the LADDER ASSOCIATION

In partnership with

T&R the Test & Research centre
Targeting Standards

STEPPING IT UP...

...investigating online platforms **and** the leading 'bricks & mortar' DIY retailers

Phase 3 Telescopic Ladder Surveillance Survey

...the latest market surveillance study from the Ladder Association as we expand our testing to include telescopic ladders from some of the UK's leading dedicated DIY and retailers, to see if their products are up to standard.

IN THE **REPORT**

01 INTRODUCTION

The Ladder Association has been highlighting the real and serious issue of the availability and use of substandard imported telescopic ladders on the UK market for many years.

Since 2021, we have been evidencing the sale of unsafe and non-compliant telescopic ladders for sale by third party sellers via online platforms through a series of market surveillance studies.

Our ongoing collaboration with industry, regulators and consumers led us to believe that telescopic ladders being sold through online platforms were unsafe. We wanted to carry out our own, robust and unbiased testing here within the UK, to understand the scale of the problem and raise awareness of the dangers of these ladders with consumers.

As it stands, online marketplaces selling products supplied by third-party sellers, have no responsibility for preventing unsafe goods being sold on their platforms, and no legal obligation to inform consumers if they have purchased unsafe goods through their sites.

Products bought from online marketplaces can be sold directly to consumers from anywhere in the world. Some of our ladder samples arrived in the UK, via shipping containers, already marked with fulfilment courier barcodes, ready for dispatch to the customer from a distribution centre.

There is no quality inspection on arrival. There is no 'importer' undertaking their legal duties in the UK. In these cases, the first person to look at the product after it left the factory, is the consumer when they open the box - who assumes and expects the product to be safe to use.

This gives rogue manufacturers and suppliers based anywhere in the world, free rein to sell unsafe – and in worst cases deadly – products direct to unsuspecting consumers in the UK. In many cases, no checks are being made at all before consumers receive the products and use them at home.

Despite ongoing campaigning, there is still not enough being done to remove these unsafe products from sale and take appropriate enforcement action against rogue manufacturers and suppliers.

The Ladder Association calls on the UK Government to take urgent action to address this issue once and for all through the new Product Regulation and Metrology (PRAM) Act.

We firmly believe that importers, manufacturers, suppliers and retailers should not only have a duty of care, but a legal responsibility, to only place safe products on the market for consumers to use.

Our members, reputable and responsible ladder manufacturers and suppliers, are facing increasing competition from third party sellers who are selling unsafe telescopic ladders through online marketplaces, often at much lower prices.

We already know from our UK Consumer Market Research Survey (published in May 2024), the majority of consumers (68% of those we surveyed) put price as one of their top three priorities when making their purchasing decision. Indeed, almost one third bought on price alone, making buying from online platforms an extremely attractive proposition[1].

Using the data gathered from our market research survey, we are stepping up our scope of product samples. In this study, we will not only test telescopic ladders bought through online platforms, but also those bought from the most popular dedicated DIY retailers, B&Q and Screwfix. This represents an accurate reflection of how these products are being purchased.

This report investigates telescopic ladders sold by Amazon, eBay, B&Q Marketplace, B&Q Direct and Screwfix.

[1] The Ladder Association Telescopic Ladder Consumer Market Research Report, Version 1, Revision 0, May 2024 - https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up

02 HEADLINE RESULTS

Telescopic ladders that do not meet the requirements of the current product standard, even if used correctly, can significantly compromise user safety, leading to injury or at worst, a fatality.

This telescopic ladder surveillance study tested 18 Ladder samples bought via online platforms and physical dedicated DIY retailers and found that:

78%

78% of the telescopic ladders
we tested in this latest study
FAILED the required safety tests,
were non-compliant and dangerous

100%

100% of the ladders
bought from **Online Marketplaces (being sold by third party sellers)**
FAILED the required safety tests,
were non-compliant and dangerous

100%

100% of the ladders
bought directly from **Physical Stores**
PASSED the required safety tests,
were compliant and safe to use

100%

100% of the ladders
sold direct from **China**
failed the required safety tests,
were non-compliant and dangerous

86%

Of the ladders that failed
the required safety tests,
86% **falsely claimed compliance**
with the current product standard

03 OUR PREVIOUS SURVEILLANCE STUDIES

The Ladder Association has been investigating the safety of telescopic ladders available on the UK market for many years. We have been undertaking proactive market surveillance studies and product testing since 2021. The aim is to investigate the conformity of ladders with current product standard EN 131 in the general public supply chain, and address ongoing concerns with the availability and use of substandard ladders on the UK market.

These studies have been carried out as part of our ongoing 'Step Up to Safe Ladders' campaign.

Telescopic Ladders - Phase 1: Partnership Surveillance Activity

In September 2021, in partnership with the East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA), Suffolk Trading Standards Imports Team and the UKAS-accredited Test & Research Centre, we embarked on our first telescopic ladder market surveillance study.

A total of 17 telescopic leaning ladders were tested:
- 8 selected and supplied by EETSA;
- 3 detained at port by Suffolk Trading Standards;
- 6 selected and supplied by the Ladder Association.

The samples were put through their paces against a series of limited scope safety critical tests to investigate their conformity with product standard EN 131-6 (known in the UK as BS EN 131 Part 6).

82% of the ladders tested failed the required safety tests, were non-compliant and, in the majority of cases, were unsafe to use[1].

Telescopic Ladders - Phase 2: Re-Testing Previously Failed Samples

In order to identify if the previous failures were 'one-offs', the Ladder Association re-tested the 6 samples we selected and supplied for the Phase 1 study, following identical testing procedures against the same samples (or the closest available on the market at that time).

While 1 sample was re-purchased from a physical store, the other 5 samples were bought from Amazon, eBay and OnBuy.com.

Of those telescopic ladders re-tested, 100% again failed the required safety tests, were non-compliant and were unsafe to use[2].

