# Is This the Right Way to Use a Nail Gun?

He’s not wearing eye protection or safety gloves and his nail gun posture is a repetitive stress injury waiting to happen.

Oh, and one more thing. “He” is Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada. So I guess we should add operating a nail gun without training to the list of violations.

**The Moral:** Nail guns and other dangerous tools should be operated only by the workers trained to use them, not by politicians.

## NAIL GUN SAFETY

**3 Reasons to Pay Attention**

1. Nail gun injuries are responsible for over 37,000 ER visits each year
2. Construction workers are especially vulnerable to nail gun injuries
3. Nail gun injuries are usually not fatal. I stress the word “*usually*.” There are exceptions like the 26-year-old Idaho construction worker who was killed when he slipped and fell while framing a house with his hand on the trigger of his nail gun. The nosepiece hit his head as he fell, driving a 3-inch nail into his skull.

# KNOW YOUR TRIGGERS*

Nail guns use 2 basic controls: a trigger and a contact safety tip located on the nose of the gun. Trigger mechanisms differ by:

- The order in which the controls are activated; AND
- How many nails can be fired by a single squeeze of the trigger.

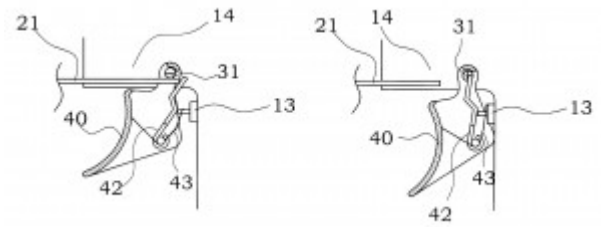
There are 4 kinds of trigger mechanisms:

**1. Full Sequential Triggers** are the safest because the trigger will fire only when all of the controls are taken in the right order.

**2. Contact Triggers** which fire a nail when the safety contact and trigger are activated in *any* order.

**3. Single Sequence Triggers** which like full sequential triggers, will only fire when the controls are activated in a certain order. First, the safety contact tip must be pushed into the work piece. Then, you must squeeze the trigger. To fire a second nail, you only need to release the trigger.

**4. Single Actuation Triggers** which like contact triggers, fire a single nail when the safety contact and trigger are activated in any order but also fire a second nail by releasing the trigger, moving the tool and squeezing the trigger again without releasing the safety contact tip.




**10 NAIL GUN SAFETY DO'S & DON'Ts**

There are 10 things to do/not do to ensure safe use of nail guns:

**DO** make sure you know how your nail gun trigger works before using it

**DON'T** bypass the nail gun safety mechanisms

**DO** follow all safe work procedures and manufacturers' instructions when operating a nail gun

**DON'T** leave your nail gun around unattended

**DO** check the trigger, safety contact and other mechanisms before you use the nail gun

**DON'T** use a nail gun that is broken or not working properly

**DO** shoot nail guns away from your body and co-workers

**DON'T** use a nail gun without eye protection and safety gloves

**DO** tell your supervisor immediately if your nail gun isn't working right

**DON'T** use a nail gun if you're the Prime Minister of Canada (or, for that matter, in any other job if you haven't received nail gun training)