



A Guide to the Care and Use of Wire Rope Ladders

1. Normally the life of wire rope will depend upon the amount of bending it receives. Bending can be minimised by the following :-
 - (i) If a large anchorage (belay point) causes the ends to diverge excessively an extra trace could be used or a karabiner linked across the "C" clips.
 - (ii) The rungs should be horizontal – not tilted.
 - (iii) If the wires between adjacent rungs tend to form a helix, the ladder has probably passed through itself. This should be corrected so that the wires become relaxed.
 - (iv) Do not walk on the ladder whilst not erected
 - (v) Place padding over sharp edges.
2. The site should be cleared of loose rocks and equipment.
3. A "C" clip must not have more than one other load bearing "C" clip engaged with it.
4. If the previous usage of the ladder is not known, it should be inspected for damage. A few broken wires may not be serious, but any damage should be tagged and reported. (Manufacturer can affect repairs).
5. A safety helmet should be worn.
6. A safety line is always a good idea, especially on long climbs. There is a variety of belaying devices and techniques available. Those not experienced in this field should seek advice.
7. Only one person at a time should be on the ladder.
8. **CLIMBING TECHNIQUE:**

When climbing only 4.5m or so, technique is not very important. However, on longer climbs an inexperienced person can become exhausted very quickly. The main thing is to make the legs do the work. This is best achieved by "hugging" the ladder whenever possible so that the hands are inserted from the other side. Some people manage to insert the heels of their shoes from the other side also. There is still a natural tendency "to hang on for grim death" with the arms, and some mental concentration is necessary to overcome this. Long climbs should not be attempted without some practice.
9. A karabiner or snap hook attached at the waist is very useful. The climber can hook himself onto the ladder rung and rest in comparative comfort. It also leaves both hands free.
10. **CORROSION:**

Occasional wetting with fresh water will not cause significant corrosion. However, it should be washed if necessary and dried before storage. Greater care will be needed if exposed to sea water. A corrosion retarding fluid could be applied provided it does not make the rungs greasy.
11. **LIMITATIONS:**

These ladders are designed for use in situations where the use of a rigid ladder or a safer means of access is not available. They are not intended to withstand the wear and tear of a fixed installation or indifferent usage. However, they are much safer than a single rope and if used correctly should provide many years of faithful service.