

Toolbox Talk

Ladder Extension 1A and 9A (Long Ladder)



The basics

This guide covers carrying, raising and lowering of the Ladder Extension 1A (Long Ladder), it's also relevant if you're working with Ladder Extension 9 which is the three section Long Ladder.

Ladder Extension 1A and 9A (Long Ladder) – what's the difference?

Ladder 1A is the most common of the Openreach Long Ladders and is a two section rope-operated aluminium ladder which extends to 7.6m. It fits on the ladder rack of the standard Openreach Vivaro & Transit vehicles.

Ladder 9A is a three section rope-operated ladder specifically designed for storing in the ladder stowage area of the Transit 604 or Tonner, it **won't** fit on the ladder rack of the standard Openreach vehicle.

- Two people are **always** required when using, carrying, loading or unloading either ladder from a vehicle
- There's no difference in the safe climbing & working practices when using Ladder 5B, 7 or either type of the Long Ladders.
- If you've been trained to climb Ladders 5B or 7 (**T14621 – Poles, Steps & Ladders**), you can climb a Ladder 1A or 9 once it's been erected and is safe to climb.

More information: go to the [Ladders & Stepladders section](#) in the Health & Safety Handbook.

A few reminders (& some of these are also relevant when using any type of ladder)

- Consideration **should always** be given to using a MEWP, scaffolding or other access equipment before deciding that the Long Ladder is the most suitable form of access equipment.
- Engineers who have been trained to use the Ladder Extension 1A & 9A should transport and carry them on their vehicles.
- There must **always** be a minimum of two people onsite and working closely together when using Long Ladders.
- The Long Ladder trained engineer is always deemed to be the experienced and lead engineer onsite when using this equipment. They should always control the work being carried out.
- The lead engineer's role includes fully explaining the procedures for carrying, erecting and lowering of the ladders, as well as making sure there's always good, clear communication and visual contact between people onsite.
- If there is restricting space or obstructions, then three people may be needed to assist erecting and lowering the ladder.
- As with any job, a full onsite risk assessment should be carried out before work starts.
Remember, your risk assessment is ongoing and continues **throughout** the task – conditions can and do change.
- Onsite risk assessments should be done jointly by both engineers onsite. This helps identify any hazards which may require extra care or control measures whilst manoeuvring, erecting and lowering the ladders.
Hazards could include: overhead obstructions & cables (including electricity), uneven ground conditions, tight spaces, bay windows, recessed windows, doorways, or flue outlets.
- Adequate control measures must be put in place or actions taken where hazards have been identified.
This could include having an extra engineer to assist onsite for safety reasons.

A few reminders

- As with our other ladders, the Top End Stability Device (TESD) is also **mandatory** on the Long Ladders, unless there's a genuine reason that fitting it increases the risk of something going wrong or it isn't possible to fit it due to obstructions or the layout of the building.
- The TESS can be fitted to the ladder once it has been removed from the vehicle and the ladder then carried to site or can be fitted when the ladder is onsite.
- Ladders must always be footed by the 2nd engineer standing on the bottom rung, although additional stability measures such as the bottom end device can also be utilised at the same time.
- Ensure passing traffic and pedestrians are taken into account, particularly when erecting and manoeuvring the ladders.
- Ensure when loading and unloading the ladders off vehicles there's enough room to do so, and traffic and pedestrians are again taken into account.
- The Long Ladders **MUST NOT** be carried on small vehicles such as the Fiat Doblo's, Vauxhall Combos or Transit Connects.
- Suitable road works guarding should be used to prevent pedestrians from entering the work area.
- Clear communication and visual contact is really important between all engineers when carrying & using these ladders.
- **Don't** allow the ladder to slide up or down a customers wall when erecting or lowering it.

Long Ladder Toolbox Talk

Pre-use checks

- Carry out the normal pre-use checks you would do on your ladders 5B & 7.
- Remember though, there **are extra checks** you need to complete on these ladders.
- This is especially important if you don't normally carry the ladder on your vehicle and have to collect the ladders from where it is stored.

After all, you don't want to get to site and find out it is out of test date or it is faulty!

