

LIGHTWEIGHT ROPE LADDERS

A GUIDE TO CARE AND USE

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 the adjacent rungs tend to form a helix, the ladder has probably passed through itself. This should be corrected so the wires become relaxed.
 - IV. Don't walk on the ladder
 - 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 as it is paid out over the edge. A few broken wires may not be serious, but damage should be tagged and reported. (Manufacturer can effect 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 the field should seek advice.
7. One person at a time should be on the ladder.
8. **CLIMBING TECHNIQUE:** When climbing only 15 feet 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 required to overcome this. Long climbs should not be attempted without some practice.
9. A carabineer or snap hook attached at the waist is very useful. The climber can lock 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 ridged ladder or safer means of access is not available. They are not intended to withstand the wear and tear of fixed installation. However, they are much safer to use than a single rope and used correctly should provide many years of faithful service.