



OSHA's definition of a step stool:

The [Federal OSHA standard at 29 CFR 1926.1050\(b\)](#) defines a step stool which is the equipment you refer to as a self-supporting, foldable, portable ladder, nonadjustable in length, 32 inches or less in overall size, with flat steps and without a pail shelf, designed to be climbed on the ladder top cap as well as all the steps.

Step stools are suitable only for use on floors with a flat surface and are not usable on those with irregular surfaces. They can be used as a ladder, but they have the advantage of being more comfortable to be able to stand on its wider platform. For small heights they are safer than a normal ladder.

Always inspect the step stool prior to each use, or at minimum before the first use on each shift. During the step stool inspection, you are checking that all parts of the step stool are in good working condition, including:

- all four anti-slip feet
- climbing/gripping surfaces on each step
- step-to-side rail connections
- working parts, bolts, rivets

Always set up and use the step stool according to the manufacturer's instructions. Before using any step stool for the first time, review all warning labels and instructions on the step stool and read the owner's manual for guidance on proper use and safety precautions.

Ensure that the step stool you are planning to use is sturdy and able to support the intended weight of the task. The maximum intended load includes the weight of the employee as well as the PPE worn, and all tools, equipment and materials being carried.

To be used safely, a step stool must be placed on level ground with solid floor support for all four feet. The step stool should be set up close to the work being performed or the area that needs to be accessed. If you begin to climb and feel like the step stool is not balanced properly, climb down and reposition.

Climb and use the step stool in a way that allows your body to be near the middle of the steps to prevent tipping or fall hazards. Avoid over-reaching when on a step stool. Always face the step stool when climbing up or down. Step stools are intended to be used by only one person at a time.

Every time a step stool is used, the base must be spread fully open with the spreaders locked. Always ensure the locking mechanism is engaged before climbing. Never attempt to move the step stool while standing on it, or by standing on something else (like a shelf) and pushing the step stool with your foot.



Additional ladder safety training videos & Documents:

Werner Co.

[Ladder Safety Videos | Werner US \(wernerco.com\)](#)

National Association of Home Builders

[Ladder Safety - NAHB](#)

[Podium Ladders - English and Spanish \(nahb.org\)](#)

[Job-made Ladders - English and Spanish \(nahb.org\)](#)

[Extension Ladder Safety - English and Spanish \(nahb.org\)](#)

[Stepladders - English and Spanish \(nahb.org\)](#)