OBSTACLES AND PLACING OUT OF REACH: BASIC PROTECTION ONLY

IS 2.5 METRES HIGH ENOUGH?

OBSTACLES: BASIC PROTECTION ONLY

Guidance Note 3 · p.36 . Protection against contact with live parts can be provided by an **obstacle** — and there is a limit to what that buys you.

> ✋ **An obstacle provides basic protection only. There is no fault protection.** It prevents **unintentional** contact with live parts, but not **deliberate** contact — someone who sets out to get round it can.

The examples given: a locked metal gate in front of a switchboard or changeover board, and transformers in a locked cage at high voltage.

> `The test is simple: does it prevent unintentional bodily approach to, or contact with, live parts?`

If somebody can walk into or reach the live parts by accident, the measure has failed — whatever it looks like.

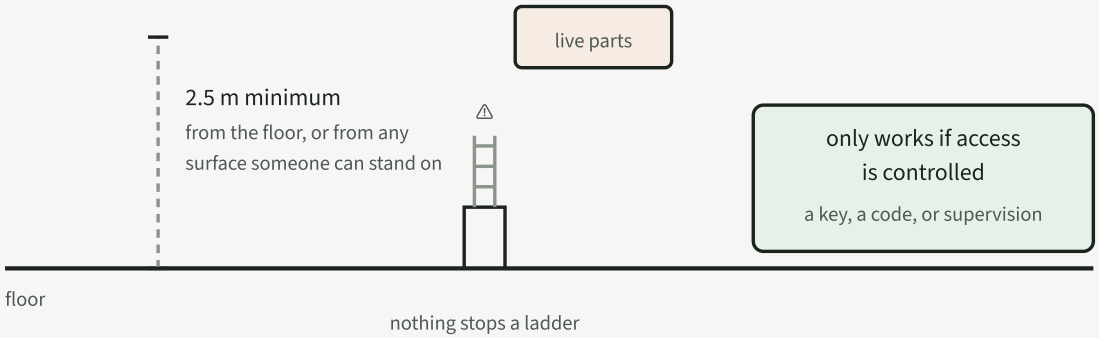
PLACING OUT OF REACH

> `2.5 metres minimum`

> ✋ **Height alone does not make something out of reach.** Nothing stops somebody fetching a ladder. The measure only works if access is genuinely controlled — a key, a code, or supervision.

One example: a **plant room or switch room**: nobody should be in there except a skilled person, or somebody under the supervision of one. And realistically they will not get the key or the code without the building manager asking why.

> **Common sense plus the standard.**
> If something is accessible to somebody who should not be near it, the measure has failed — whatever the book says about distances.



Height on its own is not a protective measure. If somebody who should not be near it can still get to it, the measure has failed — whatever the tape says.

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