

Power Tool Safety

Portable electric power tools are just what their name implies, power tools. Because they're powerful workers need to be aware of their limitations and potential hazards.

Use and maintain tools with care. Keep them sharp and clean for their best and safest performance. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for lubricating and changing tool accessories. Use the right tool for the job. Don't force a small tool or attachment to do the job of a heavy-duty tool. It overstrains the tool and overloads the motor. Keep guards in place and follow lockout/tagout procedures. Unless it's designed for it, never use a portable electric tool where there are flammable vapors or gases present.

If the tool is equipped with a three-prong plug, it should be plugged into a three-hole electrical receptacle. If an adapter is used to accommodate it to a two-prong receptacle, the adapter wire must be attached to a known ground. Never remove the third prong.

Keep the cord in good condition. Keep it away from heat, oil, and sharp edges. Never carry a tool by its cord, or yank the cord to disconnect it from a receptacle and never carry a plug-in tool with your finger on the switch. Report any defective or broken plugs and insulation on cords. Take the tool out of service to be repaired or replaced.

The greatest hazard of power tools is electric shock, so make sure the tool is properly grounded before it's turned on. It's dangerous to use power tools in damp or wet locations or if the worker is perspiring. Moisture helps electricity flows more easily through the body. Rubber gloves and footwear are recommended when working outdoors where it's damp.

Wear proper clothing and personal protective equipment when working with power tools. Loose clothing or jewelry that can get caught in moving parts. Safety glasses or goggles can protect against flying particles or chips from entering the eye. Keep others out of the plane of rotation so they won't be hit by flying particles.

