



Safe Use of Hand Tools

Tools have always been indispensable helpmates, and a good set of hand tools is essential for any farm shop, machinery or facility repair. Unfortunately, tools also contribute to countless injuries when used incompetently.

- Use the correct tool for the job.
- Keep tools in good condition. Handles should be tight and free from defect. Cutting tools should be kept sharp. Wedges and punches should be free from "mushroom heads".
- Use and maintain power tools according to their instructions.
- Make sure power tools are properly grounded or are double insulated. Never cut the three-prong plug off or use a two prong adapter.
- Switch off and unplug power tools before changing blades or servicing and repairing.
- Wear clothing with no strings or loose ends to catch on things.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as glasses, goggles, dust masks, face shields, hearing protection, etc.
- Keep bystanders at a safe distance.
- Keep all guards and shields in place. Learn to use a "push stick" with table saws.
- Unplug and put tools away after use. Consider locking out power tools to prevent others from using them without permission, especially young children.

Inspection

- Are tools in safe condition?
- Are instruction manuals available?
- Are power tools properly grounded?
- Are guards and shields in place?
- Is PPE available?
- Are tools put away and properly stored?

Information supplied by the National Safety Council's Agricultural Division, the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS) – www.necasag.org or 888-844-6322.