

Power Tools: Check, Guard, and Control

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

PRESENTED BY

Saws, grinders, and nail guns can injure the person using them and anyone nearby. On construction crews, tools often change hands between tasks. A quick check, working guards, and control of the work area help keep a routine task from becoming an injury.

Check before starting

- Every tool must be kept in safe condition, whether it belongs to the employer or a worker. Before use, look for damage, loose parts, and missing guards.
- Check the saw or grinder guard before starting. A tool designed for a guard must have that guard installed during use. Do not remove it to make a cut easier.
- If a tool looks damaged or does not work normally, stop and tell the foreman. Set it aside so another worker does not pick it up and use it.

Protect hands and nearby workers

- Guards must protect against moving parts, flying chips, and sparks. Check where those hazards could reach before cutting or grinding, including where other workers are standing.
- Keep hands out of the area where the blade or wheel works on the material. Arrange the work so you do not have to reach into that danger area.
- A tool used to position or remove material can help keep hands clear. It does not replace a required guard. If protection is missing, stop rather than improvise.

Control air-powered tools

- Secure air tools to their hoses with a connection that prevents accidental separation. Check that retaining clips on pneumatic impact tools are installed and secure so attachments cannot fly out.
- Never exceed the manufacturer's safe operating pressure for hoses and fittings. Never lift or lower a tool by its hose. Report damaged hoses or loose connections before use.
- Automatic-feed air nailers operating above 100 psi at the tool must have a muzzle safety device that prevents firing unless the muzzle touches the work. Keep that device working; never bypass it.

Know powder-actuated tools

- These fastening tools use a powder charge, not compressed air. Only workers trained on the particular tool may operate it. Test its safety devices each day before loading, following the manufacturer's procedure.
- Load only just before firing. Never point a loaded or empty tool at anyone, and keep hands away from the open barrel. Never leave a loaded tool unattended.
- Use the recommended shield, guard, or attachment. Do not fire into prohibited hard or brittle materials, such as glass block or glazed tile. Remove a defective tool from service immediately.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You receive an air nailer with its muzzle safety device held back. A coworker says it makes fastening faster. What would you do before anyone uses it?

Questions for the crew

1. What tool defects would make you stop and report?
2. How do guards protect people besides the operator?
3. Who may operate a powder-actuated tool?

| Check the tool, keep its protection working, and stop when something is unsafe.

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.300, General requirements; 29 CFR 1926.302, Power-operated hand tools

Drafted with AI for review by a competent person. Clever Rook writes from the official regulation text it cites, but it doesn't know your site. Check it against your conditions and your company's safety program before use. Not legal advice.

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REVIEWED BY (COMPETENT PERSON)

REVIEW DATE

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