

DIY SAFETY

DIY DO'S

- ✓ Keep safety in mind before you do any DIY activity, use caution, care, and good judgment – if in doubt, don't!
- ✓ Read the labels on cans containing paints, solvents, and other products; AND always follow the guidelines and any other warnings. If in doubt request safety data sheets from the supplier.
- ✓ Read the manufacturer's instructions (especially the warnings) before using any tool, especially power tools with cutting blades/bits.
- ✓ Pay deliberate attention to how a tool works; if you understand its operation, you are less likely to cause injury.
- ✓ Know and accept the limitations of your tools – use the appropriate tool for the task. Do not try to use a tool for anything it is not designed to do.
- ✓ Remove the key from any drill chuck (hand or stand mounted) after you have removed/fitted a drill bit. Do not leave the key in the chuck even when the drill is switched off.
- ✓ Wear the appropriate protection for the job in hand.
- ✓ Keep your body (especially hands) away from the business ends of power tools using blades, cutters, and bits.
- ✓ Make sure that any tool adjustment is secured before using the tool.
- ✓ Be sure that the electrical supply is safe before using it; do not overload any circuit.

- ✓ Make sure all power tools, extension cables and electrical outlets are serviceable and undamaged.
- ✓ Do not use power tools in wet conditions. Always use a Residual Current Device (RCD).
- ✓ Check for possible cables/pipework before drilling or cutting 'blind' into any wall or other surface. Take care when you cannot see the reverse side of what you are drilling or cutting.
- ✓ Use special care when using a saw bench; older benches may not have the latest safest features (blade guard, safety cut-out etc.).
- ✓ Clamp small work pieces firmly to a bench or work surface when using a power tool on them.
- ✓ Remember that things can go wrong very quickly and the body's reaction will not always be quick enough.
- ✓ Use both hands where a tool is designed to be used two handed.
- ✓ Ensure that your work area is adequately lit.
- ✓ Check your local building regulations before carrying out any new construction or remodeling.
- ✓ Plan your project thoroughly. Draw plans and measure accurately.
- ✓ Check the security and rating of a ladder or set of steps before you start to climb.
- ✓ Ask for help from experienced people or handy family and friends.
- ✓ Ensure that you have the right tools, equipment and know-how.

DIY DONT'S

- ✗ Don't attempt a project that you know is too big for you – or requires expertise.
- ✗ Don't turn down advice from those in the know.
- ✗ Take risks or use tools that you are unfamiliar with.
- ✗ Cut corners to save time and money.
- ✗ Underestimate the value of preparation.
- ✗ Use inferior materials.
- ✗ Overestimate your abilities if you are new to the world of DIY.
- ✗ Never wear loose clothing, hanging hair or jewellery when using power tools.
- ✗ Never try to use a tool (especially a power tool) for any task it was not designed to do.
- ✗ Never work with power tools when you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs or are tired.
- ✗ Never use a power tool which is damaged in any way (case, switch or cable etc.). If it starts to make an odd noise or emit smells – stop and investigate.
- ✗ Never cut small, loose pieces of wood, metal or other material using a power tool – small off-cuts which you cannot hold or secure will tend to fly off with potential for injury.
- ✗ Never change a drill bit, router cutter or saw blade or make any adjustment to a 'cutting' power tool – until the power cable has been unplugged. Do not rely only upon the switch on the tool or outlet.
- ✗ Never use power tools if you are at risk of overbalancing.
- ✗ Never work with blunt tools (saws, drill bits, cutters etc.). Sharpen the tools yourself, have them sharpened, or throw them away and use a new tool.
- ✗ Never drill or cut 'blind' into a surface before checking the possible location of electrical cables or pipework.
- ✗ Never saw a large work piece unless it is well supported both sides of the cut or there is someone else to support the off-cut.
- ✗ Never carry sharp tools in your pocket. If you want to carry such tools, use a special-purpose tool belt.
- ✗ Never rely on your weight to stabilise a ladder or mobile steps, if necessary get someone to stand at the bottom or use stabilisers.
- ✗ Never overreach when working on a ladder or steps, always re-position the ladder/steps. Never lean out so far that your belt buckle goes outside the stiles of the ladder. ■



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