The detailed reports for both studies can be downloaded from the Ladder Association website:
https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up/

[1] Telescopic Ladder Surveillance Survey, Version 1, Revision 0, May 2022
[2] 'It's Time To Step In' - Telescopic Ladder Surveillance Report', Version 1, Revision 0, April 2023

04 CONSUMER MARKET RESEARCH

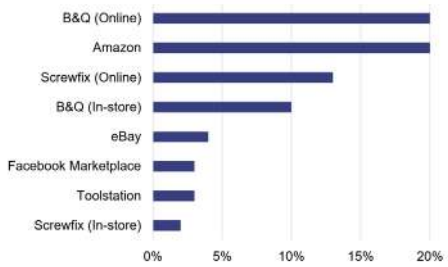
In 2023, the Ladder Association commissioned an independent consumer market research survey. We wanted to gain a better understanding of telescopic ladder users' buying behaviours; where they buy from, what influences their purchase decisions, and what safeguards they take to make informed purchases.

Funded by the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), the regulatory body responsible for developing national capacity for product safety in the UK, the findings would be used to guide our future telescopic ladder market surveillance product selection.

Using the services of an external market research company, we anonymously surveyed 1,063 buyers of telescopic ladders, aged 18+, living in the UK, who purchased the ladders in the last 3 years.

Our research found that:

72%
bought online



1 in 3
were bought from an online marketplace

Consumers purchased their ladders from:
- **B&Q** (20% online;10% in-store)
- **Amazon** (20%)
- **Screwfix** (13% online; 2% in-store)
- **eBay** (4%)

Price is the key factor informing consumers' purchase decisions for a telescopic ladder, with 29% ranking price as their first consideration, and 68% ranking price in the top 3. Home ladder users were more likely to buy based on price.

68%
said that price was one of their top 3 priorities

47% (almost half) of people we surveyed, carried out absolutely NO CHECKS before buying their telescopic ladder!

Consumers are placing their trust that products being sold online and in store are safe to use.

Consumer trust in product safety

- **Only 17% of consumers consider safety when purchasing a product;**
- Consumers were consistently found to trust and believe that an effective system is in place in the UK;
- There is a common assumption amongst consumers that manufacturers would not risk reputational damage by making unsafe products and that retailers would carry out due diligence to sell safe products;
- Consumers sought reassurance that central government are providing an overall leadership role in setting and upholding safety standards;
- **Overall, consumers expect the government to show strong leadership in setting and upholding legal safety requirements.**

Source: OPSS/BEIS Research Paper 'Consumer attitudes to product safety' www.gov.uk/government/publications/consumer-attitudes-to-product-safety

Source: The Ladder Association Telescopic Ladder Consumer Market Research Report, Version 1, Revision 0, May 2024 - https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up

05 WHAT IS A TELESCOPIC LADDER?

The focus of this project is telescopic leaning ladders. These have become highly popular in recent years, due to the fact they:

- Require a small storage space compared to other types of ladder;
- Are lightweight and compact;
- Are adjustable in size and working height.

Telescopic leaning ladders should be produced in accordance with EN 131-6.

You can learn more about ladder standards on the Ladder Association website:
https://ladderassociation.org.uk/standards

The common parts and design of a telescopic ladder are:

- **Rungs** – usually rectangular with a minimum depth of 20mm;
- **Stiles** – usually round tubes which provide the telescopic mechanism;
- **Rung brackets** – plastic bracket which join the rungs to the stiles;
- **Rung sections** – a sub-assembly of a rung and two stile tubes joined with rung brackets;
- **Locking mechanism** – normally a spring loaded locking pin which automatically engages between the inner and outer stile pair of two rung sections. There must be a locking mechanism on both stiles of a rung section.

The ladder is extended from a closed position by lifting rung sections.

Locking mechanism pins then connect the rung sections, holding the upper rung section in place.

Each section is extended until the desired length is reached.

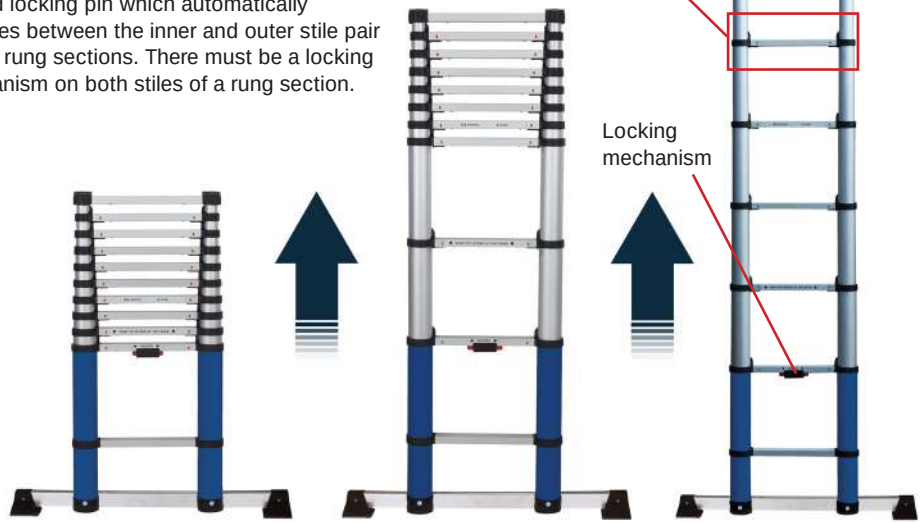


Image © Werner UK Distribution & Sales Ltd.
Please note the ladder shown has been manufactured in accordance with EN 131-6 and is used to illustrate a compliant product.

06 LATEST STUDY: PRODUCT SELECTION

A total of 18 telescopic leaning ladders were tested as part of this latest product surveillance survey.

All products were selected and supplied by the Ladder Association. All samples were obtained anonymously from a range of sources:

- 10 samples purchased via Amazon;
- 2 samples purchased from B&Q Marketplace;
- 2 samples purchased from B&Q Direct;
- 2 samples purchased from Screwfix;
- 2 samples purchased via eBay.

Based on the findings of our Consumer Research Survey, this is a true and accurate reflection of how telescopic ladders reach the homes and workplaces of UK consumers.

Amazon's Top 10

As part of our product selection, we purchased the top 10 products listed under Amazon's 'Best Sellers in Telescopic Ladders'[1]. As the biggest online marketplace in the UK, it's no surprise that up to 86% of people in the UK shop on Amazon, with 70% reporting it's the first online retailer they visit[2].