Stickers

- Ensuring it has an up to date test label & 1:4 Red Line label.

Stile grooves

- Check the grooves that run the length of the ladder.
- Ensure they aren't damage or blocked as it will prevent the ladder mechanism working properly

Rope

- Ensure you check the full length of the rope for damage & signs of excessive wear & tear

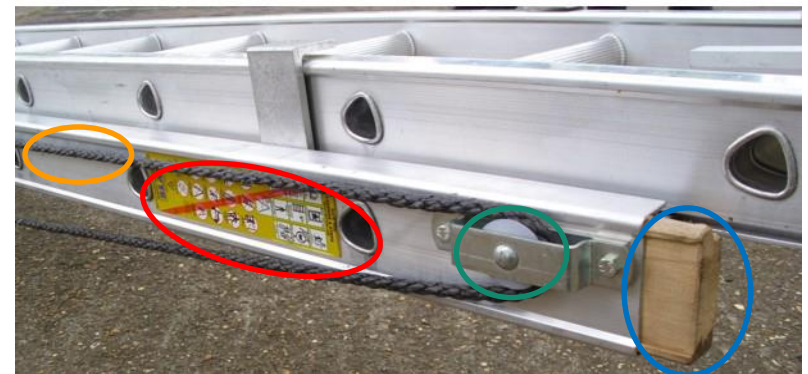
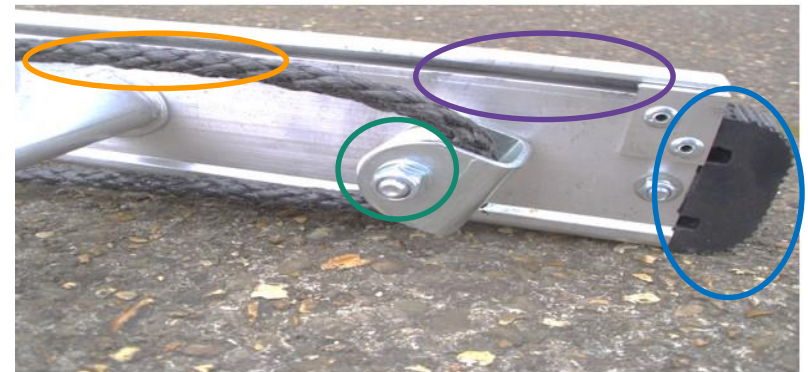
Nylon rollers

- Ensure all the rollers on the ladder are in good condition, run freely and the nuts holding them on aren't loose.

Rubber & wooden inserts

- Ensure the inserts are damaged or missing, if they are get them repaired or replaced via the normal esiTest (eYP) procedure

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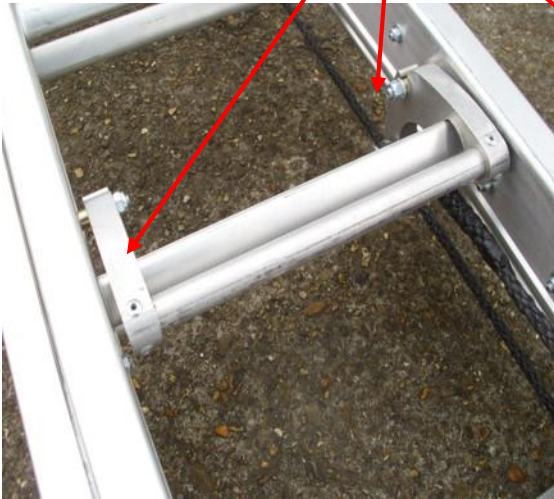
Pre-use checks - ladder latch

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This is another key part of this ladder.

- It's really important to ensure the latch operates freely when the rope is used to pull the top section up and then locks onto the rungs it will be resting on when the ladder is climbed.

Double check that the latch moves freely by hand and also when the rope is used to operate it.



