

Toolbox talk

Year-round

5 minutes

Hand and Power Tool Toolbox Talk

Inspect tools before use, keep guards in place and working, replace mushroomed heads and dull blades, use the right tool for the task, and pull damaged tools from service immediately.

READ ALOUD (ABOUT 5 MINUTES)

Tools get used hard, and tools that get used hard wear out. The five seconds you spend looking at a tool before using it is the cheapest safety control on this site.

Look for the classics: mushroomed chisel and punch heads that shed steel fragments, split or loose handles, dull blades that force you to push harder, guards that are missing, wedged, or tied back, and power cords with damaged jackets or missing ground pins.

Use the tool the task calls for - a wrench is not a hammer and a screwdriver is not a pry bar. And when a tool fails inspection, it comes out of service now, tagged, not put back in the gang box for the next person to discover the hard way.

INCIDENT EXAMPLE

A laborer struck a mushroomed chisel head with a framing hammer. A steel sliver broke off, went through the gap above his glasses, and lodged under his eyebrow - an inch from being an eye injury. The chisel head had been visibly mushroomed for weeks.

CONTROLS TO COVER

- Inspect every tool before use - heads, handles, blades, guards, cords.
- Never remove, wedge, or tie back guards.
- Replace mushroomed heads, dull blades, and split handles.
- Tag damaged tools and remove them from service immediately.

CREW DISCUSSION

1. Which tools on this crew get the hardest use and wear out fastest?
2. Where do tagged-out tools go on this site so they are not reused?
3. What task today tempts someone to use the wrong tool to save a trip?

QUICK QUIZ

1. Why is a mushroomed chisel head dangerous?
The deformed steel can shatter and throw fragments when struck.
2. Can a guard be tied back for a tricky cut?
No. Guards stay in place and functional for every cut.
3. A tool fails inspection mid-shift. What happens?
It is tagged and removed from service immediately - not returned to the gang box.

Reference: 29 CFR 1926.300 and 1926.301 - Hand and power tool injuries cut across every trade, and most trace back to damaged tools, missing guards, or the wrong tool for the task.

Toolbox Talk Sign-In Sheet

Attendance record for the talk above. Reviewers (OSHA, GC, ISNetworld/Avetta) expect topic, date, presenter identity, and attendee signatures.

Project / location

Date and time

Topic: Hand and Power Tool Toolbox Talk

Presenter (print)

Presenter signature

NAME (PRINT)	COMPANY / TRADE	SIGNATURE

Concerns raised and follow-up actions (owner, due date)