

Tool Type

Drill Press

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

The drill press was equipped with a devise by Blum called the mini-press. It is a smaller version of the machine used for drilling cabinet door hinges. The accident occurred when sweeping away shavings without the guard in place. Due to the nature of the drill bits which rotate in opposite directions, my hand was grabbed and then rotated between the cutters. Once lodged, there was no way to remove my hand without removing the bits. I was lucky, there was someone there to help and the cutters missed the bones. It required a couple dozen stitches, but otherwise no damage.

Advice

Always leave the guards, at least on this particular machine, in place.

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Hurt but OK

Description

This has happened more than once, I'm ashamed to say. The accident is thinking that my grip on a small or roundish shaped piece is greater than the torque exerted by the bit via the drill press. I've had my hand smacked several times, once (and the last time, knock on wood) very hard, thought it was broken or even worse till I could look.

Advice

Always clamp those small pieces and especially the awkward ones that cannot easily be clamped. Find a way even if you have to glue it to a scrap board. All my close calls have been on the drill press because I somehow think of it as being benign.

Tool Type

Drill Press

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

When I was about 12 years old, I was drilling a hole through a piece of 16 ga sheet metal that was about 3 inches long and 3/8" wide. Like an idiot, I was holding the metal strip in my left hand while operating the drill press with my right. As the drill was passing through the metal at the end of the cut, the drill caught the metal and instantly spun the metal strip at the same speed as the drill. Before I could react, the spinning metal hacked into my left hand several times. Mainly removed a lot of skin.

Advice

Should have held the piece with pliers.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

I was drilling a whole in a terminal on a battery cable. The hole in the cable was not big enough to fit my battery. I made the mistake of not properly anchoring the cable to the drill press table. The drill bit caught in the cable terminal and almost wraped by entire hand into the cable. The end of the cable also struck my head. I was luckey only to receive a large cut to my right hand.

Advice

Sometimes the most innocuous tasks are the most dangerous. I now always respect EVERY tool in the shop. Not just the ones with obvious dangers.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

I was using a circle cutter to cut a disc out of some thin sheet brass. I had one c clamp holding the work in place. I had completed the cut and was reaching up to turn off the machine when the cutter grabbed the sheet and started turning it. The sheet caught the top of my ring finger and sliced up to the second knuckle. The doctor said if I was going to cut myself it was the best place to do it. It took about a year before I could wear my ring again.

Advice

Make sure that your work is well mounted.

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

This doesn't pertain particularly to wood workers but it's still something that could happen on any drill press. About ten years ago I was drilling pin holes into the heads of allen screws for safety wire. I was using a machine vice not clamped to the table. After completing about ten holes I reached over to the vise and pulled the finished screw out. . While mounting the next one (the drill press was still running) the return spring on the drill press decided to give up the ghost and dropped the drill bit into my first knuckle. Being caught by the pin drill (probably an 1/8" or less my natural reaction was to pull my finger out... The result was I split my finger nail in half permanently sustained nerve damage in my finger tip and dragged the drill bit across the bone to the end of my finger.

Advice

I was lucky. The joint in my finger was unaffected. Never work directly under a spinning drill bit and better yet turn off the drill press when reloading.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

I was at school using the drill press when my tie got caught in the drill press. It all happened so fast that before i knew it i was face to face with the drill . My teacher got at the emegency stop just in time

Advice

Keep all loose items or things that could get snagged tucked away or pinned up

Tool Type

Drill Press

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Placed a 17" long used wood boring bit into the chuck to attempt to drill through 12.5" thick glue lam. After supporting the glue lam and turning on the press (proper RPM, all safety precautions taken) and preparing to enter the wood, the bit bent 90 degrees just an inch under the chuck, where the bit met the shank. The bit whipped around several times before I could shut it down, and in the ensuing adrenaline rush I had not noticed that the tip of the bit had ripped a rather large hole in my shirt and left a nasty deep scratch across my chest and sternum. The bit had been lent to a "friend" and came back seemingly in fine shape. I suspect that it had been bent, and then bent back straight. It worked just fine for several hundred revolutions while I fine tuned my setup, and was nowhere near contact with wood when it decided to bend. It is a bit of a mystery to me exactly what caused this.