B&Q Marketplace

Launched in 2022, B&Q's specialist home improvement marketplace at diy.com offers customers an expanded choice of over 1.2 million products from more than 1100 verified third party sellers.

B&Q Marketplace continues to grow from strength to strength and in January 2024, its sales accounted for 38% of B&Q's total e-commerce sales[3].

We purchased the top 2 telescopic ladders by popularity, sold by third party sellers on diy.com

B&Q Direct

We purchased the top 2 telescopic ladders by popularity, sold directly by B&Q.

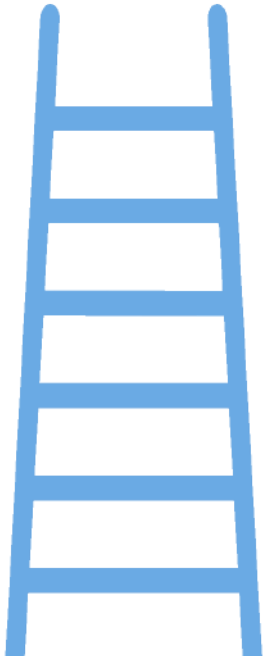
Screwfix

Based on the filter 'Most Relevant' when searching for telescopic ladders on their website screwfix.com, we purchased one item of each of the first two brands listed - those were Xtend+Climb and Werner.

eBay

We purchased 2 ladders from eBay, based on a search for 'telescopic ladder' within the eBay search bar. We purchased the first two non-sponsored listings (i.e. not paid for advertisements).

Both listings were marked as 'trending', while one was also marked 'most popular'.



[1] Most popular at time of purchase - 'Amazon Best Sellers: our most popular products based on sales'
[2] https://www.statista.com/statistics/1307976/consumer-value-score-amazon-united-kingdom-uk/
[3] Marketplace highlights: https://www.diy.com/corporate/marketplace

07 SCOPE OF PRODUCT TESTING

Telescopic leaning ladders should be produced in accordance with EN 131-6.

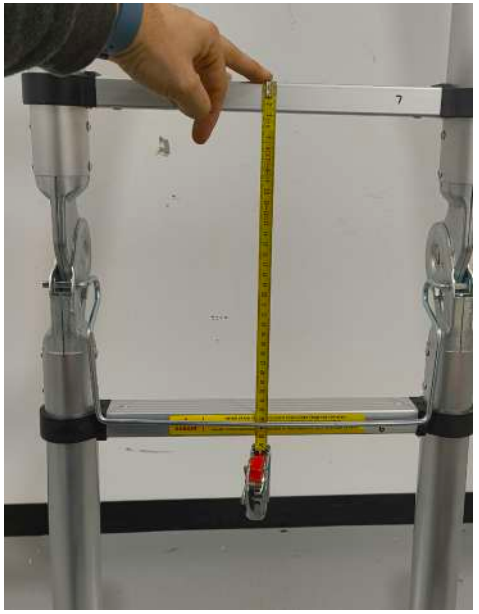
You can learn more about ladder standards in the 'Guidance' section on the Ladder Association website:

https://ladderassociation.org.uk/standards

All 18 of the ladders selected fall under the product standard EN 131-6.[1] The standard has requirements for:

- Functional and dimensional requirements;
- Strength tests;
- Deflection tests;
- Durability (cyclic) tests;
- Markings and user instructions.

If a product is found to be substandard based on these tests, it could lead to complete product failure whilst in normal use, and cause the user to fall from height.



[1] British Standards Institution – BS EN 131-6 – Part 6: Telescopic ladders

Images above show products included in our testing programme

Getting advice from the Test & Research Centre

Using the experience built up from testing over 100 telescopic ladders, our UK-based Test Laboratory partner, the Test & Research Centre, recommended a shorter list of tests and measurements.

The limited scope of tests from EN 131-6 identified for this project were:

- Clause 4 – Functional dimensions
- Clause 5 – Requirements
- Clause 6.2.2 – Ladder preconditioning
- Clause 6.3 – Strength test
- Clause 6.7.4 - Rung strength test in the unlocked position
- Clause 6.7.6 – Pull out test of rungs

From their extensive experience, these key tests are those most likely to find product or safety flaws which could lead to injury, and this meant we could test more products on the market.

The tests were performed in the specific sequence as listed in Annex A of EN 131-6.

A detailed explanation of all tests can be found in Appendix 2.

Images above show products included in our testing programme

08 CASE STUDY: JOFFREY'S STORY

Electrician Joffrey Bogemans knows all too well the severe impact these unsafe telescopic ladders can have.

On a normal working day, he and his apprentice were controlling a fire alarm - a job he's done dozens of times before. But despite his best planning and safeguards, he found himself in A&E after the 5m telescopic ladder he was using suddenly snapped and collapsed (inset).

He'd bought his ladder from Amazon. He'd read the reviews, did his homework and felt assured the product was safe, after all the seller claimed it complied with product standard EN 131. Sadly though, this wasn't the case and the claims were fraudulent.

Joffrey suffered extensive injuries from the fall including broken ribs, damaged pelvis, wrist and ankle, cut foot, ligament inflammation in his hand and subsequent lung discomfort. He was unable to work for 8 weeks and suffered significant loss of business and income.

But, when it came to accepting liability, Joffrey found himself hitting a brick wall. **Neither the seller nor Amazon would accept liability** and he had to embark on a lengthy legal process, which is still ongoing.

In January 2025, after being approached by the BBC, the Ladder Association anonymously bought 3 sample telescopic ladders from Amazon and eBay, which were put through their paces at the Test and Research Centre.
The testing was filmed with Joffrey for a segment on the **BBC 'Morning Live'** programme to help raise awareness of the issues faced when buying telescopic ladders from online platforms.

During filming, Joffrey was visibly shaken as he watched a ladder, almost identical to his, and from the same seller on Amazon, snapping under test conditions. He's says he's 'lucky', but until the online platforms take responsibility, there are thousands of ladder users like Joffrey in danger.

