

The Tale of an Idiot and a Perfectly Good Ladder

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The Scenario

- On a bright sunny Saturday in September 1999, the idiot and his wife had planned to go shopping
- But ... before they went out, the idiot decided to do a “quick fix” on a seam for his greenhouse
- Selected a perfectly good step ladder in good condition and attempted to use it to access the loose seam
- Set the ladder “firmly” on muddy ground and scaled the ladder
- Climbed to the very top of the ladder and promptly fell off, landing on the ground and broke his back

Errors Made by the Idiot

- Attempted to do a “quick fix” without fully assessing that:
 - The ladder was not quite tall enough
 - The ground was muddy and not a real firm base
- Then violated “don’t go beyond” the second rung from the top rule (clearly marked on ladder)

What Happened

- The only possible “good thing” that came out of this was that the idiot avoided a likely very expensive trip to Liberty Village
- However, the resulting pain and suffering was not worth it:
 - First time the idiot got to ride in an ambulance
 - Was in the hospital for over a week and then on a walker and in an upper body brace for 6 weeks
 - Had to undergo physical therapy for another 6 weeks

Five Rules for Ladder Safety

- Select the right ladder for the job – wood or fiberglass preferred
- Select a good ladder and inspect it
 - Includes checking the ground upon which the ladder will rest
- Set up the ladder with care
 - Ensure stepladder is locked
 - Ensure straight ladder secured and lean ratio from the wall is $\frac{1}{4}$ the ladder extended length
- Climb and descend with caution
- Work safe! Work smart!

The Idiot