Advice

I would advise woodworkers to: (1) Never loan tools (2) Never become complacent about safety, I was convinced that I had taken all of the "necessary" precautions, but clearly I had not (3) Never get into a situation where you are wondering about the limitations of the equipment... if there is even a question about "Can this be done?" you probably have no business trying.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

About a week after getting a drill press: Drilling a 3/8" hole through a piece of 8"x2" Lexan. The bit caught the material and the piece of Lexan went one revolution at 800 RPM before ripping it's way into my thumb. Probably could have used a few stitches but I survived.

Advice

I learned the hard way to clamp EVERYTHING on to the drill press table. If you're reading this: that would be the easy way.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

Nearly lost my right eye for the 3rd time in my life. Another worker was on the drill press while I was sitting at a belt sander to his left-face about deadlevel with the drill, me taking a known chance but thinking, "I have regular glasses on - no side protection though, but what are the chances? Too much, at least 1 in 360 degrees! Sure enough, other guy jams his bit into his workpiece, has to let go as it starts spinning and than THAK! Broken off drill bit and all slams into the wall somewhere.

Advice

Never rely on excuses.If you don't have safety gear or a safe workplace, stop, or quit, you can't work that way. Never take chances. Watch out for any possible dangers that have been overlooked.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

While using one of those multiple hole saws (cheap one), the saw portion exploded and the saw whipped around and cut the end of my finger. Luckily, I had my safety gear on and was only slightly wounded. No stitches.

Advice

Don't use cheap tools and keep a safe distance from them.

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was drilling 1/4" holes through a large number of 4" x 4" x 4" blocks of wood. I had a clamping-positioning jig on the table, and was using a 16" drill bit with the press set to the lowest speed. After having completed many cycles successfully, I started to bear down on the press too hard. The bit acted like a screw, and pulled the block up out of the jig half way up the bit leaving 3" of bit sticking out the bottom of the block. Since the hole was not in the center of the block, the centrifugal force caused the bit to bend and flail. The bent bit and the block made about one rotation and then pinned themselves against the main support column of the press. The flailing bit cut through my heavy flannel shirt and my T-shirt and gave me a one foot long, amazingly shallow scratch across my belly. A corner of the block hit the back of my hand resulting in four stitches.

Advice

Don't force any tool. Always have hold down clamps as well as positioning clamps when drilling small parts. Never run a long drill bit in a drill press at high RPMs.

Tool Type

Drill Press

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Instead of using a saw to cut a half-circle shape in the end of a 1/4" thick piece of purpleheart, I decided to use the drill press for a more accurate cut. I chucked a 2" diameter forstner bit and proceeded to make the cut. I knew the bit would want to grab the thin board, so I made sure I held it extra tight with my left hand. It grabbed anyway. I was holding it so tight that my thumb went with it before I could react. The large cutting corner of the bit dug in from the first knuckle, through the nail and off the left side. It was not as painful as a hammer smash. 19 stiches were required to close the wound.

Advice

Never use body parts as clamps or hold downs.

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was dismantling a 17" floor type drill press to move it from my father's house to my sister's in another state. I needed to remove the head assembly. I told my nephew to loosen the bolts on one side while I removed the auxiliary table and raised the drill table; he did what I asked ... the drill head assembly fell 2' and punctured my hand with the closed 3/4" chuck jaws and trapped the hand between the rim and hole on the auxiliary table. OUCH!!! The point of impact was between the bones of the thumb and first finger and the auxiliary table provided some give so the head (130lbs) did not puncture the hand all the way through AND did not crush the tissue. The resulting wound was 1" deep and the thumb knuckle was bruised on the bone. Too deep for stitches, antibiotic ointment was applied, a dressing, and tape.

Advice

This happened three days after my father's death. Think though EVERY step especially when you are under stress. You may "feel" alright but you NEED to slow down. Two other subsequent minor injuries within two weeks have convinced me that I am STILL distracted enough to need to slow down and be MORE aware of what I am doing.

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

Although this did not happen to me, I was working next to the person. She was using a holesaw mounted in a drill press to drill inlet holes in brass radiator tanks. She noticed that the brass plugs were staying up in the hole saw after the cut. Wanting to remove the brass plugs, and as the machine was running, she started swatting at it with her hand trying to knock the piece out. When she did so, her right work glove (cotton) got caught on the holesaw which wrapped her the back of her hand around the spindle. She broke her wrist and was on medical leave for several months.

