



The selection and use of the appropriate tool is one of the main concerns related to hand tool safety. Regrettably, a lot of people improvise with what they have on hand and misuse tools. Also, since many people believe that hand tools are easy to use, safety is not a major worry.

Actually, no matter what kind of hand tool is being used, safety precautions should always be taken. Studies show that the inappropriate use of hand tools contributes to about 8% of workplace accidents. Little cuts, contusions, and abrasions to amputations, fractures, and punctures are all examples of injuries.

Here are several examples of how to use hand tools improperly. Have you done any of the following?

- Using a wrench to push rather than pull a fastener to make it loose.
- Bending metal with pliers that are too small, which can harm both the pliers and the metal.
- Trying to remove a screw with a screwdriver while holding the object you're working on in one hand.
- Using a cutting tool to move toward your body.
- Materials for filing that are not adequately clamped in a vice and lack a handle.
- Using a tool that is improperly sized for the task (e.g., sockets that are slightly larger than the fastener).
- Using dull cutting tools.

The tool must be in good working order in addition to being appropriately used. Before using any hand tool, take a moment to make sure it is in good condition. One or more of the following should be on the lookout:

- a screwdriver with a worn-out or broken tip
- a hammer with a chipped head and/or a loose or broken handle; any cutting tool with a dull surface.
- Tools that have lost their temper;
- Chisels with a mushroomed head.

