

**WAC 296-876-30005 Condition and inspection.** (1) You must keep portable ladders in good, usable condition. Good, usable condition includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Joints between the steps or rungs and the side rails are tight.
  - (b) Rungs, cleats, or steps are not bent, broken, or missing.
  - (c) Side rails are not bent, broken, or split.
  - (d) All bolts and rivets are in place and secure.
  - (e) Hardware, fittings, and accessories are securely attached and working properly.
  - (f) Ropes are not frayed or badly worn.
  - (g) Moveable parts operate freely without binding or excessive play.
  - (h) Safety feet and other auxiliary equipment are not excessively worn.
  - (i) Metal components are not corroded.
  - (j) There are no other faulty or defective components.
  - (k) Rungs and steps of portable metal ladders are corrugated, knurled, dimpled, coated with skid-resistant material, or otherwise treated to minimize the possibility of slipping.
  - (l) Each stepladder or combination ladder used in a stepladder mode is equipped with a metal spreader or locking device that securely holds the front and back sections in an open position while the ladder is in use.
  - (m) You must maintain portable ladder surfaces free of puncture and laceration hazards.
  - (n) You must ensure portable ladder rungs, steps, and cleats are parallel, level, and uniformly spaced when the ladder is in position for use.
- (2) You must make sure wood ladders are not coated with an opaque covering except for the minimum amount necessary for identification and warning information which may be placed on one face only of a side rail.
- (3) You must have employees inspect portable ladders, as follows:
- (a) Competent person when required by Table 1, Ladder Inspection Criteria; and
  - (b) Trained ladder user, prior to the user's initial use in each shift, and as necessary during the use to identify defects or damage that may occur during a work shift after the initial check. For example, if a ladder tips over, falls off a structure (e.g., roof) or vehicle, is struck by an object (e.g., vehicle or machine), or used in a corrosive environment, evidence of this damage would necessitate the authorized ladder user to initiate a ladder competent person inspection to determine whether the ladder is still safe to use.
- (4) You must make sure any ladder with structural damage or other hazardous defect is:
- (a) Marked to identify it as defective or tagged with "do not use" or similar language; and
  - (b) Removed from service.

Note: Ladders subjected to certain acids or alkali materials may experience chemical corrosion and a reduction in strength. Consult the manufacturer or a qualified person prior to use.

**Table 1**  
**Ladder Inspection Criteria**

When the ladder is:	Do the following:
First placed into service as necessary while in service	Inspect the ladder for visible defects, including, but not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Working parts; and</li> <li>2. Rung or step connections to the side rails.</li> </ol>
Damaged by impact or tips over	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visually inspect the ladder for dents, bends, cracks or splits</li> <li>2. Check:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Rung or step connections to the side rails.</li> <li>b. Hardware connections.</li> <li>c. Rivets for shear damage.</li> <li>d. All other components.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Exposed to excessive heat such as a fire	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visually inspect the ladder for damage.</li> <li>2. Test for deflection and strength characteristics using the "in-service use tests" contained in the appropriate ANSI.</li> </ol> <p><b>EXEMPTION:</b>            Job-made wooden ladders are not to be subjected to load or impact tests. Those tests may weaken lumber components or fasteners, causing hidden damage that could result in sudden failure during use.</p>

(5) You must ensure stepstools have a minimum clear width of ten and one-half inches (26.7 cm).

(6) You must ensure portable ladder rungs, steps, and cleats have a minimum clear width of eleven and one-half inches (29 cm).

**EXEMPTION:** The minimum clear width does not apply to ladders with narrow rungs that are not designed to be stepped on, such as those located on the tapered end of orchard ladders and similar ladders.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and chapter 49.17 RCW. WSR 20-09-146, § 296-876-30005, filed 4/21/20, effective 10/1/20; WSR 14-09-095, § 296-876-30005, filed 4/22/14, effective 7/1/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060. WSR 05-20-068, § 296-876-30005, filed 10/4/05, effective 1/1/06.]