

So many of us are working out of our homes and garages. We fail to recognize the safety standards that are applied commercially. We jeopardize the safety of ourselves, and our neighbors.

1. First obvious things are eye, hearing and lung protection.

- Safety glasses
- Ear muffs
- Dusk mask/respirator

2. Using jigs, push sticks, push pads, etc. to move materials past a cutting blade without endangering your digits or body.

Other things that are just as important is:

3. First Aid

- A full complement First Aid kit. Not just a box of Band-Aids. Home Depot and Lowes sell good first aid kits for about \$20, or a little more. Well worth the investment!
- Visible as are fire extinguishers, not hidden in a drawer. If someone needs to help you they need to know where the first aid kit is.

4. Fire protection

- Safe handling and storage of combustibles
- Fire extinguishers
- Shop heating (in cold climates)

5. Electrical loads.

- Be mindful of the current draw of your tools.
- Don't exceed the capacity of the circuit you are using.
- Don't run multiple tools simultaneously that may draw current in excess of your circuit's capacity.
- Use extension cords carefully and that have capacity. When running long lengths your cord capacity needs to be higher to avoid burning out the tool's motor.

6. Smoke detectors. Have one in the shop and in adjacent rooms or areas.

7. Emergency exits. Know where they are at. Don't obstruct them with tools or materials. If my neighbor's garage service door was obstructed, I would not have been able to get in to save them.

8. Safe fastening to structures and Supports

- IBC International Building Codes – A minimum standard to safety. Be better than that. See IBC: <http://glcrafts.com/Resources/Holes&NotchesInFraming%20IBC%202308.pdf> and a generic local code: <http://glcrafts.com/Resources/Holes&NotchesInFraming-LocalGuide.pdf>
- Structural and framing systems
- Block walls

Shop Electrical Loads

In most home shops we are working with 15 amp circuits. We typically have circuit breakers, rather than the old glass fuses. In older homes with knob & tube wiring, you really need to re-wire the entire place. Don't risk burning the whole shack down.

Some of us are lucky to have more than one circuit in our garage/shop. You need to be aware what is on which circuit.

That means you must be aware of the amperage your tools draw. My tablesaw draws the most. At 120v it draws 13 amps at the max. That is within my circuit's limits. However, if you have other things on that same circuit drawing power, that's going to reduce your capacity and cause circuit breaker trips. It's inconvenient to keep running to the circuit breaker box. If you trip the circuit breakers enough, you'll need new ones. They do reach their limit of cycles they can handle.

So, when I am running a tool I am aware of what else may be drawing power on that same circuit. I may need to turn something off.

If you have some major power hungry tools, you may need to have a larger circuit installed just for that tool. I would like to use a 120 amp welder someday, but that requires a 120V 25 amp circuit. I would have to hire an electrician to install that. Don't try to do it yourself. There are licensing requirements and safety standards to be met. Above all, you want to be safe and live.

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