Woodworking Tool Safety Meeting Kit



WHAT□S AT STAKE

Woodworkers use power tools such as saws, drills, routers, planers, sanders, and lathes along with hand tools such as chisels, carvers, and augers to shape wood into functional and artistic objects. While wood crafting, woodworkers need to keep safety in mind.

WHAT□S THE DANGER

Dangerous Woodworking Practices, Machines/Tools

1. **Table Saw.** A table saw likely accounts for more serious woodworking accidents that any other machine or tool.
2. **Dull Chisels.** A sharp tool is a safe tool. This goes for every hand tool, especially true for chisels. A dull tool needs extra force to use, and the moment it gives way the chisel will go flying. Chances are good that injured your hand.
3. **Disc / Edge Sander.** Everything goes smoothly with these sanders, until it doesn□t.
4. **Drill Press.** A pretty innocuous machine, which is why workmen let their guard down while using them. Small- to medium-sized workpieces are harder to control by hand, and if a drill bit catches the workpiece it can immediately spin out of control, injuring a hand.
5. **Router.** Since routers rotate sharp cutting edges at such high speeds, and they□re often used freehand, things can get out of control very quickly if they□re not used with great care.
6. **Thickness Planer.** Workpieces can be shot out the infeed end of a thickness planer. This usually isn□t the end of the world, unless you happen to be standing directly in-line with where the workpiece is being shot. Don□t stand directly behind a thickness planer.
7. **Jointer.** It□s rare something goes wrong while jointing, but if it does the results can be gruesome. Forget hoping the doctor can reattach a finger, as a jointer will be all too happy to eat any that comes its way.
8. **Finishing Rags.** Oil-soaked finishing rags can be extremely flammable if not disposed of properly, and a fire can damage more than just your workshop.
9. **Random Orbital Sanders.** Most woodworkers don□t protect themselves from airborne dust created by random orbital sanders. Wearing a proper mask or

respirator will protect your lungs.

10. **Angle Grinder.** Whether you happen to be using a wood power carving disk, or are grinding metal, an angle grinder sends debris flying. There's potential for it to kickback.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

BEST WOODWORKING SAFETY RULES

Always Wear Safety Glasses and Gear. Your first line of defense is wearing safety glasses, hearing and respiratory protection.

Wear Appropriate Clothing. Loose and baggy clothes are the worst offenders when it comes to getting snagged and tangled in moving equipment. Long-sleeved shirts and full-length pants are safer than shorts and T-shirts. Safety clothing also extends to wearing gloves in the right conditions and always having appropriate footwear.

Avoid Wearing Jewelry. Woodworking shops aren't the place for hanging chains or dangling pendants.

Disconnect Power When Changing Blades or Bits. Make sure you don't just shut your tool off by the switch when switching bits or blades. Either unplug your tool's primary cord or shut off the breaker at the power source.

Don't Use Drugs or Alcohol. Impaired people lose their judgment and decide to pick up a woodworking project. Legitimate prescription pills, like painkillers and anti-depressants must be avoided.

Use Sharp Blades and Bits. Sharp blades are safe blades. It's the dull, damaged and worn-out blades that are dangerous. Sharp blades cut your wood fast and leave clean edges with few splinters to impale you.

Check Wood for Nails. Make sure you always check wood for nails or other fasteners before you start using it. Your best bet if you handle a lot of reclaimed wood is getting a metal detector.

Work Against the Cutter. Most experienced woodworker know to work against the cutter. That means to bring your work to the cutting tool whenever possible. It's safer to feed work against a stationary blade, rather than forcing it onto the work surface.

Use A Single Extension Cord. Use a single extension cord when using power tools at a distance longer than their attached cord allows. Make sure you're using a heavy enough cord to supply ample current at a distance.

Never Reach Over a Running Blade. Take the time and effort to reach around a running blade if you need to get behind it. Better yet, if something is that important, shut your tool off and stop the blade.

Minimize Distractions. Distractions can come from outside sources like a radio program or vehicle noise. The most distracting things in today's workshops is a cell phone. Leave your phone in a different room.

Ask For Help When You Need It. It's unsafe to try to complete tasks that are

beyond your physical limitations. You could suffer from serious injuries, such as accidental contact with a running blade or muscle strain causing a back pain.

Never Work When You□re Tired. Being tired is another form of impairment. Tiredness limits your attention span, as well as your powers of observation. Fatigue and drowsiness impair your judgment and slow your thought processes.

Clamp Workpieces Down Firmly. Always clamp workpieces down firmly. For small pieces, your hand pressure might be sufficient. But, for big components, make sure you use a mechanical restraint.

Take Time to Read the Tool Manual Before Using A New Tool. Manufacturers go to a lot of trouble to produce owner manuals. They do it because they want you to get full benefits from your purchase.

Clean Up Sawdust. Sawdust is an inevitable by-product in woodworking shops. But it is a safety hazard. You can slip on it, breathe it in and let the stuff block your vision.

Keep The Blade Cover on Saws Whenever Possible. If you have to remove a blade cover, make sure you do it safely. De-energize your tool, and keep your blade cover off only as long as necessary.

Do Not Try to Free A Stalled Blade Until The Power Is Off. Woodworkers know never to try freeing a stalled blade until the power is off. Energized tools can unexpectedly start and badly hurt you.

Use Push Sticks or Pads When Using A Table Saw, Bandsaw, Router Table. Push sticks and pads are finger and hand savers when you□re using a table saw, bandsaw, router table or sharpener.

Use Well-Maintained Tools. You□ll have a lot of benefits from using well-maintained tools. Besides lasting longer and performing better than worn equipment, well-maintained tools are safer.

Take A Training Course. Investing in your knowledge / Consider taking a training course.

Use Common Sense. Use common sense when woodworking. Slow down, pay attention and think about what you□re doing. Make sure you□re working sensibly.

FINAL WORD

Woodworking can be a safe and enjoyable hobby or vocation if you follow some basic woodworking safety rules. The wood shop is not the place to be in a hurry or have an “it won’t happen to me” attitude.