

Annual Shop Safety Checklist

The purpose of this list is to help make your shop experience safer and more fun by encouraging proper use of tools in a clean, well-organized environment.

GENERAL SHOP LAYOUT

Is there adequate work space around each machine tool?
Move less used machine tools to the garage / storage room to increase work space.
Put plumbing tools in one place, electrical in another, carpentry in another, etc.
Add lockable wheels to less used machine tools to maximize available space.

LIGHTING, ELECTRICAL

Is overall lighting (fluorescent OK) bright enough to easily find dropped items?
Are there task lights (non-fluorescent best) over machine tools and workbenches?
Add extra 120v and 240v outlets on walls, floor and ceiling drops as needed.
Are all machine tools grounded with convenient easy-off switches?
Eliminate electrical cords on the floor and across benches.
Is there at least one window for light and observing the passage of day?

HEATING–VENTILATION, AIR CONDITIONING

Add or upgrade the HVAC unit to encourage year-round use.
Add extra filtration over standard filter to save clogging HVAC unit.
Install additional insulation to doors (use fiberglass bat or foam board),
and windows (use double glazing, or clear plastic).

DUST COLLECTION, NOISE CONTROL

Switch filters to micron sized to eliminate very fine dust.
Clean entire shop with special attention to removing dust from motors,
the garage door chain drive and exposed insulation.
Move sawdust collection system and air compressor outside shop to decrease noise.
Add automatic gates to sawdust collection system to increase efficiency.

WOOD STORAGE

Add shelving beneath workbenches and tool stands.
Secure all wood from falling and label it as to type and size.
Stand long boards in a corner or on shelving near the ceiling in shop, attic or garage.
Small blocks fit well in drawers, on low shelving or in cardboard boxes.
Use open ceiling joist space as shelves by fastening strips or boards across joists.

FLOORS

Remove/repair uneven surfaces and dust catching areas.
Place a fatigue mat beside your lathe(s)?
Remove anything which could cause tripping or stumbling.

(over)

Annual Shop Safety Checklist (continued)

WALLS

Add pegboard, shelving brackets, and/or tool holders to all walls.
Paint walls/ceiling a light color to increase lighting and attractiveness.

FINISH APPLICATION AND CURING AREA

Establish a separate area for applying finish to your work, if possible.
Use five sided (open bottom) boxes to keep dust off freshly finished items.
Are flammable liquids stored in a metal cabinet?
Is there a closed metal container for oily rags?

POWER TOOLS (Machine and Hand Held)

Lubricate bearings; remove rust and wax metal surfaces, e.g. lathe bed.
File lathe tool rest smooth, check for alignment and damaged parts.
Replace worn drive belts, add belt guards.
Inspect all tool cords, repairing or replacing worn ones.

HAND TOOLS

Sharpen or replace frequently used drill bits.
Sharpen chisels, regrind screwdrivers, oil pliers, wrenches, etc.
Replenish your supply of sand paper and sanding discs.

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Clean and/or replace safety goggles, face shields, and magnifiers, etc.
Replace dust mask with an improved one.
Use a bug bomb to kill spiders/vermin in all nooks and crannies of the shop.
Add a desk for planning projects with a comfortable chair for reading.
Update and restock First Aid Kit.
Recharge Fire Extinguishers.
Label all drawers, cabinets, and storage boxes to reduce searching.
Put all tools, wood and accessories in their proper places.

SHOP CONVENIENCE ITEMS

Add a telephone.
Add a plumbed or chemical toilet.
Add work sink, even if it drains only to the yard.
Add a 36" tall, wheeled cart to hold gouges, calipers, etc. beside your lathes.
Add drawer units, file cabinets, wall and base cabinets for part & tool storage.
Use strong rare-earth magnets on tool bases to hold often used wrenches, rules, etc.
Purchase a Reach-and-Grab tool to prevent climbing and bending over too much.