



Hazard
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Supplement: Unintentional cutting and piercing injury in the home

Safety tips for operation of power tools, knives and lawn mowers

Safety tips for power tool use and care

Design

- Incorporate earth leakage detection units into the lead on all power tools to prevent electrocution

Safe work practices

- Keep safety guards in place during operation of power tools
- Keep work areas dry, clean and clear of debris
- Follow manufacturers' operating instructions
- Make all necessary adjustments to powered machines before switching them on and stop machines before making further adjustments
- Use the most appropriate tool for the task at hand
- Use tools of the correct size
- Keep tools clean, free of debris and well maintained
- Maintain proper footing and balance and avoid over-reaching or forcing power tools
- Clear the working area of bystanders, particularly children

Personal protective equipment

- Choose personal protective equipment that is comfortable and the correct fit
- Wear personal protective equipment appropriate for the task
- Protective eyewear should be: comfortable; size adjustable (no gaps between frame and face); scratch and fog resistant; able to fit with or without corrective glasses
- Gloves should fit comfortably while maintaining sufficient control over finger movement
- Wear non-slip footwear with nail resistant soles and steel caps, where appropriate
- Wear hearing protection, where appropriate



Safety tips for knife use, care and storage

Correct use

- Use the correct sharp knife for the job, when in doubt opt for a larger knife.
- Always hold a knife by the handle.
- Make all cutting strokes away from your other hand and body, never towards you.
- Always let the knife do the work, never force the blade.
- The correct working height is important; the wrist should be in a neutral position when cutting. Adjustable cutting boards are available.
- Avoid holding vegetables in your hand to cut or remove the skin if possible. Place on a chopping board and cut the skin off by cutting down onto the board.
- The thumb and forefinger should be kept behind the heel of the knife, not extended onto the blade.
- The food to be cut should be held with the fingers slightly bent back so the knuckles touch the flat blade of the knife to help guide the cutting. As the food is cut the thumb carefully pushes it forward under the action of the knife. This technique requires practise.
- The point of the knife should always remain on the board while chopping, always cut large or harder foods and bones with the heel (widest part) of the blade of a cook's knife. Frozen or partly thawed food should not be cut.

- A carving fork, which has a protrusion below the handle to prevent the knife slipping up the blade, should be used when carving meat.
- Use an appropriate cutting surface, wood or composite cutting boards are recommended. Cutting on metal, glass or marble surfaces dulls and damages the knife.
- Use a knife only for its intended purpose, do not use a knife to prise apart frozen food, open bottles, loosen drawers etc.
- When passing a knife to someone, lay it down on the work surface and let the other person pick it up.
- Do not allow the knife blade to extend over the edge of a table or cutting board
- Do not try to save a falling knife, allow the knife to fall to the floor, and then pick it up.
- Install good overhead lighting over benches used for cutting tasks

Correct care

- **Keep knives sharp**, a sharp knife performs better and is safer as less pressure is required to cut through the food. When too much pressure is applied, there is the possibility of the knife slipping and causing injury.
- **Keep knives clean**, wash thoroughly between uses to prolong the life of the knife and between cutting tasks (e.g. between cutting meat and other foods) to de-grease blade and handle and prevent food cross contamination.

- **Always wash knives by dipping them in dishwasher or under a running tap**, wipe the handle and blade with a soapy sponge or cloth and dry immediately with a soft towel to prevent corrosion. Never leave a knife soaking in the sink or on a draining board, the risk of someone cutting themselves in these circumstances is increased.
- **Never put a sharp knife in the dishwasher**, it can damage the blade, shrink wooden handles and presents a hazard when loading and unloading dishes.
- **Wear covered shoes** when using a sharp knife (never thongs or bare feet).
- **Get knife professionally sharpened** unless you are trained in the use of sharpening tools.

Correct storage

Store all sharp knives safely out of reach of children:

- in a wooden knife block OR
- in a special knife drawer fitted with two parallel magnets (to hold knives securely) and a child-resistant drawer fastener OR
- in scabbards in a kitchen drawer or cupboard fitted with a child-resistant fastener OR
- in a knife rack fitted into a high cupboard (one with a child-resistant latch if there are children around the house) OR
- on a wall-mounted magnetic holder out of the reach of children, provided the magnet is strong enough to hold the heaviest knife (two parallel magnets may be needed).

Safety tips for lawnmower use

- Consistently follow the instructions in manufacturers' guides.
- Wear protective clothing (eye protection, work boots with slip resistant soles, gloves and ear muffs).
- Keep hands clear of blades whenever the engine is running or the blades are moving.
- Shut down mower engine, remove spark plug and wait for blades to

stop circling before adjusting the mower in any way, unclogging the blades or blade area or carrying the mower.

- Remove stones and other debris from the area before commencing mowing and clear bystanders, especially children, from the area being mowed.
- Do not mow wet grass.
- Do not pull mower backwards.

- Refuel mower out-of-doors and well away from open fires and cigarettes.
- Use a portable safety switch when using an electric mower and take special care never to use an electric mower near water or when it is raining, and never pull it backwards.
- Do not allow passengers on ride-on lawn mowers

