

Spot the Safety Violations: Is This a Safe Way to Operate a Circular Saw?



Is This a Safe Way to Operate a Circular Saw'

Show this photo to your workers and ask them to point out all the things the worker using this handheld circular saw is doing wrong



Safe Use of Handheld Circular Saws

Of all the dangerous things the worker is doing, using his legs to brace the board he's cutting is the one that should most alarm your audience.

The Moral: Warn your workers not to use portable circular saws, or any other portable powered cutting tool for that matter, unless they:

- Wear safety glasses to protect their eyes from dust and wood chips—those eyeglasses aren't doing the worker any good dangling from his shirt;
- Use hearing and head protection; and
- Use a proper platform to cut the object—legs don't count as a proper platform!

3 Reasons to Pay Attention

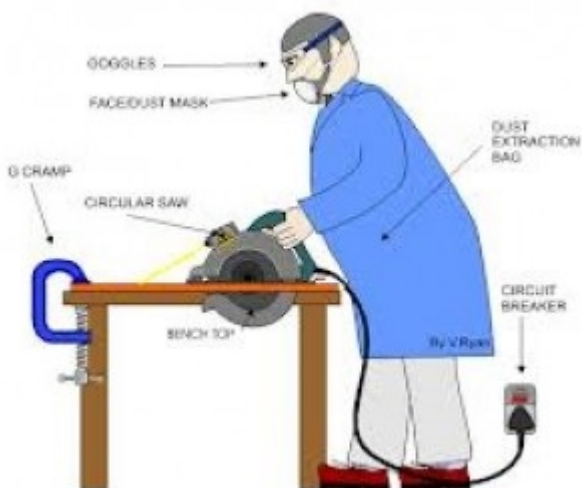
Let your workers know what's at stake by making the following three short but powerful points:

1. Each year, an average of over 10,000 workers suffer serious circular saw injuries
2. Almost all of these injuries are preventable
3. The one thing that would prevented the most injuries: using the saw properly

3 Hazards to Watch Out For

Having captured the audience's attention, point out the common hazards posed by operating a handheld circular saw and the steps they can take to protect themselves:

1. **Point of Operation Hazards:** You can get hurt if your hands slip or you get too close to the saw during cutting.



Prevention strategy: Keep your hands out of the line of the cut.

2. **Flying Particles:** Wood chips, splinters and broken saw teeth may be thrown off by the blade's cutting action.



Prevention strategy: Use proper eye and face protection.

3. **Kickback:** When the blade catches the stock, it may be thrown back toward the operator.



Prevention strategy: Keep the blade sharp, use the saw at the speed the manufacturer recommends and properly support the stock being cut—remember, using your legs is not a proper means of support!

8 Circular Saw Operation Do's and Don'ts

Finally, list some basic DO's and DON'Ts of operating a handheld circular saw:

- **DO** use the proper blade for cutting action—for example, don't use crosscut blades for ripping
- **DON'T** use the saw at speeds the manufacturer says are

unsafe

- **DO** maintain and sharpen the blade
- **DON'T** use saws to cut stock that isn't properly braced
- **DO** use eye and face protection when operating the saw
- **DON'T** use saws if the blade is cracked
- **DO** direct the saw blade away from the aisle and any people who are near the saw
- **DON'T** use a saw if it doesn't have an upper guard that covers the entire blade and a lower guard that's retractable