

Understanding Your Product

The team at Bcompact is dedicated to ensuring you find the perfect Bcompact Folding Stair or Ladder unit for your project. Throughout the design process, you'll work with a Project Consultant to tailor a product that fits your specific install space.

The most important first step to a perfect solution is ensuring that you understand the products we offer and how they fit into your install space. Our Project Consultants have years of experience working with owners, builders and architects; however, every project is different. We rely on clear, accurate information from you to ensure a smooth process from initial design through to installation.

This document is the first of three essential guides designed to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the units we offer. It will help you familiarise yourself with the units themselves and the variations available. The second guide details the requirements of your installation space and provides instructions on how to prepare the area for a seamless installation. The final guide covers the range of optional extras available for our products.

Please keep these guides handy throughout the design and installation process.

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1. Overview

The Bcompact Stair and Ladder share the same bamboo structure and are based on the same concept. Through precise alterations, the base concept has been adapted to create several distinct variations. These variations are grouped into three defining pairs:

- Stair or Ladder.
- Fixed Step or Full-Fold.
- Narrow or Wide.

Every unit is a combination of one option from each pair. For example, a unit may be a Stair / Full-Fold / Narrow or a Stair / Fixed Step / Narrow, depending on the needs of the install location and user preference. A set of these variations form the basis for each unit's design, which is further customised by altering the step rise and number of steps.

This document details the key differences in each of the defining pairs and is an important reference throughout the design process. If you are unsure about any of the information contained within this document, please contact your Project Consultant.

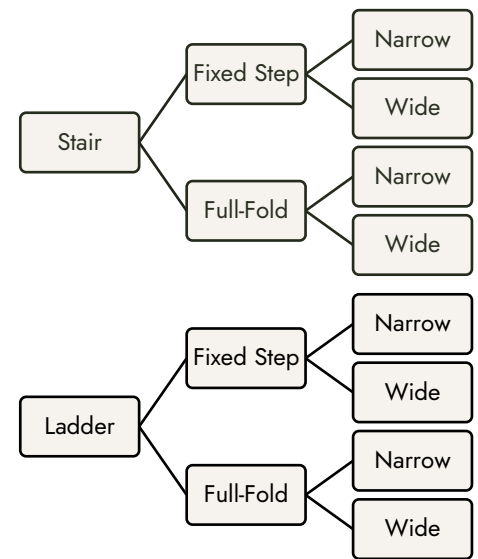


Figure 1. Variation Hierarchy.

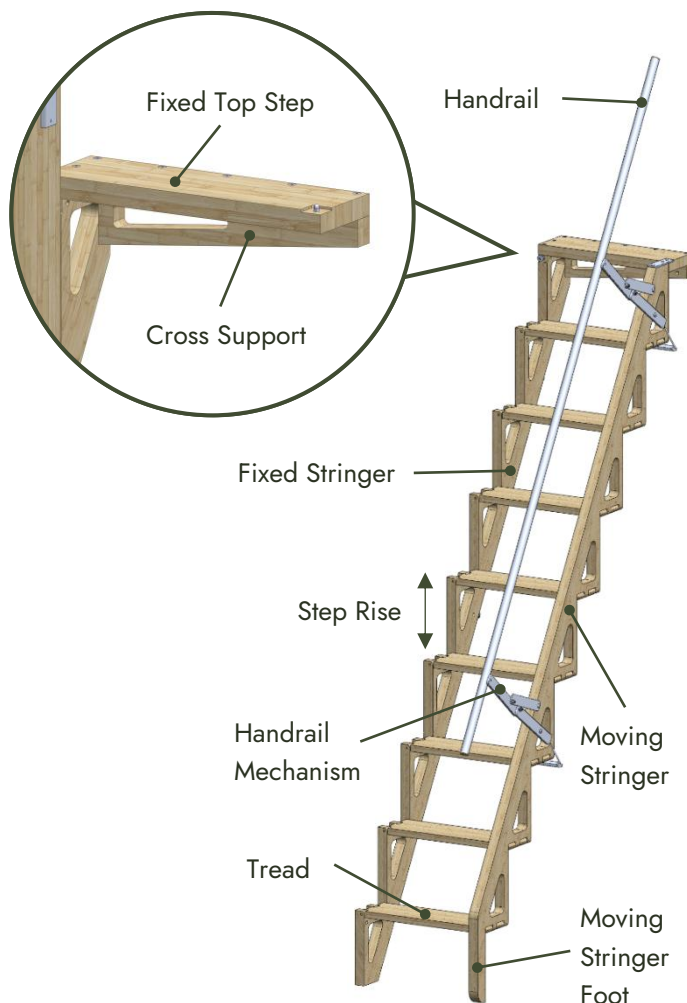


Figure 2. Unit Terminology.

