



Table Saw

Safety

Tool Box Talk

Table saws are among the most frequently used cutting tools on the jobsite. Most table saw injuries occur due to kickback, contact with the blade, or flying debris. By following proper inspection, setup, and operation procedures, operators can drastically reduce their risk of serious injury.

Pre-Use Inspection

Conduct a full inspection before operating the table saw:

- **Check the battery** – Ensure there is no damage to casing and charged.
- **Inspect the blade** – Confirm the blade is sharp, clean, properly aligned, and securely tightened.
- **Test safety features** – Verify that the blade guard, riving knife, and anti-kickback pawls are in place and working properly.
- **Check for loose bolts and parts** – Tighten as needed.
- **Check alignment** – Ensure the fence and miter gauge are square and locked.
- **Verify dust collection** – Ensure the saw table and stand are secure and level.

If any defects are found, remove the tool from service until repaired.

Check the Area Before Cutting

- **Inspect your surroundings** – Clear clutter, cords, and scrap wood from the cutting zone. Ensure adequate lighting and ventilation.
- **Confirm electrical safety** – Avoid using the saw in wet or damp conditions.
- **Plan your cut path** – Ensure no obstructions behind or under the workpiece.
- **Keep bystanders clear** – Maintain a safe distance of at least 10 feet.
- **Check dust extraction zone** – Avoid standing in the path of ejected debris.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Always read manual and follow site/company operating procedures

- **Eye protection** – Safety glasses or face shield to protect from sawdust and debris.
- **Hearing protection** – Earplugs or earmuffs to reduce exposure to high noise levels.
- **Dust mask or respirator** – Especially when cutting MDF, plywood, or treated lumber.
- **No loose clothing, jewelry, or gloves** – These can catch on moving parts.
- **Proper footwear** – Safety toe, non-slip boots for stable footing.

Safer Operation

- **Set blade height** – Adjust the blade so teeth extend no more than 1/4 inch above the workpiece.
- **Maintain a firm stance** – Stand to the side of the blade path, not directly behind it.
- **Use push sticks or push blocks** – Keep hands at least 6 inches from the blade.
- **Feed material smoothly** – Avoid forcing the workpiece; maintain steady pressure.
- **Never reach over or behind the blade** – Wait until it stops completely.
- **Do not remove guards or safety devices** – They are essential for protection.
- **Disconnect power before adjustments** – Remove battery before changing the blade or cleaning.
- **Use proper dust extraction** – Helps visibility and reduces respiratory hazards.
- **Stay focused** – Never operate the saw when tired, distracted, or under medication.
- **Use the right Blade for the Task!!** – Make sure the speed marked on the blade is at least as high as the no load RPM marked on the tool. Know your Workpiece.
- **Cut only wood, wood-like, or plastic materials** – Do not cut metal. Avoid cutting small pieces of material which cannot be properly secured.
- **Make sure wood is dry before cutting** – Wet wood produces higher friction against the blade. Also the blade tends to load up with wet sawdust, creating a greater probability of kickback.
- **Always use the miter gauge or rip fence** – To ensure a straight cut. Do not cut “freehand”.
- **Respect the blade** – Every cut requires focus. Even a small lapse in attention can result in severe injury. Always follow safe setup, operation, and maintenance practices.