

STEP STOOL – INFORMATION SHEET

What is a step stool?

Step stools, also known as kik/kick steps or 2-3 step equipment (both illustrated below) are commonly used in the workplace and must be manufactured to either BS 7377 or BSEN131 standards or comply with European GS standards by being 'GS Approved'. This will be marked somewhere on the step stool or 2-3 step equipment. If no standards are identifiable on your step stool or 2-3 step equipment then it should be removed from use. Most step stools and 2-3 step equipment have a maximum load capacity of 150kg.



Step stool



2 step equipment

Falls from step stools and 2-3 step equipment are more common than you might think. Even though a fall is not far from ground level they can still cause serious injuries and time off work.

Since there are times when you may have to use a step stool or 2-3 step equipment to do your job, you need to be cautious and ensure the step stool or 2-3 step equipment that you are using is sturdy and in good condition.

When using a step stool or 2-3 step equipment, you should never overreach or put yourself in a position where you will be off balance. You should ensure that you can safely handle the weight, size and shape of whatever it is you are placing at height. If necessary, ask a colleague to assist you in carrying out the task from ground level.

All users of access equipment when carrying out any work at height must be appropriately trained in its use. This is a legal requirement. By reading this information sheet at least annually, you should be competent to use step stools or 2-3 step equipment as described above. If you have any questions or you are unsure, please speak to your manager.

Whenever using a step stool or 2-3 step equipment you must follow the points below:

1. Always check the step stool or 2-3 step equipment prior to each use. Look for damaged/missing parts, condition of anti-slip feet and condition of the

climbing/gripping surfaces. If any damage is suspected, immediately place the step stool/2-3 step equipment out of service and report to your line manager/caretaker.

2. Ensure the 2-3 step equipment is spread fully open and the locking mechanism is engaged.
3. Ensure the step stool and 2-3 step equipment are used on a level surface with solid floor support. Step equipment must never be placed on other objects such as boxes or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.
4. The anti-slip feet located at the bottom of each step stool and 2-3 step equipment must be present and in good condition. Never use them on slippery surfaces.
5. Set-up the step stool or 2-3 step equipment close to the task being carried out. Work with your body in a central position whilst on the step stool or 2-3 step equipment and never overreach as this could cause the step stool or 2-3 step equipment to tip.
6. Never attempt to move the step stool or 2-3 step equipment whilst on it. Always climb down, relocate it and then re-climb.
7. Store the step stool or 2-3 step equipment in a location away from excessive heat or chemical vapours. Do not store items on top of the step stool or 2-3 step equipment.
8. Never use a step stool or 2-3 equipment for a purpose for which it was not designed. For example, do not lean a closed 2-3 step equipment against a wall or other surface for climbing, or stand on one that has been placed across objects in a horizontal position.
9. Never climb up or down a step stool or 2-3 step equipment whilst carrying any object that could cause you to lose your balance. When using a 2-3 step equipment place one hand on the support rail.
10. Ensure you have suitable footwear on when using a step stool or 2-3 step equipment, never use whilst wearing shoes with heels.
11. Never stand on the top step of a 2-3 step equipment unless the manufacturer's instructions detail differently

Note to Managers

It is recommended this information sheet is refreshed with staff annually (although intervals are to be determined locally) and evidence retained as to who has received this information sheet. Remember you do not have to stop the use of step stools by staff – just ensure that staff use them safely and in accordance with local arrangements and training.