

Hand Tools – Power Tools Field Training

OSHA 1926.300 is where you find the regulations that cover hand tools and power tools.

This section covers the general use of every typical tool you have from hammers to saws and drills.

1. When must you inspect a tool, any tool? The correct answer is just before you use it. OSHA requires you to inspect any tool of any type just before you use it. We say this all the time because it is required for anything you use. PPE, extension cords, tools, hammers, ladders, safety vests, compactors, backhoes, any equipment, in other words “EVERYTHING” must be inspected just before you use it.
2. All tools are required to be maintained in a safe condition. It must operate exactly as it was designed by the manufacturer. No damaged parts or items that don't quite operate like new.
3. You cannot alter, change, modify, or cause the tool to operate differently than the way it was designed.
4. All guards must be in place. You cannot remove a guard or cause it to not operate exactly as it was designed.
5. Personal protective equipment must be worn. Safety glasses must be worn to protect your eyes but, in many cases, you may need a face shield. For an example a face shield is required when doing any type of grinding.
6. Handheld powered drills, grinders, saber saws, and such must have a momentary contact “on-off” switch. Pull the trigger and it starts, take your finger off and it stops. Some may have a mechanical lock button so that it stays on, but you must be able to stop it with a single pull of the trigger.
7. All tools like circular saws, chain saws and percussion tools shall be equipped with a constant pressure switch that will shut off the power when pressure is released. You cannot tie or tape the trigger in the on position. They are not allowed to have a lock button like a drill.
8. Power cords must be in like new condition – no missing plug parts, no cuts or removed insulation. The insulation cannot be pulled away from the plug.

9. **Hammers with damaged, cracked, or loose handles cannot be used until they are repaired. Hammers with damaged or cracked metal faces must not be used. A chip can break off and hit you. In some cases, we may be able to grind a smooth surface on your hammer head in the shop.**
10. **Mushroomed heads on chisels must be repaired before use. Again, this is to keep a piece of metal from breaking off and hitting you. Take them to our shop and ask for them to be cleaned up on the grinder.**
11. **Saw blades should be kept sharp. This keeps them from grabbing the lumber and pulling the saw into your hand or body. It also helps stop splintering. Wearing safety glasses can help with the splinters but they can never eliminate the hazard.**
12. **Drill bits are just like saw blades. They work best when sharp. When dull they can grab and pull the drill out of your hands.**
13. **Avoid plugging too many items into an extension cord. A saw and a drill are about the maximum a typical extension cord will handle. You can cause the cord to overheat and start a fire, you can cause failure in the cord and get shocked, or you can burn up your tool. Tools are designed to operate at full power, having too many tools plugged in the same cord can reduce the power and damage the tool.**
14. **It is very important to always tag-out a defective or damaged tool. DO NOT JUST PUT IT BACK IN THE TRUCK. If OSHA finds a defective tool in the truck and it does not have a tag saying, "do not use", they will write us a citation. Even if it is waiting to be repaired, tag it out.**
15. **If you use your own personal tools, they must meet the same rules and regulations. Every employer is required to ensure personal tools are in like new condition.**