



# Safety Talk



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## Step Stool Safety Awareness

A step stool is a self-supporting portable, fixed, or foldable piece of equipment. A step stool is not adjustable in height with stationary steps. As per the Occupational Health and Safety Act, a step stool is 800 mm (32") or less in height, excluding side rails, if any, above the top cap.

A step stool is considered a piece of equipment, just like a ladder. A pre-inspection of the step stool must be done prior to each use to ensure that it is safe to use. If it is damaged, it must be tagged out, taken out of service, and reported to management immediately.

**Pre-inspection of step stools must be done prior to use. Step stools in the workplace must be CSA or ANSI approved with a rating of 2 (grade 2 or type 2). They must have the weight capacity identified on the step stool that is suitable for the workers using the step stool.**

When climbing up and down a step stool, a worker must face the step stool, taking one step at a time to go up and down the step stool. Always access the step stool by the front and not the side. Access by the side may side load the step stool and the step stool may move, causing the worker to lose their balance or fall.

It is recommended that a worker only use a step stool for short-term use only. If the step stool is for regular use, then a risk assessment should be conducted to assess to see if there is a safer way to perform the task. When working from a step stool, always keep hands above the mid-thigh height to maintain balance. Always keep both feet on the step stool to maintain balance.

When on a step stool, **do not** rise up on toes (known as 'being on your tippy toes') to reach; feet must be firmly on the step at all times. Avoid performing forceful or jerky, pushing or pulling movements as this could cause a person to lose their balance and fall. Avoid overextending to reach objects when on a step stool as this could promote a sprain, strain, or loss of balance.



**Northern Safety Solutions Inc.**

955 Bancroft Drive, Sudbury ON P3B 1P8

Toll Free: 1-866-524.1975

[www.northersafety.com](http://www.northersafety.com)

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