Watch the BBC segment on our website at:
https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up/

> Suddenly I felt the ladder falling underneath my feet...I didn't know what was broken, the pain was everywhere. The ladder, from Amazon, has just literally bent. I'm lucky to be alive. **I don't want this to happen to anyone else.**
>
> *Joffrey Bogemans*
> *Suffered a serious fall from height from an unsafe ladder he bought from Amazon*

09 TEST RESULTS

	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4	Sample 5	Sample 6	Sample 7	Sample 8	Sample 9	Sample 10
Marketplace / Retailer	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon	Amazon
Seller	dhfnm / SMART ZC Ltd	dhfnm / SMART ZC Ltd	LuckyPocket / Guangzhoushi Xijimaoyi Youx-iangongsi	MultibaoShop / DG MULTIBAO LIMITED	Tecknet-Online Ltd	RRMAN / Gan-ZhouShiRiMian-MaoYiYouXian-GongSi	ShangHaiShi ChenHui MaoYi-YouXianGongSi	YouseaHome / Guangzhou Yuhaimaoyi Youxiangongsi	dicn / Guang-zhou Dingcheng Dianzikeji Co., Ltd.	SunHope999 / Guangzhoushi Zhaomingshang-mao Youxian-gongsi
Seller's Registered Address	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	China	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	China	China	China	China	China
Brand	SIMPDIY	Unknown - listing now removed	Lucn	Multibao	Tecknet	Unknown - listing now removed	HUIYOPU	YouseaHome	DICN	AutoBaBa
Product Code	B0CBMYW7BK	B0DHZV726F	B085G9R2TY	B08S3J1BXD	B0CMX577N6	B09N741NGT	B0DKT549W2	B0BJNQ5QZD	B09QFMY93L	B07F2FHSVL
Length	3.2m	3.2m	3.8m	3.2m	2.6m	4.5m	3.2m	2.6m	2.6m	3.8m
Shows CE Mark?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
States EN 131?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
EN 131-6 Clauses:										
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	**Fail**
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**

Key: Pass = Met requirements, Fail = Did not meet requirements, N/T = Not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test

N.B. Detailed results and photographs of testing can be found in Appendix 1

TEST RESULTS cont.

	Sample 11	Sample 12	Sample 13	Sample 14	Sample 15	Sample 16	Sample 17	Sample 18
Marketplace / Retailer	eBay	eBay	B&Q Marketplace	B&Q Marketplace	B&Q Direct	B&Q Direct	Screwfix	Screwfix
Seller	joagib-4389	yesjolly	Tecknet-Online Ltd	Fone Central	B&Q	B&Q	Screwfix	Screwfix
Seller's Registered Address	United Kingdom	China	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
Brand	Unknown - listing now removed	Unbranded	Tecknet	Dyzi	Mac Allister	Mac Allister	Xtend+Climb	Werner
Product Code	405400810352	356251290597	5056243629282	711709361285	3663602910534	3663602910541	673JJ	955HA
Length	3.8m	6.2m	3.8m	2.6m	2.6m	3.8m	3.8m	3.8m
Shows CE Mark?	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
States EN 131?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
EN 131-6 Clauses:								
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	**Fail**	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**FAIL**	**PASS**	**PASS**	**PASS**	**PASS**

Key: Pass = Met requirements, Fail = Did not meet requirements, N/T = Not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test

N.B. Detailed results and photographs of testing can be found in Appendix 1

10 SUMMARY OF TESTING FINDINGS

- **Of the 18 ladders tested, only 4 fully passed all of the limited scope requirements (just 22%)**

- **14 ladders failed the strength test (that's 78%):**
  - 10 samples buckled under load; most worryingly, 4 of these buckled at, or below, 150kg (the maximum total load of an EN 131 ladder)
  - 2 samples collapsed within 5 seconds of the load being applied
  - 2 samples may have supported load but were damaged beyond use thereafter.

- **14 ladders failed the pull out test of rungs**, with either complete separation of the rung bracket from the rung, fixing rivets shearing or locking mechanism breaking resulting in stile jamming;

- **14 ladders failed the preconditioning test**, with damage seen in the locking mechanism, locking indicators, stiles and rung brackets;

- **14 ladders were incorrectly constructed**, such that the rung sections could be stored in any position;

- **14 ladders did not have a safe unlocking/closing mechanism;**

- **13 ladders (that's 72%) failed to have the required 35mm top rung clearance;**

- **12 ladders had a greater rung pitch than the 300mm maximum** or had inconsistent rung spacing outside of the limit of +/- 2mm - the largest was 400mm[1];

- **10 ladders had an insufficient base width**, with the worst case being 610mm too short;

- **1 ladder failed the rung strength test in the unlocked position**, with the sample collapsing on one side, the deformation of which made the ladder unfit for safe use.
  13 ladders could not be tested against this requirement due to the samples suffering structural failure earlier in the test sequence!

- **12 ladders were fraudulently marked or marketed** as conforming with EN 131.
  Of the 14 ladders that failed the tests, 12 falsely claimed compliance (that's 86%);

- **5 ladders (that's 28%) displayed CE markings** on their labels or packaging.
  Although markings (labels) were not part of the assessment, it is important to note that ladders cannot be CE marked. There are no EU directives or regulations for any type of ladder, and so any claim is false and potentially illegal.

[1] Both eBay samples (sample #11 and sample #12) had the largest rung pitch of 400mm

11 RISK TO LADDER USERS

Just 22% of the telescopic ladders we tested passed all of the limited scope requirements.

That means a staggering 78% failed our safety tests.

These substandard, unsafe telescopic ladders, are dangerous to use and pose a significant consumer safety risk.

A significant number of ladders tested were seen to have inherent design features which make the product incompatible with the requirements of the standard. A rung pitch of 400mm for example, as found in sample #11 and sample #12, both bought through eBay, increases the risk of a fall from height due to the excessive distance between the rungs making it harder to climb.

Some ladders produced with the rung locking mechanism on the face of the rung, allow the product to be set up with inconsistent rung spacing. Similar to rung pitch, this increases the risk of fall from height, as a user may position the rungs incorrectly and lose their footing during use.

The base width of leaning ladders over 3 metres in length was increased some years ago as part of the revision to EN 131-1 to improve leaning ladder safety and make ladders more stable. The majority of the ladders sampled here that failed on this requirement were clearly designed without this feature being implemented, compromising ladder stability and user safety.

