

SafetyGuidance

Telescopic Ladders

BUYING • USING • MAINTAINING

www.ladderassociation.org.uk/guidance

Buying

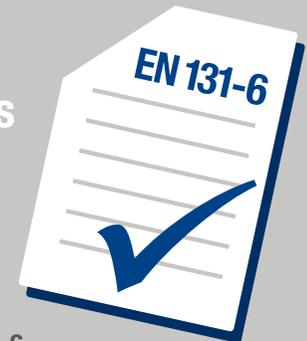
How to shop smart for telescopic ladders

Shop with a reputable company or specialist ladder supplier

The price of a good telescopic ladder is inevitably higher than some of the cheap and unsafe products, but the cost to you and to your health will be much greater if an accident occurs because of using an inferior and unsafe ladder.



Make sure the ladder conforms to EN 131 – 6

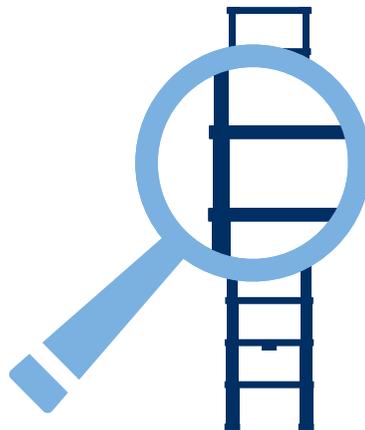


- > Check that the telescopic ladder meets European product standard, EN 131 – 6 (or an equivalent standard), by checking the specification, labelling, and user instructions. If you are not sure, or you want extra reassurance, then you can always ask the supplier for a copy of their certificate of compliance with the standard issued by an accredited test body (such as BSI or TUV). If they cannot provide you with a certificate, then you need to think carefully about buying the ladder.
- > If you see ladders with a CE mark on them, don't even consider buying them as it is an indication that the ladder could be suspect. Not only is it impossible to CE mark a ladder – it's illegal!

Using

How to safely use telescopic ladders

Before you decide to use any type of ladder you need to consider if the task you are carrying out is both low risk and short duration. If it's not, then don't use a ladder.



Check the ladder every time before you use it and inspect it thoroughly at intervals

Telescopic ladders have significantly more safety critical parts than ordinary ladders and therefore need more careful pre-use checks and more rigorous thorough inspections at more frequent intervals.

Telescopic ladders can be damaged by impact or through poor conditions of transport, use or storage.

- > Before you use it for the first time, inspect the ladder thoroughly – it may have been damaged before you bought or hired it, or during shipment.
- > If the ladder is dropped, or following any event which may have similarly jeopardised its safety, then you should carry out a thorough inspection before you use the ladder again.
- > If any of the tubes forming the sides of the ladder are damaged, then the ladder may be difficult to operate and may not lock properly. Damage to the sides or rungs can create a weakness that may result in a ladder failing under load.
- > "If you find anything which is damaged or not working exactly as it should, or which you are just not sure about, then DON'T USE THE LADDER – contact the supplier for advice.



Make sure you read the instructions BEFORE you use the ladder

This is vital, particularly for a telescopic ladder, as you need to fully understand the instructions for extending and closing; otherwise, you may end up with trapped fingers or the ladder collapsing in use.

- > Not all telescopic ladders work in the same way. Don't assume you know how to use one just because you have used another telescopic ladder before.
- > All ladders conforming to EN 131-6 must be supplied with a full set of user instructions. If you don't have them, then contact the supplier and ask for a replacement set.

All the basic rules for ladder use apply just the same to telescopic ladders

Read the user instructions and the safety labels on the ladder.

Carry out a pre-use check.

Extend the ladder following the user instructions – this particularly applies to the sequence for opening and where you should position your hands. Trapped fingers can be very painful!

Check that all locking mechanisms have operated correctly and that each extended section is properly locked at both ends of the rung. Don't climb the ladder if the sections are in the wrong position or if the gaps between the rungs of the extended sections are not the same.

If you are not sure, then **DON'T USE THE LADDER.**

Position the ladder at the correct angle (75 degrees for a leaning ladder) and make sure it is the right way up and facing the right way (some telescopic ladders have a front and back and must be used the right way around). Never use the ladder horizontally as a bridge or to support something.

Don't forget to tie the ladder to prevent it from moving. If you cannot tie it, use an effective stabilising device designed for use with a telescopic ladder.

Never tamper with or attempt to adjust the locking mechanisms whilst working on the ladder.

Close the ladder following the user instructions – pay attention to the sequence for closing and where you should position your hands.

Extend and close telescopic ladders slowly and carefully to avoid damaging the locking mechanisms.



Find more useful information on the following web pages:

- > Using a ladder
- > Inspecting a ladder
- > LadderSolve
- > Other resources

Maintenance, care and storage

How to keep your telescopic ladder in good condition

Because a telescopic ladder has more safety critical moving parts, they need to be looked after and stored in good conditions. If they are not, this can quickly cause the ladder to fail.



- > Follow any specific care directions in the user instructions.
- > Keep telescopic ladders clean – wipe them with a clean dry cloth.
- > Keep them dry as damp conditions can adversely affect their condition and operation.
- > Don't use the ladder in dirty or dusty environments.
- > Paint, plaster and other contaminants should be wiped off before they dry and before closing the ladder sections.



- > Do not lubricate the sections of ladder unless it is specified in the user instructions.
- > If lubrication is advised in the instructions, then you must use the lubricant specified.



- > Never attempt to dismantle or repair telescopic ladders. There are no repairable parts inside. If the feet of the ladder need to be replaced, contact the supplier for advice.



- > Store telescopic ladders in a clean and dry environment and sheltered from the elements. Make sure nothing is stacked on top of the ladder. This also applies when transporting telescopic ladders.



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ASSOCIATION

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