

The greatest risks from using hand tools in the workplace come from either misuse or poor maintenance. In general, OSHA requires that each employer shall be responsible for the safe condition of tools and equipment used by employees. While there are some specific requirements for certain tools (i.e. wrenches, impact tools, jacks, etc.), the following general criteria and safety tips can be used to avoid injuries associated with hand tool use, both in the workplace and for at-home projects!

### Hand Tool Use 101

- Maintain hand tools in good condition.
- Inspect tools before each use (this is not required to be documented, but just as important to complete):
  - Check the tool's electrical cord, as well as the extension cord and/or outlet used to provide power
  - Look for obvious (visual) signs of damage
  - Ensure guards and covers are securely attached
  - Verify drill bits, saw blades and other replaceable items are sharp and in good condition
- Operate tools according to the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations.
- Use the right personal protective equipment (PPE) for the job, including:
  - Safety glasses with side shields
  - Cut-resistant gloves with sharp tools, such as saws, knives, etc.
  - DO NOT use gloves with rotating/reciprocating tools such as sanders, drills, etc.
- Use tool guards as designed and replace them if they're missing or damaged.

### Other Important Considerations

- Use the right tool for the job. Don't use your wrench as a hammer. Don't use a screwdriver as a chisel, etc.
- Don't use broken or damaged tools, dull cutting tools, or screwdrivers with worn tips. Impact tools, such as drift pins, wedges, form stakes, and chisels must be kept free of mushroomed heads.
  - The wooden handles of tools must be kept free of splinters or cracks, and shouldn't be loose
- Cut in a direction away from your body and away from others standing or walking nearby.
- Make sure your grip and footing are secure when using large tools.
- Carry tools securely in a tool belt or box. Don't carry tools up ladders, instead use a hoist or rope if needed.
- Keep close track of tools when working at heights. A falling tool can kill a co-worker.
- Hand a tool to another person by the handle; never toss it to someone.
- Never carry sharp or pointed tools, such as a screwdriver, in your pocket.
- Select ergonomic tools for your work task when movements are repetitive and forceful.
  - Recognize the signs of musculoskeletal stress (e.g. numbness, tingling, dropping things frequently, fingers turning white, pain and soreness). Early detection might prevent a serious injury.
- Always keep your tools in top condition. A dull blade or blunt point can lead to injury.
- Store tools properly when you stop working, to protect them from damage.

Signature of Employees in Attendance:

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