It is clear by simply looking at the design of the 14 ladders that failed on all of the dimensional, design and strength requirements, that the manufacturers have made little or no effort to conform to EN 131.

The physical tests highlight more concerning findings. 10 ladders failed the strength test *before* the test load could be applied. This is extremely concerning as when in use, the ladder could buckle beneath the user, causing a fall from height. A further 2 ladders (samples #8 and #9) were only able to hold the test load for around 5 seconds before collapse, while 1 ladder (sample #1) supported the test load but the stiles bent after removal of load, preventing closure between 6th-7th and 7th-8th rungs. Another sample (#10) supported the test load in 4 positions but failed as the locks were broken on the prior test.

It's important to remember in our testing, we can hold the test load and stop the test. But, for users like Joffrey (page 9) they are only stopped when they hit the ground. There is no set of scenarios leading to failure, the ladder can collapse without warning, and with potentially life-threatening results.

The failures of samples against the unlocked rung strength test is equally concerning.
Telescopic ladders rely on the locking catches to hold the users' weight. It is entirely foreseeable that a locking mechanism could be overlooked, hence why this test is included in the standard.
13 out of the 18 ladders in our study didn't survive long enough to undertake this test (that's over 70% of our samples) due to structural failure in earlier tests. Of the 5 ladders that did make it to the rung strength test, 1 failed. This could easily lead to a fall from height for a user with potentially serious consequences and risk of injury.

12 CONCLUSION

With 4 of the 18 (22%) telescopic ladders tested passing all of the limited scope requirements, there are clearly products on the market which have been designed and conform to EN 131-6.

However, yet again, the Ladder Association's latest study clearly supports the concerns that there is a real and serious issue with the continued availability and use of substandard telescopic ladders on the UK market being sold by third party sellers through online platforms.

In this latest study, 14 out of 18 samples (78%) failed our safety tests.

As part of our product selection, we purchased the top ten products listed under Amazon's 'Best Sellers in Telescopic Ladders'. Consumers would be forgiven for thinking that the products sold via well-known, global online platforms such as Amazon and eBay are safe for use, and the correct due diligence has been carried out before products are listed.

Consumers might also not realise that a significant number of products sold via B&Q's website, diy.com, are now supplied via third-party sellers (with it referred to as 'B&Q Marketplace'), as those products are contained in the general product listings. Consumers are required to click on a product listing and check to see if it's 'sold and shipped by' B&Q or a third party.

As it stands, these online marketplaces selling products supplied by third-party sellers, have no responsibility for preventing unsafe goods being sold on their platforms, and no legal obligation to inform consumers if they have purchased unsafe goods through their sites.

Products bought from online marketplaces can be sold directly to consumers from anywhere in the world. There is no quality inspection on arrival. There is no 'importer' undertaking their legal duties in the UK. In these cases, the first person to look at the product after it left the factory, is the consumer when they open the box - who assumes and expects the product to be safe to use.

This gives rogue manufacturers and suppliers based anywhere in the world, free rein to sell unsafe – and in worst cases deadly – products direct to unsuspecting consumers in the UK. In many cases, no checks are being made at all before consumers receive the products and use them at home.

Trading Standards have powers to investigate businesses and business premises if they have product safety concerns. However, for online marketplaces, sellers do not need to be based in the UK. This makes it extremely difficult for enforcement action to be taken, other than notifying the marketplace of the substandard products. In the absence of a UK-based contact or representative, consumers buying online are essentially 'stuck' with an unsafe product, at financial loss. They have little or no recourse against overseas sellers, there's a lack of accountability on the part of the online platform and a lack of legal framework to prosecute rogue traders.

Every ladder we've tested in our market surveillance studies to date, that have been sold by third-party sellers via online marketplaces, has failed the required safety tests designed to keep users safe. Our evidence also highlights widespread product safety failures of telescopic ladders sold by third party sellers, via online platforms, where the products have originated from China.

Now is the time for the UK Government to step up - to create equity for compliance and recourse between online sellers and 'bricks-and-mortar' sellers, and to hold online marketplaces accountable for the safety of the products sold through their platforms.

13 CALL FOR ACTION

It is clear from our market surveillance studies that the issue of unsafe telescopic ladders available for sale on the UK market is neither new nor improving[1] .

Whilst we acknowledge that **some importers, manufacturers, suppliers, retailers and sellers do take their responsibilities seriously**, there are a significant number who do not.

In those instances, they are misleading consumers and ignoring their legal requirements by showing a complete disregard for product and consumer safety.

Online marketplaces pass the responsibility for product safety to the seller. But, if the seller does not care and has no threat of legal consequence due to being virtually anonymous and based overseas, our current legal framework is allowing people's lives to be put at risk.

Not-for-profit trade associations and safety bodies can only do so much.

The Ladder Association firmly believes that Government must make urgent regulatory change to hold these multi-billion dollar online platforms accountable for ensuring the products they sell are compliant and safe to use.

Regulatory Action

The Ladder Association calls for the following action to be taken:

1) The Government to consult closely with stakeholders and industry on the Product Regulation and Metrology Act and associated secondary legislation;

2) Introduce regulatory change to hold suppliers and online platforms accountable for selling safe products;

3) Widen the powers of the Office for Product Safety & Standards (OPSS) to obligate online marketplaces to monitor ladders offered for sale on their platforms are safe for use;

4) Where products sold online claim to have product certification, these claims are verified and proof of certification published;

5) Empower the OPSS to take representative enforcement action against the online marketplaces;

6) Strengthen consumers' rights to bring civil actions against the online marketplaces.

"We welcome the new Product Regulation and Metrology Act, as this is the first step in the right direction to improve consumer safety.

We need to swiftly see details on the specific legislation that will change the landscape and practices of direct sellers using online marketplaces, to make them safer and protect the public from dangerous products.

The Government has acted - it's now time for online marketplaces to step up and take accountability for the safety of the products sold on their platforms.