Make sure the latch locks and rests fully on the rungs before it is erected to working height

Long Ladder Toolbox Talk

Carrying the ladders



- **The ladders should always be carried by a minimum of 2 people, preferably on the shoulders although there may be occasions when carrying them at waist height may be more suitable & in some cases more comfortable.**

Once at the work location there are 2 options for lowering the bottom end of the ladder to the ground -

- Still facing forward, the rear engineer lowers the bottom end of the ladder to the ground (this may result in the front engineer bending slightly backwards)

Or

- The front engineer turns to face the other then the bottom end of the ladder is lowered to the ground.
- Clear communication is important during the carrying and lowering procedures.



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Raising & lowering the ladder against a wall (option 1)



- Where space permits, the feet of the ladder can be wedged against a wall or solid structure then 'walked up' by the engineers.
- It is recommended that the 2nd engineer walks behind the engineer who is 'walking' the ladder up. This is so they can support or stop the ladder from falling in the unlikely event their colleague loses control or needs support.
- Once the ladder is erected, both engineers then manoeuvre the ladder into position so it can be erected to the most suitable working height.

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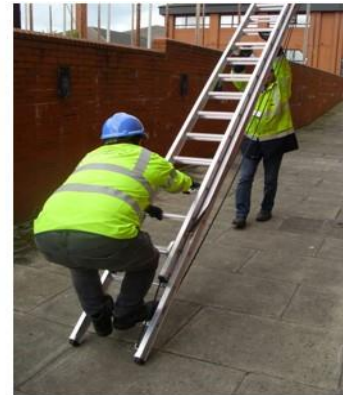
- **Lowering the ladder** - the exact opposite of the raising procedure is followed to bring the ladder down to the ground

Remember: clearly communicate between each other during both procedures.

Long Ladder Toolbox Talk

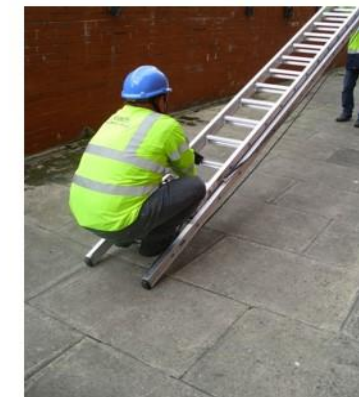
Raising & lowering the ladder against a wall (option 2)

Where space is tight, the assisting engineer assists by crouching onto the bottom rung after the engineer at the top end of the ladder starts the lift. The engineer at the top end then 'walks' their hands down the rungs which raises the ladder. At the same time, the supporting engineer 'walks' their hands up the rungs as it is raised, which brings the ladder vertical.



Lowering the ladder - the exact opposite of the raising procedure is followed to bring the ladder down to the ground.

Remember – clearly communicate between each other during both procedures.



Long Ladder Toolbox Talk

Raising & lowering the ladder (option 3)

- An alternative and acceptable option to the previous method is for the engineer standing on the bottom rung to use the Ladder Removal Tool (LRT - i/c – 129133) as a lever when the ladder is being raised.
- One of the benefits of this method is that it may help some engineers who struggle to crouch down fully as required in the previous method.
- The LRT is located on the 5th rung from the bottom and is drawn into the standing engineer as the ladder is raised. The rungs are then held when the ladder is at the appropriate position.



Lowering the ladder - the exact opposite of the raising procedure is followed to bring the ladder down to the ground.

Remember – clearly communicate between each other during both procedures.

Long Ladder Toolbox Talk

Erecting the ladder



- The ladders should always be manoeuvred into position and erected by at least two people.
- Using both hands, the fully trained Long Ladder engineer operates the rope that is used to pull up and lower the top section of the ladder as well as engaging the ladder latch onto the appropriate rung.
- The 2nd person supports the ladder at the rear all the time it is being erected
- If a 3rd person is required onsite they can either support the 2nd person behind the ladder or be used as a guide to ensure the ladder avoids any obstructions or hazards as it is raised into position.
- As the top section is raised the rope operator can stand on the bottom rung to give extra stability if necessary or stands with their foot against the bottom of the stile to prevent it slipping.
- When the ladder has been positioned it is important that it is secured and stabilised just the same as any other ladder. This can include it being footed by another engineer.
- **Remember** – if the ladder is being footed then there should be clear communication when the engineer working on the ladder is descending, lowering and raising tools



