

General do it yourself safety comments

[Safety do's](#) - [Safety don'ts](#)

The home can be a highly dangerous area so every diy'er needs to take some precaution and, more importantly, use common sense. The following are some basic principles for the do it yourself person.

Do's

- Always keep safety in mind before you do any diy activity, use caution, care, and good judgement - if in doubt, don't !
- Always read the labels on cans containing paints, solvents, and other products; AND always follow the guidelines and any other warnings.
- Always read the manufacturer's instructions (especially the warnings) before using any tool, especially power tools with cutting blades/bits.
- Always pay deliberate attention to how a tool works, if you understand it's operation, you are less likely to cause injury.
- Always know and accept the limitations of your tools - use the appropriate tool for the task. Do not try to use a tool for anything it is not designed to do.
- Always remove the key from any drill chuck (hand or stand mounted) after you have removed/fitted a drill bit. Do not leave the key in the chuck even when the drill is switched off.
- Always wear the appropriate protection for the job in hand. This may involve gloves, facemasks (to filter dust etc.) and/or eye protection.
- Always keep your body (especially hands) away from the business ends of power tools using blades, cutters, and bits.
- Always make sure that any tool adjustment is secured before using the tool - it is always better to double check an adjustment - e.g., always check the fence on a saw bench - this will avoid possible injury and scraped material.
- Always be sure that the electrical supply is safe before using it; do not overload any circuit. Make sure all power tools, extension cables and electrical outlets are serviceable and undamaged. Do not use power tools in wet conditions.
- Always check for possible cables/pipework before drilling or cutting 'blind' into any wall or other surface. Take care when you cannot see the reverse side of what you are drilling or cutting.
- Always use special care when using a saw bench; older benches may not have the latest safest features (blade guard, safety cut-out etc.). Avoid sawing short pieces if you can, as these can be hard to keep a firm grip of..
- Always clamp small workpieces firmly to a bench or other work surface when using a power tool on them.
- Always remember that things can go wrong very quickly and the body's reaction will not always be quick enough.
- Always use both hands where a tool is designed to be used two handed.
- Always ensure that the work area is adequately lit.
- Always check your local building regulations before carrying out any new construction or major remodelling. The regulations are intended to avoid safety hazards and should be observed - they should not be considered obstructions to be circumvented.
- Always check ladders and steps before use, make sure the rungs and sides are undamaged.
- Always check the security of a ladder or set of steps before you start to climb.
- Always be aware and alert!

Don'ts

- Never wear loose clothing, hanging hair or jewellery when using power tools.
- Never try to use a tool (especially a power tool) for any task it was not designed to do.
- Never work with power tools when you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs or are tired. If in doubt - don't. Any of these factors can impair judgement of your ability, your physical state and general safety aspects - it's always better to delay a job than risk serious injury.
- Never use a power tool which is damaged in any way (case, switch or cable etc.). If it starts to make an odd noise or emit smells - stop and investigate.
- Never cut small, loose pieces of wood, metal or other material using a power tool - small off-cuts which you cannot hold or secure, will tend to fly off with potential for injury.
- Never change a drill bit, router cutter or saw blade or make any adjustment to a 'cutting' power tool - until the power cable has been unplugged. Do not rely only upon the switch on the tool or outlet.
- Never use power tools if you are at risk of overbalancing, reposition any ladder, scaffold etc. to make the job comfortable.
- Never work with blunt tools (saws, drill bits, cutters etc.). Sharpen the tools yourself, have them sharpened, or throw them away and use a new tool.
- Never use a power tool on a workpiece which is not firmly secured.
- Never drill or cut 'blind' into a surface before checking the possible location of electrical cables or pipework.
- Never saw a large workpiece unless it is well supported both sides of the cut or there is someone else to support the off-cut.
- Never saw a workpiece supported on any part of your body (or anyone else's body!).
- Never carry sharp tools in your pocket. If you want to carry such tools, use a special-purpose tool belt.
- Never rely on your weight to stabilise a ladder or mobile steps, if necessary get someone to stand at the bottom or use stabilisers.
- Never overreach when working on a ladder or steps, always re-position the ladder/steps.