Peter Bennett OBE, Executive Director, The Ladder Association

[1] The Ladder Association Market Surveillance Studies, part of the ongoing 'Step Up to Safe Ladders' campaign: https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up/

14 GUIDANCE FOR CONSUMERS

Guidance from the Ladder Association on buying ladders online or in store:

- **Research before you buy**
  You can carry out a quick online check of the company or brand to check their business location and visibility in the market. If they don't have a UK/EU address then it can make it much more difficult to contact them if you have an issue after you buy;

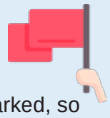
- **Check product reviews**
  These are a great way of hearing first-hand from other consumers and often give valuable insight in the product quality, mainly if it falls below standard. But beware, some companies and brands post fake positive reviews, so read them carefully, note where the reviewer is based or how many reviews they have previously posted;

- **Don't be swayed by price**
  Don't make decisions solely on price - but, if something is very cheap, you should question why. That's not to say it's poor quality, but it's certainly a prompt to make you do a bit more homework. Genuine quality products can cost more to manufacture due to the enhanced testing and cost of materials, but equally, a higher price doesn't necessarily mean quality;

- **Do your own checks**
  Remember, online platforms take little or no responsibility for the quality or safety of the products sold on their platforms and place the responsibility for safety firmly with the seller. Don't assume product safety and compliance checks have been carried out by them before they placed them online for sale;

- **Get hands-on if you can**
  If you're buying from a physical store, don't assume they sell only safe products. They could knowingly - or unknowingly - be stocking products that don't meet product standard EN 131-6. If you're in-store, check the labelling for print quality or spelling errors, check the product quality as best you can, and speak to the retailer if you have any questions;

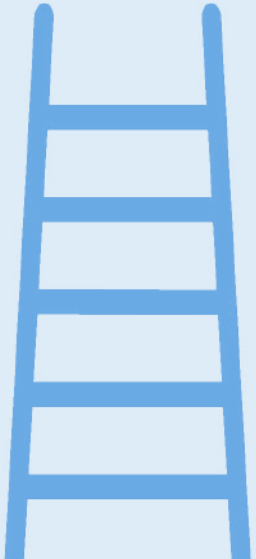
- **Stay clear of ladders that are CE or UKCA marked**
  Despite what you might think, ladders cannot be CE or UKCA marked, so avoid any that bear that marking, it's a red flag;



- **Check it when you get it**
  Check the product, the instruction manual (every ladder should come with one) and the labelling on the ladder itself once you receive it;

- **Buy from a Ladder Association member**
  Members are committed to high standards of safety, and by joining the Association, they pledge to only make or sell ladders that comply with EN 131 (or international equivalents) and are certified by a third-party Conformity Assessment Body. A full list of members can be found on the Ladder Association website: **https://ladderassociation.org.uk**

- **Trust your gut**
  If you have a feeling your ladder is unsafe, dangerous or not made to standard, don't use it! You should then contact your local Trading Standards team or report via our website: **https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up**



KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR - OR AVOID!

We understand it can be extremely difficult to navigate online platforms and identify the 'good' from the 'bad'. To help consumers know what to look for, or more often, what to avoid, we've pulled together some visual cues to help you buy a safe telescopic ladder online or in-store.

Make sure you can find the manufacturer details along with the date of manufacture.

If your ladder, or product listing states CE or UKCA then avoid at all costs.

The limit for an EN 131-6 ladder is 300mm - any greater doesn't meet the standard.

An EN 131-6 ladder must store any unused rungs at the top by design.

Over 3m long? An EN 131-6 compliant ladder should be wider at the base for stability.

If you feel your telescopic ladder is bending and flexing, do not use it as it could buckle.

WATCH OUR VIDEO

We've also created a short, handy video with a bit more information.

It is available, with all of our Market Surveillance Reports, on our 'Step Up to Safe Ladders' campaign webpage:

https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up

15 ABOUT THE LADDER ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1947, the Ladder Association is the not-for-profit lead industry body dedicated to promoting the safe use of portable ladders.

Members include manufacturers, rental companies and training providers. Separately, these businesses innovate and compete. But when it comes to advancing user safety, they all work together.

Membership of the Ladder Association shows clear commitment to adhere to the Ladder Association Code of Practice which puts safety at the heart of everything members do:

- **Ladder Association Manufacturers** only make ladders that comply with EN 131 (or international equivalents) and those products must be certified by a third-party Conformity Assessment Body and be subject to ongoing surveillance;

- **Ladder Association Suppliers** only supply ladders that are certified to EN 131 (or international equivalents);

- **Ladder Association Training Providers** conduct training in approved centres, using Ladder Association trained instructors, and only use equipment that complies to EN 131.

The Ladder Association works closely with a number of organisations to support codes of good practice, minimum standards for equipment, trained and qualified operatives and education in the work at height sector.

These include the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), the British Standards Institution (BSI) and other National Standards Bodies, the Access Industry Forum (AIF) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).

The Ladder Association has spearheaded a number of hugely successful ladder safety campaigns, including our award-winning 'Get a Grip' initiative, which promoted a very clear message "If it's right to use a ladder, use the right ladder and get trained to use it safely."

In 2022, the Ladder Association launched the ongoing 'Step Up to Safe Ladders' campaign to shine a light on the very real dangers of poor-quality telescopic ladders on the market, and raise awareness of the issues.

The Ladder Association currently offers seven training courses delivered through a network of audited and approved training centres:

- Ladder & Stepladder User;
- Ladder & Stepladder Inspection;
- Ladder & Stepladder Combined Use and Inspection;
- Ladders for Managers;
- Stepladder & Step Stools for Users;
- Stepladder & Step Stools Inspection;
- Stepladder & Step Combined Use and Inspection.

In addition to administering the LadderCard training scheme, the Ladder Association publishes safety guidance, Code of Practice and technical notes - all free to download from our website **https://ladderassociation.org.uk**

Ladders are an everyday tool in homes and workplaces across the world, allowing millions of people to work at height quickly and easily. They're a versatile and vital piece of equipment, that can be used for a whole range of jobs.

Working at height can be risky enough, without the additional danger of unsafe equipment – every 11 minutes in the UK, someone attends A&E after sustaining an injury involving a ladder[1]. We know that a fall from height can cause life changing injury, and in some cases, death.

The Ladder Association wants everyone who climbs a ladder to come back down safely.