Terminology

Many of the names and terms that we use when referring to our units are based on standard staircases. However, while reading through our documentation and throughout the design process, you may encounter unfamiliar terminology that is specific to our products.

Figure 2 will help you familiarise yourself with this terminology. Please note that the two folding directions (folding up to the left/right) are mirrored versions of each other but are otherwise identical.

2. Stair and Ladder

The two main versions of the product we offer are the Stair and Ladder. Both versions are based on the same concept and operate in the same way; however, each version reflects its namesake when considering step rise and angle.

The Stair features deeper steps and lower step rises, allowing it to achieve angles from 50 to 60 degrees. This version makes for a more comfortable ascent/descent and is commonly used to replace a fixed staircase when the install area is not restricted. The Stair includes an auto-folding handrail as standard.

Conversely, the Ladder features shallower steps and higher step rises, allowing it to achieve angles from 60 to 70 degrees. This version is an ideal replacement for a conventional attic ladder, where space is restricted. The Ladder does not include a folding handrail however a fixed (non-folding) handrail can be added for added ease of use and comfort while entering and exiting the unit from the top landing.

If you are unsure which version best suits your space, please discuss this with your Project Consultant. They will be able to suggest the design that balances your needs and preferences.

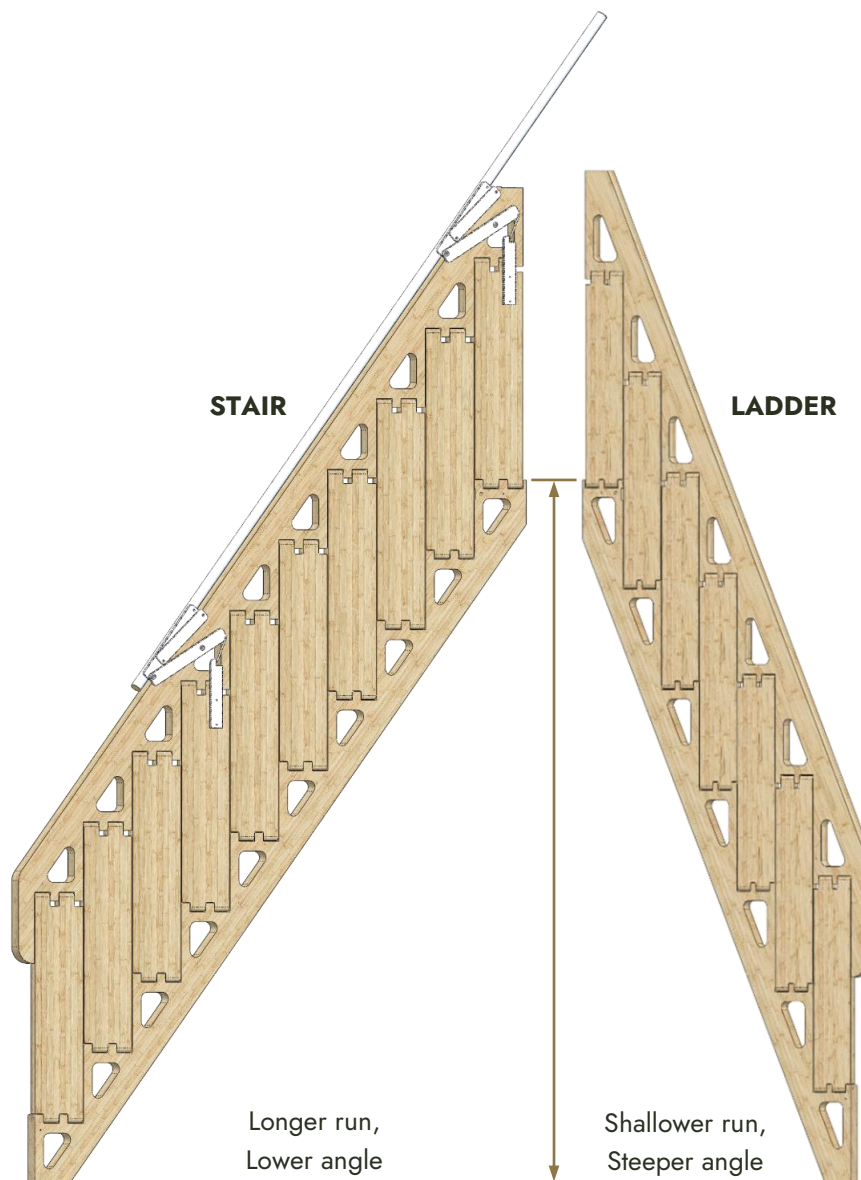


Figure 3. Stair and Ladder variations.

