



April 23 — Not Built for That

Using a step ladder against the wall like an extension ladder.	Use the right type of ladder for the job.
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A step ladder was leaned against a wall and set up like an extension ladder.

It reached the area. It looked like it would work. But it wasn't built for that.

Step ladders are designed to be fully opened, with all four feet stable and the spreaders locked in place. That's what gives them strength and balance. When they're leaned, that stability is gone. The base angle changes, the support shifts, and the ladder is no longer working the way it was designed to.

No one had climbed it yet.

The setup was recognized. The work was stopped. And the right equipment was discussed before anything started. Because once weight is on that ladder, there's no time to rethink the set up.

This wasn't about a fall. It was about stopping the conditions that could lead to one..

Hazards

- Fall from height
- Ladder instability
- Base slip or movement
- Loss of balance while climbing
- Improper ladder setup
- Serious injury from elevated fall

Stats

- Falls from ladders are a leading cause of workplace injuries
- Improper ladder use is a major contributing factor in fall incidents
- Many ladder injuries occur during routine tasks
- Using the wrong ladder significantly increases instability

Words of Wisdom

- Use it the way it's built
- The right ladder for the right job
- Setup decides the outcome

Pause and Think

When the right equipment isn't nearby, it's easy to make something else work. You look at what you have, adjust it, and keep moving. And when it looks like it will work, it's even easier to go with it.

But ladders don't adapt to how we want to use them. They perform based on how they're designed.

Changing the setup changes the risk.

And once you're on it, you're committed to that decision.

- Am I using the correct ladder for the job?
- Is my ladder set up the way it was designed?
- Have I ever made a ladder "work" instead of using the right one?
- Would I stop someone else from doing the same thing?