenance areas and equipment access are just a few of the places where a platform ladder can be used to increase task safety and efficiency.

While rolling ladders can be of varying sizes and widths, all must comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) regulations for Walking-Working Surfaces ([29 CFR 1910](#)). In addition to outlining standards of workplace safety for the general industry, this regulation prescribes the design and maintenance requirements for rolling ladders. For example, an OSHA compliant rolling ladder must be capable of supporting at least four times its maximum intended load and have slip resistant steps and working surfaces. For a more robust review of OSHA's rolling ladder requirements, read our blogpost: [Stepping Up Ladder Safety in the Aviation Industry](#).

### When to Use a Rolling Ladder?

Rolling ladders are most frequently used in industrial workplaces like warehouses, distribution centers and manufacturing facilities. However, the list of potential platform ladder applications does not end there. The aviation, railroad and iron industries (to name only a few) are all dependent upon the successful completion of tasks at elevated levels. Additionally, places like offices, hospitals, schools and libraries frequently store large quantities of resources in multilevel storage areas. In each of these instances (and many others), a rolling ladder is the most efficient means of product access.

When compared to a folding ladder, a rolling ladder provides enhanced levels of safety and stability. Handrails (located along the length of the steps and around the top platform) protect employees from falls and provide an extra level of security for those ascending and descending the steps. Optional tool trays (attached to the handrail around the top platform) provide personnel with quick and easy access to any tools that may be necessary for the task at hand. Locking devices ensure that the platform ladder does not move out of position while in use. Taken altogether, these rolling ladder features are especially important when personnel are attempting to move bulkier items or need to stand on a ladder for an extended period of time to accomplish a task.



## How to Use a Rolling Ladder?

A rolling ladder is a safe and efficient way to accomplish tasks. However, when used incorrectly or carelessly, a platform ladder poses potential hazards and risks. The following five tips provide an overview of the types of behaviors and best practices that facilities can implement to help ensure a safe rolling ladder experience for their personnel.

### 1. *Select the Right Size*

Before purchasing a rolling ladder, it is important to determine where it will be used. Knowing this information in advance will ensure that the correctly sized platform ladder is purchased. A rolling ladder that is correctly sized will get personnel safely within reach of the task at hand and can prevent overreaching injuries and falls. Additionally, it is also important to determine how the rolling ladder will be used before making a purchase decision. For instance, cantilevered rolling ladders provide a bigger working platform that is preferred for elevated maintenance functions.

### 2. *Inspect for Damage*

A platform ladder should always be inspected before use. Doing so can protect personnel from injury and death and reduce the likelihood of damaging the property and equipment in the nearby vicinity. Before stepping foot on a rolling ladder, personnel will want to check for any rust, cracks or corrosion that could compromise the ladder's structural integrity. All bolts and rivets should be tightly secured, and the locking mechanism should be checked to ensure that it is fully operational. Additionally, if the rolling ladder is marked with "do not use," do not assume that the sign was hung in error.



### 3. *Position Correctly*

Correctly positioning a platform ladder prior to use is a critical safety precaution. Rolling ladders should always be used on level ground to prevent slips and/or rolls from occurring while the ladder is in use. Since rolling ladders are generally constructed with metal, it is important that personnel be aware any electrical sources in the nearby vicinity and respond appropriately. Additionally, when moving items to/from storage or when performing elevated maintenance work, it is imperative that the rolling ladder be positioned as closely as possible to the task at hand. Doing so can help reduce the likelihood of an overreaching injury.

### 4. *Maintain and Store Properly*

Tools and equipment function best when they are maintained properly and stored correctly. This logic holds true for rolling ladders. Given the fact that rolling ladders are frequently used in



industrial settings, it is not uncommon for a platform ladder to come in contact with oils and caustic substances. In addition to making the ladder's surface slippery and (potentially) unsafe to climb, these substances can damage the ladder's metal, reducing the equipment's lifespan. By keeping the rolling ladder clean and storing it in a secure, dry place, rolling ladder owners can expect dividends on their equipment investment.

GUARDS  
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##### 5. *Provide Training*

Any personnel needing to use a rolling ladder should first receive training on best practices. Left to their own devices, many assume that they already know how to safely ascend and descend a platform ladder. However, these misconstrued safety notions are often incorrect and unintentionally put people and equipment in harm's way. For instance, best practice dictates that when climbing up or down a rolling ladder, personnel should always be facing the platform ladder, keeping their body centered between the rails. By implementing a robust training program that covers a variety of topics, facilities can protect their investments in both personnel and property.

#### **Wildeck's Rolling Ladders**

Wildeck offers a comprehensive suite of rolling ladder products known as the [Rolastair™](#) Rolling Ladders. Available in both standard and custom designs, Wildeck's Rolastair™ Rolling Ladder products provide safe access for both common and unique tasks. For example, Wildeck's [Cantilever Rolastair™ Rolling Ladder](#) is a great solution for those instances when personnel need elevated access to maintenance tasks or special projects. The ladder's cantilever design allows workers to gain safe access without resting the ladder against the project. This is especially beneficial for work on tankers, aircraft, industrial machinery/equipment, etc.

Wildeck's superior ladder design capabilities can also be seen in the [Super Duty EZ-Climb Rolastair™](#). A highly ergonomic rolling ladder, the Super Duty EZ-Climb Rolastair™ is specifically designed for frequent use. The 45° angle of climb provides easier access and more comfortable working conditions for personnel. Workers appreciate the minimal effort required to walk up and down this platform ladder as they carry boxes and materials. The Super Duty EZ-Climb Rolastair is a great solution for stock rooms or other environments with frequent elevated access needs.

Whether your facility's access needs are big or small, simple or complex, Wildeck has the right rolling ladder solution for you. Contact one of our platform ladder experts today to learn how a Rolastair™ Rolling Ladder can help increase the safety and efficiency at your facility. Our solution experts can be reached at [info@wildeck.com](mailto:info@wildeck.com) or (800) 325-6939.