

expert guide /

A summary of the update to standard EN 131: Ladders

contents

- ARCO OVERVIEW 1
- HOW THE STANDARDS HAVE CHANGED 2
- KEY DATES & WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU 3
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 4
- WHERE TO GET HELP 5
- MORE ADVICE 6



Arco is the UK's leading supplier of personal protective equipment, workwear and workplace safety products offering a world-class range of over 170,000 products.

As Experts in Safety we are widely recognised as a provider of specialist advice through our sales office network and this is further supported by our training and consultancy division. We reach our customers through an extensive product catalogue, interactive website, local sales offices and a network of over 47 stores. We pride ourselves on providing customers with great availability, performance and price.

Founded in 1884 Arco has a heritage spanning four generations. With traditional family values at the heart of the business we pride ourselves on our core values: respect, hard work, enterprise and excellence in reputation.

We fully subscribe to the ETI's Nine Principles Base Code and have fully incorporated the internationally recognised code of labour practice into our own ethical policy. In 2007 Arco was the first distributor in our industry to become a member of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and in 2010 we became a member of Sedex, the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange. We continually support local communities and charities donating in excess of 1% of pre tax profits annually.

As we are members of the BSIF Registered Safety Suppliers Scheme you can be confident that we will supply safety equipment which is genuine and compliant with the relevant standards and regulations. The BSIF monitor and regulate members of the scheme by conducting regular standards audits.



How The Standards Have Changed

The new regulations for portable ladders and steps have been published as a single British and European standard EN 131: Ladders, replacing BS 2037 and BS 1129.

Previously, domestic use and industrial use ladders came under different regulations. However, the new European standard simplifies this by covering all uses under one European standard: **EN 131. The British version of this is BS EN 131.**

The updated standard simplifies the buying and training process and includes two categories; EN 131 Professional (Industrial and trade) and EN 131 Non-Professional (domestic).

Overall, the standard will improve ladder safety, stability and durability.

EN 131 – ONE SINGLE LADDER STANDARD

The regulations have been updated to improve the safety of ladders, reduce ladder related accidents and make the process of selecting the right ladder straight-forward.



Key Changes Within EN 131



MINIMUM WEIGHT CAPACITY OF 150KG FOR ALL LADDERS

The revised standard will now ensure all ladders, whether for professional or domestic use, have the same safe working load of 150kg.



CHANGES TO DIMENSIONS FOR IMPROVED STABILITY

Extension ladders over 3m to have a wider base to reduce slips and increase stability.



NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR LADDER DURABILITY

The updated standard will also introduce new cycle durability tests as a way of checking product durability.

Key Dates & What This Means For You

Key Dates

- **From January 2018**, all new ladders and step ladders must be designed to adhere to the new EN 131 standards.
- **The 31st December 2018**, is the target transition date for the Ladder Association and reputable suppliers.

During the transition period, ladders certified to the previous version of EN 131, BS 2037 and BS 1129 can still be sold to enable suppliers to clear their stocks. This means you will still be able to purchase these during the transition period, which is perfectly legal.

The new product standards do not apply retrospectively, therefore, existing ladders do not need to be replaced immediately if they are in good condition. The revision simply sets a new minimum, to ensure even the most basic DIY products are designed to be safer and more durable.

Ladders for industrial use

Those who require industrial use ladders should consider updating their purchase policies, to ensure EN 131 Professional ladders are specified when it's time to replace existing ladders or buy new ones.

Ladders for domestic use

Those who simply require ladders for domestic use (DIY), can look for products that fall under any EN 131 category (Non-Professional or Professional). Provided the ladder will only be used to complete DIY jobs, a Non-Professional ladder will be adequate. However, if there is a chance of using it in a business manner, purchasing a Professional ladder would be recommended.



What This Means For You:

- Industrial ladder users should update their purchase policies
- Existing ladders in good condition do not need to be replaced
- Domestic ladder users can purchase any EN 131 product

Warning:

NO ladder can be CE marked. If you see a ladder that claims to have CE certification, do not purchase and highlight your concern to the seller and Trading Standards.

Frequently Asked Questions



Can I still use my existing ladders?

Yes, product standards do not apply retrospectively. Therefore, if they are in good condition, there is no immediate requirement to change your existing ladders.

