



Express Eddie's Toolbox



The Hidden Dangers of Hand Tools

A [hand tool](#) is defined as an item that is manually powered to complete a task, and includes axes, chisels, and hammers. Hand tools are used in construction, manufacturing, agriculture, and many other industries.

Using hand tools can cause arm, elbow, hand, shoulder, and wrist injuries, including abrasions, bruises, cuts, strains, and scratches. Injuries to the eyes, face, head, and other parts of the body are also possible. Always keep a first aid kit on site in case of injury.



To help avoid hand tool injuries:

- Use the right tool for the task. Avoid using a wrench as a hammer, a chisel as a screwdriver, or pliers as a wrench, and use the correct size tool.
- Maintain tools in good condition and regularly inspect hand tools for dullness, chips, splits and cracks.
- Cut away from the body and co-workers when using a knife or chisel.
- Wear [work gloves](#) to protect hands and provide a secure grip.
- Use hard hats when on a lower level, below other workers using any kind of tool, and to help prevent injury from flying and broken tools.
- [Safety glasses](#) protect the eyes from impact, flying chips, splinters, and broken screwdriver or chisel tips.
- Try new ergonomically designed hand tools to help reduce strain caused by working in tight spaces, applying high forces, awkward positioning of the body, and repetitive motion.

Consider the following when evaluating possible ways to improve hand tool safety at the workplace:

- Determine the possible hazards of the hand tools being used.
- Train new workers and provide refresher courses to experienced employees about possible hand tool hazards, how to recognize hazards, what safety precautions to take, and how to properly inspect and use hand tools.
- Include training on [first aid kit](#) locations and what to do in the event of an injury.
- Explain to workers why safety products should be used with hand tools and how to properly use the protective equipment provided.

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Work together and discuss the hazards of hand tools with employees to help limit health risks. Team contributions when reviewing work methods and the use of ergonomic hand tools can be a very positive experience and help reduce injuries from repeated movements, using excessive force, and poor positioning of the body.

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