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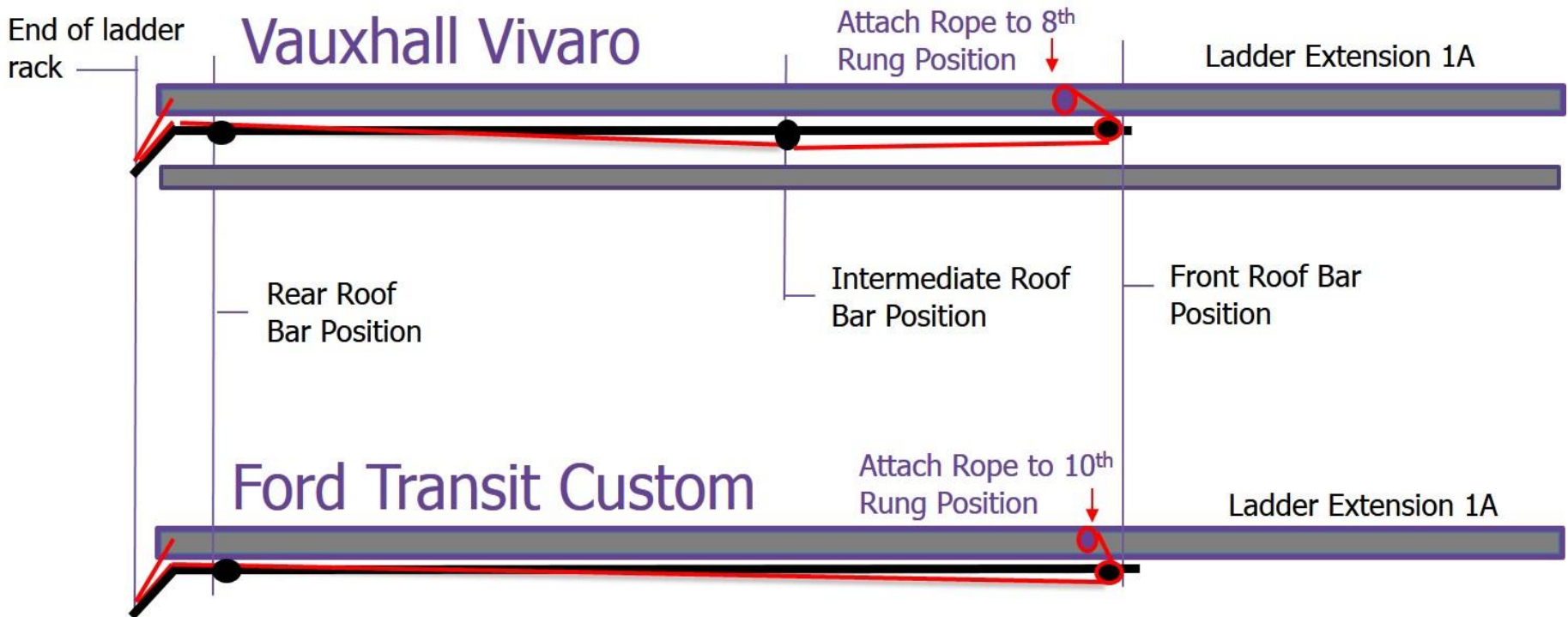


Lowering the ladder - the exact opposite of the raising procedure is followed to bring the ladder down to the ground

Long Ladder Toolbox Talk

Securing Long Ladders onto Vivaros & Transits

- As with any other ladders carried on our vehicles, it's important they're correctly and securely fitted to the ladder rack.
- The diagrams below confirm the best rungs the ladder rope should be fitted on to ensure they tightly secured to reduce any bounce or movement of the ladders.
- You will need to place the ladder at an angle at the rear of both vehicles to fit the rope to the correct rung, so make sure you have enough space to do this and you aren't presenting a hazard to traffic or pedestrians.



Remember!

Long Ladders **MUST NOT** be carried on the smaller engineering vehicles such as Diablos, Combos or Transit Connects.