Does this also apply to industrial use?

Yes. However, businesses should consider updating their purchasing policies to be ready to specify EN 131 Professional.

Can I buy a ladder with a CE Mark?

It is currently not possible to legally CE mark a ladder. If you see a ladder with a CE mark, steer clear and do not purchase it.

Do I need retraining to adhere to the new standards?

If you currently hold a Ladder Association LadderCard you do not need to retrain, as the current training is compliant with the new EN 131 standard.

Those using ladders in a professional environment will need to go through a training programme that equips them with the essentials on using, handling and storing a ladder safely.

Does every company have to change its ladders?

Ladders that are well maintained and in good condition do not need to be changed immediately, however, when businesses are looking to replace ladders, they should be purchasing products that adhere to the new standard; unless it's in the initial transition period where older products will still be available.

I'm self-employed, does this affect me too?

Yes, if you are using ladders and stepladders in a professional manner, you will need to take note of the new standards. You won't need to replace your ladders immediately if they are in good condition, however, when you get around to replacing your products, you will need to ensure they are compliant to the new standard.

How do I know if I'm buying the correct ladder?

It's always best to shop at a reputable company to ensure the products you're purchasing are of the highest quality. It's also good practice to check the specification, label and user instructions to check the product complies with the latest version of EN 131. It's worth noting, however, that during the initial transition period, it will still be possible to buy ladders under the old standard. This is perfectly legal, as suppliers are simply clearing their existing stocks.

How do I ensure that my staff are using the correct equipment when working at height?

We recommend conducting a site audit that helps you to identify the most appropriate access equipment, and ensures you are using it safely. Arco offers a free site survey to businesses looking to audit their 'working at height' risk assessments.*

* Terms and conditions apply. Site audit is available subject to meeting specific criteria, speak to your local Arco representative to discuss. Site audit is subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time.

Where To Get Help

Working at height carries a heightened level of risk and so it's essential that you have the right tools for the job. Arco is dedicated to ensuring the safe use and maintenance of access equipment to protect both work forces and those simply wishing to carry out DIY.

Arco Ladders

All current EN 131 stepladder products available from Arco are fully compliant with the new regulations. Some new and improved models will become available as we replace the current Class 1 products.

Site Audit

If you are concerned that your current products are putting you or your workers at risk, then you may want to consider a site audit. Arco offers businesses a free site survey for those wishing to audit their 'working at height' risk assessment.*

Arco's in-depth survey involves a thorough inspection of a site's 'working at height' activities with a view to identifying the most appropriate equipment for the task, and ensuring workers are using them correctly.

Contact your local sales office to book a free survey today.

Ladder Safety Training Courses

As a key requirement of the Working At Height Regulations is to demonstrate competence, both Ladder Association and Prefabricated Access Suppliers' and Manufacturers' Association (PASMA) courses are available through Arco.

There are several different courses on offer including a Ladder and Stepladder course, designed for frequent ladder users, a Ladder and Stepladder Inspection course, for workplace ladder maintenance as well as Mobile Access Tower training.

For more information or to book your course, please contact Arco's Training & Consultancy Specialist Services on 01482 611769.



* Terms and conditions apply. Site audit is available subject to meeting specific criteria, speak to your local Arco representative to discuss. Site audit is subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time.

Need More Advice?

As the UK's leading safety company, Arco has a wealth of knowledge in the world of PPE and health and safety and is happy to help.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new ladder standard, please visit:

www.arco.co.uk/access
or www.arcosafety.ie/access

Alternatively, contact your local sales office:

Aberdeen	01224 249 494
Scotland & Northern Ireland	01506 841 510
North England	0191 499 1555
North West England	0161 869 5807
Yorkshire	01482 611 611
East Midlands	0115 938 0456
West Midlands	0121 500 6060
South West	0117 982 3751
South East	01923 204 141
Republic of Ireland	(+353) 1 409 5000

To find your nearest Arco store, please use Arco's branch locator: www.arco.co.uk/branchloc



Experts in Safety

arco[®]

**Arco Limited
P.O. Box 21,
Waverley Street,
Hull HU1 2SJ**

www.arco.co.uk

www.arcosafety.ie

© Arco Limited 2018. All Rights Reserved.

