

# Prepare for Impact

Choosing and using the right ladder for the job is the basis for all other ladder safety concepts. If you don't start out with the right ladder you are setting yourself and your ladder, up for failure.

Looking at this picture, a few obvious unsafe work practices probably jump out for you.

First off, the worker appears to be working on a unit powered by electricity. And he's doing it while on a metal ladder. Another basic tenant of ladder safety – NEVER use a metal ladder when working with or around electricity. A safer choice would be a wooden or fiberglass ladder.

Next, look at the ladder placement and setup. This worker is leaning his stepladder up against a soda dispenser. A stepladder is not designed to be safely used this way (I'm guessing neither is the soda dispenser). A better choice for our leaning laborer, may be an extension ladder or mobile ladder with a platform.

Additionally, the ladder feet (or the parts of the feet making contact with the floor) are precariously placed on a highly waxed, smooth floor, around a beverage station where spills and puddles of melting ice are a common occurrence. A perfect storm of slip and fall hazards all right under the ladder's feet.

Finally, while there is a lot going on at the base of the ladder, check out the worker's feet. Looks like he is standing on the second step from the top of the ladder; a most dangerous place to be!

The safe way is to avoid working from, or standing on, the top two rungs, steps or cleats or bucket shelf of a portable ladder.

There's at least one more hazard in this picture. I'll leave you to find it. Happy hunting!