[1] Hospital data from NHS England, NHS Wales and Public Health Scotland

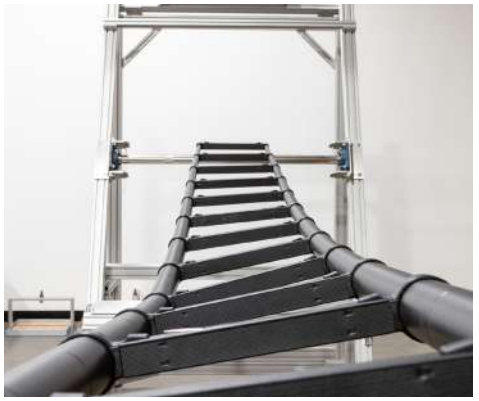
16 ABOUT THE TEST & RESEARCH CENTRE

The Test & Research Centre is a UK-based Certification Body, Test Laboratory and training facility that specialises in access equipment.

They provide ladder and mobile access tower testing and certification services for manufacturers, importers and regulators, to check that products conform with current British and European Standards.

They work with, and are supported by, the Ladder Association and PASMA (Prefabricated Access Suppliers' and Manufacturers' Association), the leading not-for-profit industry bodies in their respective portable ladders and mobile access tower sectors.

They also work closely with the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) and Trading Standards teams across the UK to offer advice, support and market surveillance testing on consumer access equipment.

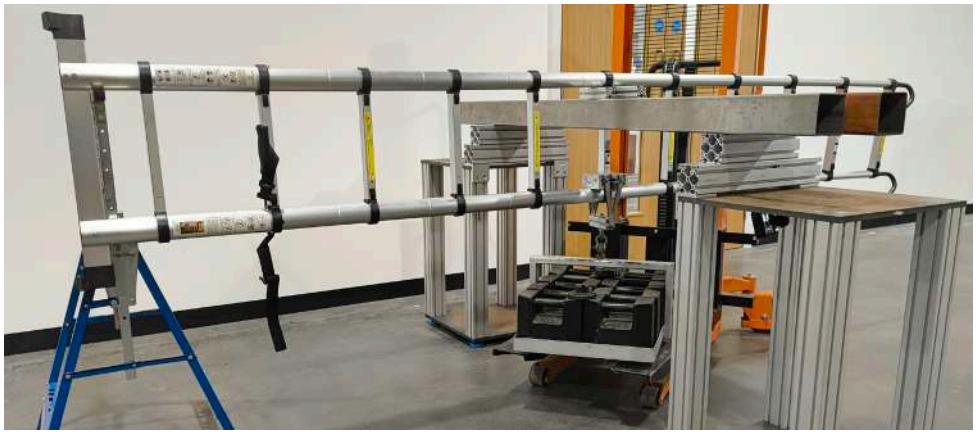


For further information, visit the Test & Research website: **https://testandresearch.org**

APPENDIX 1
DETAILED RESULTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF TESTING

#1 - 3.2m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 21% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg). Ladder supported test load but stiles bent after removal of load, preventing closure between 6-7th and 7th-8th rungs.
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder supported test load in all 3 positions, but locking mechanisms in 7th and 8th rungs not operational as stile jams before full closure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	



#2 - 3.2m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 40% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 1282N (130.6kg)
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (9th rung) from rungs 7-10. Test stopped due to failure
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#3 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 44% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Rupture of 13th rung bracket and damage to locks/indicators on 12th rung. - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- Marked as Non Professional. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 1476N (150.4kg).
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder supported test load in first position (11th rung) but with broken rivets. In second position (7th rung) ladder brackets separated from rungs 5-8. Test stopped due to failure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#4 - 3.2m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 40% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Permanent deformation to right stile above 9th rung preventing closure. - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 2171N (221kg)
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (9th rung) from rungs 6-10. Test stopped due to failure
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#5 - 2.6m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity)
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Rupture and damage to locks/indicators on 8th & 9th rungs. - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 2233N (227.5kg)
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (7th rung) from rungs 6-8. Test stopped due to failure
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#6 - 4.5m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rung pitch greater than 300mm (average 361.38mm, largest 388.76mm) - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 49% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Rupture and damage to locks/indicators and brackets on 10th-13th rungs. - Permanent deformation in stiles prevents closure above 8th rung. -- System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 1998N (201kg)
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (11th rung) from rungs 9 to 13. Test stopped due to failure
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#7 - 3.2m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 41% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Separation between brackets and rungs in multiple positions - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 1947N (212kg).
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (8th rung) from rungs 5-10. Test stopped due to failure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#8 - 2.6m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity)
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Rupture and damage to locks/indicators on 7th rung. - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- Ladder held test load for approximately 5 seconds before ladder collapsed.
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (7th rung) from rungs 5-8. Test stopped due to failure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#9 - 2.6m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity)
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- Ladder held test load for approximately 5 seconds before ladder collapsed.
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	- Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (7th rung) at 7th rung. Test stopped due to failure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#10 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rung pitch greater than 300mm (average 300.45mm, largest 322.29mm)
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 16% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Rupture and damage to 11th rung bracket and locks/indicators on 9th & 10th rungs - Stile deformation above 8th rung preventing closure. - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg). Supported load in 4 positions but failed a locks were broken on prior test.
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	**Fail**	- Ladder collapsed to one side during test, but supported load. - Deformation in ladder after test making it unfit for use.
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (3rd rung) from rungs 2-6. Test stopped due to failure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#11 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rung pitch greater than 300mm (average 396.78mmmm, largest 400.02mm) - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 44% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Separation between brackets and rungs on 8th rung. - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 2174N (223kg).
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (8th rung) from rungs 5-9. Test stopped due to failure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

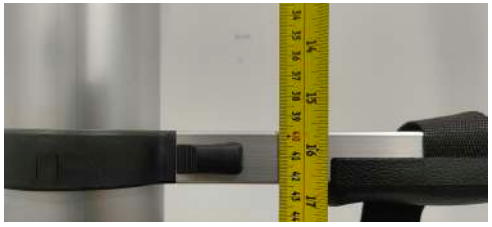




#12 - 6.2m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rung pitch greater than 300mm (average 398.61mmmm, largest 400.61mm) - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 55% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Stile brackets ruptured - 10/11/14/16 & Locking indicators - 13/14/15. - Locking catches ejected or damaged on 13/14/15 - After 1st test, deformation in stiles prevented closure above 14th rung. Not possible to check after second test due to damage. - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 1207N (123kg).
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder supported load, but brackets separated from rungs on 2nd-7th rungs and no longer closes. Test stopped due to failure.
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	








