

Hand and Portable Powered Tools – Hand Tools

Overview Of Topic

Subpart P of 29 CFR Part 1910 covers the use of hand and portable tools in general industry. The regulation covers general requirements and specifies guarding requirements for portable powered tools. Requirements for inspection and safe use are also included.

Employees should be properly trained in the correct use of the hand tools that they use and in how to protect themselves from tool hazards.

Tool hazards

Tools are such a common part of our lives that we forget that they may pose hazards. Employees may be exposed to hazards from dropped tools, from parts or chips flying off, or from flying grit from abrasive tools.

Tools made from good quality, durable materials will help your employees avoid injuries caused by tools breaking or slipping on the job. Metal tool parts should be strong enough to resist bending, cracking, chipping, or excessive wear.

Personal protective equipment

Using PPE should become a habit when using tools. Wear eye protection if there is a chance that chips, sparks, or debris could get into the eyes. Eye protection should be worn when using hammers, mallets, chisels, punches, or bolt cutters.

Employees can protect themselves from cuts while handling knives or materials with sharp edges by wearing cut-resistant gloves.

A job may also require foot protection, such as when using heavy tools like mauls and sledgehammers.

Tools should be inspected before and after each use. Look for tool damage or wear, such as:

- cracked or loose handles;
- dull, rounded, or chipped cutting surfaces;
- mushroomed striking surfaces;
- damage to gripping surfaces.

Reducing tool hazards

Hand tool hazards can be prevented by following these rules:

- Keep tools in good condition with regular maintenance.

- Use the right tool for the job.
- Examine each tool for damage before and after using.
- Use the tool the way it is designed to be used.
- Use the correct PPE as provided.

Employee Training

OSHA's regulations do not have specific employee training requirements in regards to hand tools. However, employees who understand the hazards and know how to inspect and use hand tools will have less risk of injury.

Training Tips

Review 29 CFR 1910 Subpart P.

Using the employee handout, review proper hand tool use.

Review inspection steps, and have examples of damaged tools for the employees to look at. Explain how to take tools out of service if they are damaged.

Ask employees for any experiences they may have had with tool-related injuries.

Where To Go For More Information

29 CFR 1910 Subpart P—Hand and portable powered tools and other hand-help equipment