

Hand tools are used every day in our line of work. If you're a carpenter your tools include hammers, saws, framing squares, plumbs, etc. If you're a concrete finisher you will have trowels, bull floats, a finishing broom, etc. The list goes on and on for each type of trade. All these tools help you accomplish your work.

Maintaining Hand Tools

- Keep wooden handles tightly secured in or on the tool and replace broken or cracked handles immediately.
- Keep cutting edges sharp and protect those sharp edges when carrying or storing the tool.
- Clean and inspect your tools frequently.
- Look for chips, cracks, or other wear, which could cause the tool to fail.
- If tools are damaged or defective take it out of service and have it repaired or replaced immediately.

Hand Tool Use

- Never carry a sharp pointed tool in your pocket.
- When using a wrench, pull it, don't push it.
- If you're cutting with a knife or chisel, always cut away from yourself.
- Carry tools in a pouch or tool belt or use a hand line to raise and lower them, when going up or down a ladder.
- Always use the right personal protective gear for the job ... eye protection, gloves, face shield, etc.

All hand tools are designed to perform specific tasks. If you misuse them, for example: using a wrench as a hammer, a screwdriver as a pry bar, or a nail hammer to strike a chisel you increase your chance of injury. Each time you use a tool incorrectly you're taking a chance, and sooner or later you're going to be injured. Injuries often occur when we don't think about the "what ifs." Always use the right tool for the job and use it SAFELY.

Questions for Discussion

- What type of hand tools do you use at work?
- Has anyone ever had an accident while working with hand tools? How could the accident been avoided.

Presenter tips

- Pre-read the Toolbox Talk. Your comfort level and confidence will be higher if you know your topic.
- Discuss related tasks, work areas or events that make the Toolbox Talk relevant to your job site.
- Involve the workers by asking questions and input that drives discussion.