Power Tool Safety Tips

Power tools make a DIY home improvement project much easier and satisfying. Power tools can be used for cutting, drilling, painting, sanding, grinding, and more. They can be categorized as stationary or portable. A stationary tool like a table saw is one popular example of a power tool. There is no need for manual work, as a table saw works quicker and smoother than a handsaw. Examples of common portable power tools are chain saws, cordless drills, grinders, nail gun wood routers and many more. While power tools can make a project easier, faster, and more enjoyable, they can also be the cause of serious injuries. Safety with power tools is essential for any user to consider before ever turning the power tool on. The following power tool safety tips will help keep you safe so that your home improvement project has a positive and satisfying outcome.

Read all instructions: Read instruction manuals and know what tools should be used for that particular project. Using the wrong type of tool can damage the materials or injure you.

Use proper lighting: If the light is not bright enough, use extra lights to ensure you can see exactly what you are doing to prevent injury.

Handling power tools: Do not carry tools by their cords. When a tool is not being used, you should disconnect it. When you are handling tools that are plugged in, **keep your fingers away from the on/off switch.** Never disconnect a power by pulling on the cord--remove the plug from the outlet. Keep power tool cords away from heat, oil, sharp edges or moving parts and replace damaged cords immediately.

Inspect your tools regularly: Check them for exposed wires, damaged plugs and loose plug pins. For nicked cords, you can use electrical tape, but if the cut is deep, replace the cord. Hand and power tools safety is imperative to ensure a safe outcome of your project. Be sure to repair or replace damage tools.

Protect your eyes: ALWAYS wear eye protection, preferably impact resistant safety glasses. Wearing safety glasses prevents dust, metal/wood shavings, fiberglass, and other debris from getting into your eyes.

Protect your hearing: Minimize the damage to your hearing by investing in a pair of **earplugs**. Even the best power tools can be loud, especially in a garage or workshop environment.

Protect your body: Don't wear loose clothing or jewelry while using a power tool. Long hair should be tied back or tucked under a shirt collar. Keep body parts away from the moving parts of the power tool. Ideally, clothing that covers the entire body should be worn and heavy gloves should be used in order to avoid injury from sharp implements, splinters, and other debris. Use safety equipment such as a dust mask, non-skid safety shoes, and a hard hat for appropriate conditions.

Keep your work area clean: Maintaining a clean work area will help to reduce the accumulation of dust particles. Particles in the air can be ignited with a spark. Keep flammable liquids away from the power tools. Practice good housekeeping, as clutter can result in tangled cords, piles of debris, and accidents.

Use clamps when securing your work pieces to be cut or drilled. Take extra caution with more dangerous power tools such as miter saws and table saws. They should be used with a quick-release clamp and a wood push-through. Also, be very careful with nail guns and power belt sanders. These are dangerous tools and can be deadly if not used with caution.

Keep power tools away from people who are not familiar with power tool safety. Store power tools in a safe place, especially away from where children can reach.

Safety with power tools is important. Keep this in mind the next time you turn on your power tool for your next DIY project. For additional power tool safety information, view the DRI Machine Shop Safety Rules and Wood Shop Safety Rules available on the EH&S Programs webpage.

Sources:
ToolBoxTopics.com – Power Tool Tips
DIY-HQ – 10 Must Know Power Tools Safety Tips