3. Fixed Step and Full-Fold

The choice between the Fixed Step and Full-Fold design concerns both the install area requirements and visual aesthetics. The Fixed Step version features a fixed top step that stays in place when the rest of the steps are folded away. This fixed top step supports the top of the moving stringer while in the open position. The Full-Fold eliminates the need for the fixed top step by utilising a catch bolt system. This version requires a bolt be installed in the front façade of the install area, which supports the moving stringer while in the open position.

The Fixed Step design largely provides functional benefits, as summarised below:

- **Supports the Gate, Top Lock and Extended Top Step add-ons.** These add-ons are only available for this design because they are integrated into the fixed top step.
- **Ideal for install areas that lead up into a doorway or other vertical obstructions.** The fixed top step functions as a landing and helps to provide manoeuvring space at the top of the unit.
- **More easily adjusted to fit under a skylight.** If your install space leads into a skylight or similar, please notify your Project Consultant to ensure the unit will fit and discuss design options.

The most significant benefit of the Full-Fold is the visual appearance when folded away. Since the fixed top step is removed, the entire unit sits flush against the wall when not in use. Other benefits include:

- **Extra tolerance if the install corner is out of square.** The catch bolt provides easier adjustment if the front façade is not square to the side wall.
- **Removes fixed top step as potential obstruction.** Ideal for shorter units that would otherwise position the fixed top step at head height and therefore cause an obstruction.
- **Shorter run length than the equivalent Fixed Step design.** The elimination of the fixed top step removes one step depth from the run length.

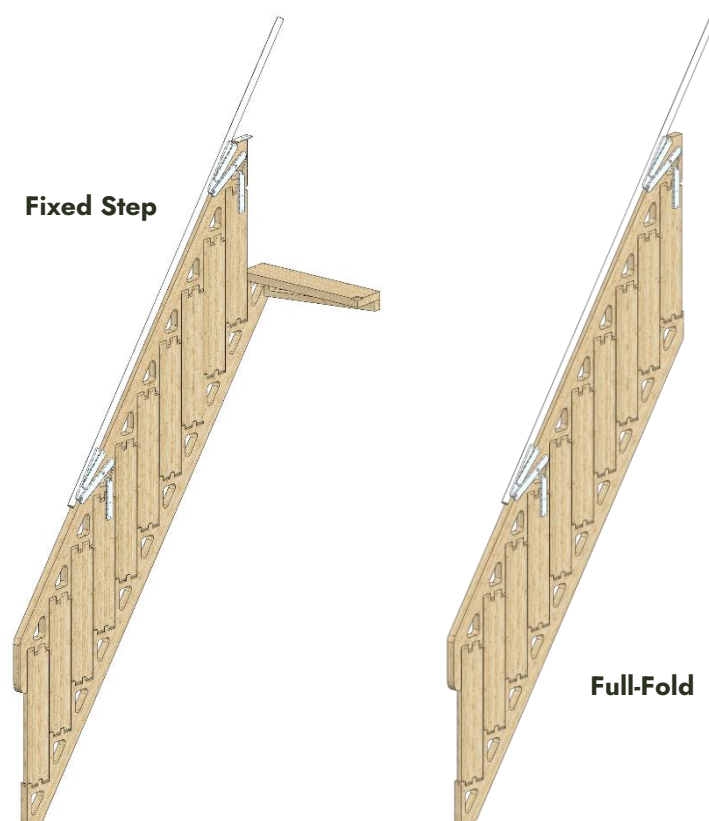


Figure 4. Fixed Step and Full-Fold variations.

4. Narrow and Wide

Unlike the other options, the Narrow and Wide variations affect only the width of the treads, rather than the stringers. Narrow treads come standard on every unit and can be upgraded to Wide treads for a greater walking surface. For this reason, we often refer to these two options as Standard Narrow and Premium Wide.

Table 1 shows the dimensional differences between the two options. The walking width is the distance between the two stringers and reflects the effective width of the walking surface of each tread. Additionally, since the unit folds upwards, the Wide treads also increase the height of the unit above the upper floor when closed as shown. All dimensions shown are for units without a handrail.

Table 1. Narrow and Wide unit dimensions.

	Unit width	Walking width	Height above upper floor in closed position
Narrow	575mm [22.6"]	495mm [19.5"]	536mm [21.1"]
Wide	715mm [28.15"]	635mm [25"]	676mm [26.6"]

The choice between these two options is a balance between the overall width of the product and the walking area of the steps. For example, we generally recommend the Narrow option for units that will be installed in a hallway or similarly restricted areas. Alternatively, for areas that are installed in an open area, the Wide version will offer more comfort for regular use.