

SECTION 8

WORKING AT HEIGHT



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SECTION 8 - WORKING AT HEIGHT

You may not think you are working at height in the hair industry – but you often are. The moment you have to put up something, or take down something that is higher than you can reach, and you grab a ladder (okay, yes, most of you would grab a chair or stand on something else – all of which is unsuitable and very hazardous), you are working at height.

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8.2 What is working at height?

WORKING AT HEIGHT

Work in any place where, if precautions were not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury

Work at height means work in any place where, if precautions were not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury.

Working at height is the major cause of death in the workplace, and one of the major causes of major injuries.

You are working at height if you:

- work above ground/floor level
- could fall from an edge, through an opening or fragile surface
- could fall from ground level into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground

Work at height does not include a slip or a trip on the level, as a fall from height has to involve a fall from one level to a lower level, nor does it include walking up and down a permanent staircase in a building.

So, in short, you could be working at height the moment you grab the ladder to hang up a new poster, or if you have a hole in the floor and you are working around that hole.

8.3 Work at height regulations 2005

Under the Work at height regulations 2005, employers must organise and plan work at height. They must carry out a risk assessment for anyone working at height and take suitable measures to prevent the person from falling and being injured, such as:

- select appropriate equipment and PPE (a chair or box are not appropriate!)
- Must be suitable, stable and strong enough for purpose

Anyone carrying out work at height must be competent i.e. have enough knowledge, understanding and experience to do the job safely. Make sure workers are properly trained and supervised, have the right equipment and know how to use it safely.

In a salon, working at height usually involves no more than the use of stepladders/ladders to change light bulbs, clean surfaces such as windows or reach items stored at high level.

- Stepladders/ladders must be of commercial quality and not domestic type
- Do not use chairs or stand on work surfaces
- Do not stand on the platform of platform steps

8.4 Resources

For more information, see

[INDG401 Working at height. A brief guide](#) (HSE)

[LA455 Safe use of ladders and stepladders. A brief guide](#) (HSE and The Ladder Association)