#13 - 3.8m

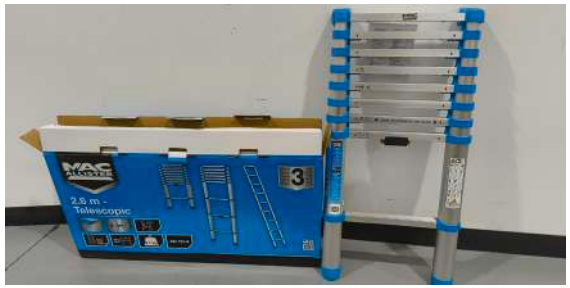
EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity) - Base width 21% under limit
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- Rupture and damage to locks/indicators on 11-13th rungs - System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 1894N (193kg)
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (10th rung) from rungs 8-12. Test stopped due to failure
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#14 - 2.6m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - top rung clearance below 35mm limit
5 - Requirements	**Fail**	- rung pitch outside +/-2mm - rungs can be stored in any position - Locking mechanisms unclear - Closing of the ladder not safe (falls unrestricted under gravity)
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	**Fail**	- System to prevent entrapment not present prior to test
6.3 - Strength test	**Fail**	- No ladder class markings. Tested to Non-professional load 2250N (229.3kg) but buckled at 1481N (150.9kg)
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	Ladder buckled on prior test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	**Fail**	- Ladder brackets separated on test load in first position (7th rung) from rungs 6-8. Test stopped due to failure
OVERALL RESULT	**FAIL**	

#15 - 2.6m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Pass	
5 - Requirements	Pass	
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Pass	
6.3 - Strength test	Pass	
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	Pass	
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Pass	
OVERALL RESULT	**PASS**	



#16 - 3.8m

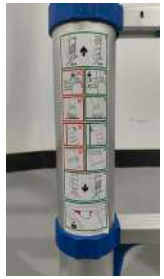
EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Pass	
5 - Requirements	Pass	
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Pass	
6.3 - Strength test	Pass	
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	Pass	
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Pass	
OVERALL RESULT	**PASS**	

#17 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Pass	
5 - Requirements	Pass	
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Pass	
6.3 - Strength test	Pass	
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	Pass	
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Pass	
OVERALL RESULT	**PASS**	

#18 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Pass	
5 - Requirements	Pass	
6.2.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Pass	
6.3 - Strength test	Pass	
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	Pass	
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Pass	
OVERALL RESULT	**PASS**	



APPENDIX 2
DETAILED EXPLANATION OF TESTS

Each test selected in the limited scope assesses a different aspect of the ladders design and performance.

Clause 4 – Functional dimensions

This clause has requirements for specific dimensions and the minimum clearance provided at the top rung with the vertical surface / wall.

It also cross references to EN 131-1[1] for dimensional requirements of leaning rung ladders. This ensures that all leaning rung ladders have common minimum and maximum dimensions for features such as rung pitch and inner width.

Clause 5 – Requirements

Clause 5 includes design requirements for telescopic ladders, such as having a two-point contact with the vertical surface/wall. It has design requirements for features of the ladders, such as a safe closing mechanism, to prevent finger crushing or entrapment.

The clause also has a dimensional requirement for a wider base width (where the ladder contacts the ground) for ladders over 3 metres in extended length. This follows the approach in the other EN 131 family of standards.

Clause 6.2.2 – Ladder preconditioning

Ladder preconditioning, in this case a drop test, requires the sample ladder to be fully extended vertically and then allowed to fall under its own weight.

The ladder is then inspected for damage, including any damage to the locking mechanisms and any deformation in the ladder which prevents it from operating normally. The brackets between the rungs and stiles must not have any relative movement following the drop test.

The test and inspection is then repeated with the ladder falling on the opposite face to the first test.

Clause 6.3 – Strength test

With the ladder placed in the position of use, against a wall at 65 degrees, a test load is applied to the rung nearest the centre of the ladder adjacent to one stile. The test load is based on the ladder class as stated in the user instructions or markings.

For a Non-Professional class ladder the test load is 2250N (229kg) and for Professional class it is 2700N (275kg).

The ladder must withstand the test load without rupture of parts, locking mechanisms and indicators must be operational, and no relative movement between brackets and rungs/stiles. Permanent deformation is acceptable provided that the ladder remains fully functional and does not impair the fitness for use or safety of the ladder.

Clause 6.7.4 - Rung strength test in the unlocked position

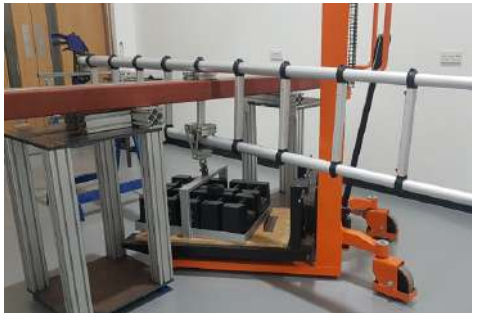
With the ladder in the position of use, leaning against a wall at 75 degrees, a test load of 2600N (265kg) is applied to the highest rung permitted for the user to stand on. Prior to the load being applied, the lock mechanism must be disengaged at the rung where the load is applied.

The ladder must withstand the test load without rupture of parts, locking mechanisms and indicators operational, and no relative movement between brackets and rungs/stiles. Permanent deformation is acceptable provided that the ladder remains fully functional and does not impair the fitness for use or safety of the ladder.

Clause 6.7.6 – Pull out test of rungs

With the ladder placed horizontally on its side, the upper stile of the ladder is suspended with blocks adjacent to a rung bracket. On the lower stile, and on the same rung, blocks are placed adjacent to the rung bracket and a test load (2600N / 265kg) is applied.

After the test, the telescopic ladder and the locking mechanisms shall function in all sections normally and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.



[1] British Standards Institution – BS EN 131-1 – Ladders – Terms, types, functional sizes

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'Stepping it Up - Telescopic Ladder Surveillance Report', Version 1, Revision 0, October 2025