# Hand and power tools safety toolbox talk

29 CFR 1926.300, 1926.301, 1926.302, 1910.242

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

**Opening question**

**What is the most beat-up tool on this job right now, and why is it still in use?**

## Why it matters

Tools are in our hands all day, so it is easy to stop thinking about them. A cracked handle, a missing guard or a damaged cord can lead to cuts, eye injuries, burns or shocks in a split second. A quick check before you start catches these problems before they hurt someone.

## Key points

1. **Check every tool before you use it**
   All hand and power tools must be kept in a safe condition, whether the company or the worker supplies them. Before each use, look for cracked or loose handles, mushroomed heads, frayed cords and missing parts. If a tool is damaged, tag it out and turn it in. Tape is not a repair.
   29 CFR 1926.300(a)

2. **Use the right hand tool, and keep it in shape**
   Use the right tool for the job. A screwdriver is not a pry bar and a wrench is not a hammer. Impact tools like chisels, wedges and drift pins must be kept free of mushroomed heads, which can throw chips when struck. Store tools clean and dry, with sharp edges covered.
   29 CFR 1926.301(c)

3. **Guards stay on**
   When a power tool is designed to take a guard, it must have that guard on whenever it is in use. Never pin back a saw guard or remove a grinder guard to make a job easier. If a guard is missing, broken or sticking, the tool is out of service until it is fixed.
   29 CFR 1926.300(b)(1)

4. **Respect the cord and the plug**
   Electric power tools must be double-insulated or grounded. Check cords for cuts and plugs for damage, and never use a grounded plug with the ground pin cut off. Never carry, hoist or lower a tool by its cord, and unplug it before changing blades, bits or accessories.
   29 CFR 1926.302(a)(1)

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### 5 Wear the PPE the job calls for

Workers using tools who are exposed to flying, falling or abrasive objects, or to harmful dust, fumes or vapors, must be given the PPE needed to protect them. For most tool work, plan on safety glasses at a minimum, with a face shield over them for grinding or chipping. Add hearing protection, gloves or a respirator when the task calls for it.

29 CFR 1926.300(c)

### 6 Compressed air is not a duster

Never blow dust off your skin or clothes with compressed air. In general industry, compressed air may be used for cleaning only when it is reduced to less than 30 p.s.i., and then only with effective chip guarding and PPE. Construction has the same rule, but the 30 p.s.i. limit does not apply to cleaning concrete forms, mill scale and similar work (29 CFR 1926.302(b)(4)). Use a brush or a vacuum instead whenever you can.

29 CFR 1910.242(b)

## Scenario

Picture this: it is late in the day and one cut is left. The lower guard on the circular saw keeps sticking, so a worker wedges it open to finish faster. The blade binds, the saw kicks back, and with the guard pinned open there is nothing between the blade and the worker's leg. What should have happened the first time that guard stuck?

## Crew discussion

1. Which tools on this job are worn, damaged or missing a guard right now?
2. Where do we tag out and turn in a damaged tool, and who replaces it?
3. What PPE does the work we are doing this week call for?
4. Are there personal tools on site that nobody has checked?

**Bottom line** **If a tool is damaged or missing a guard, it does not get used until it is fixed or replaced.**

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# Sign-in sheet / Hoja de asistencia

Topic / Tema Hand and power tools / Herramientas manuales y eléctricas

Date / Fecha _____

Trainer / Instructor _____ Location / Lugar _____ Company / Empresa _____

| # | Name<br>Nombre | Signature<br>Firma | Company<br>Empresa | Date<br>Fecha |
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Trainer signature / Firma del instructor _____ Time / Hora _____

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