Advice

Do not wear gloves while operating a drill press. Also restrain long hair and loose clothing. They can all easily become entangled in the bit. If you want to clear any debris out of the bit, power the machine down and wait for the spindle to come to a complete stop.

Tool Type

Drill Press

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was holding onto a turned piece of oak. then i proceeded to try and drill a hole in this piece. I did not even graduate the bits to the correct size. 3/8" new bit. I figure after it grabbed the wood it spun in my grip about 3 times less than needed to start flames. about 13 rev's right now it hurts like heck I have 4 very proud burn marks. I am very dissapointed with myself. Total stupidity, at least the wood did not break and the bit end up; Gawd I'll stop there....

Advice

YOU KNOW You Know you are not suppose to; so Don't. I did not even try using a glove. If you forgot to drill a hole and nothing you can do to drill the hole without breaking the piece think of another use and make another one. sheesh I cannot believe I tried it. Ouch!

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Close Call

Description

A student was operating a drill press when the chuck key fell from its resting point on top of the machine. She was startled but no injury-accident occurred.

Advice

Don't use machines as shelves

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

Just came from shop having had a small accident from what can be the most dangerous shop tool - the drill press. I had installed and was using a 3" drum sander. As I was sanding with it very lightly, I saw the sander start to wobble. It was clear that the chuck had loosened. In the time it took me to move hand to ON-OFF switch, the drum went into orbit, forcefully. Thankfully, my hands were already clear. Its trajectory slammed one hand, but no real injury. I havent yet found the drum. As I have said before, the DP and other "safe" machines, are waiting for their turn to get you. There is a lot of rivalry between shop tools. I think they spend much of their downtime discussing who gets next shot at me.

Advice

Beware of tools that do not pose a threat. Drill press can really spin things...not always the way you want them to spin. Be cautious with it.

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Intermediate

Injury Severity Hurt but OK

Description

Drilling 1" hole on edge of oak board using "spade" or "speed" type bit, holding piece down with left hand. Bit caught on edge of board and pulled board (with my hand still holding it) towards bit. Rotating bit took 1/8" off end of thumb.

Advice

CLAMP IT DOWN! Don't use a spade bit near edge of stock. Oh, and CLAMP IT DOWN!

Tool Type

Drill Press

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Made a chisel rack - small hole stepped up into larger hole, a slot into them for the chisel to be slid into and out of the rack. Wanted to enlarge the holes to accommodate some new butt chisels. Removed the part of the rack with the holes (the rack being put together with finger-box joints and not glued together) and took it and a piece of backer board scrap to the drill press. Clamped the part and the backer board in a machinist vise, positioned the first hole under a forstner bit and clamped the machinist vise to the drill press table. The edge of the slot for getting a chisel into and out of the rack caught the bottom cutting part of the forstner bit. Since the bit couldn't cut off that much wood in one bite something had to give. The 15-20 pound machinist vise AND the clamps holding it to the drill press table were what gave - as well as the shaft on the forstner bit. Threw the vise into an adjacent wall, bounced the piece I was drilling off another wall and I still haven't found the missing chunk out of the part. The bit now has a 10 degree bend in it. Had I been in the line of fire the vise would've caught me in the chest or neck (my drill press table is at chest height -easier to see things). Had I been trying to hold the vise in position my wrist and or fingers would probably been broken. Fortunately I'd changed the pulleys for a "slow speed" but that doesn't do anything to reduce the torque, just gives a fraction of a second more reaction room.

Advice

For bits over half an inch, use slow speed, clamp the part down AND start with a very very light cut.

Tool Type Drill Press

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Hurt but OK

Description

I was trying to CounterBore some holes in some small oak blocks. Three big problems were stacked against me.

1. I didn't own a reall drill press, just a drill press stand that you clamp a drill into.
2. The DP stand didn't have a table to it so it was impossible, or so I thought, to clamp the part down, this meant holding the part with my Left hand.
3. The drill I used in the stand had a locking trigger, but would only lock at top speed, 2300 RPM. I had also screwed up and drilled the thru hole first and was using a regular drill bit to make the Counter Bore. The first one worked well enough, but on the second one, as I slowly lowered the bit, it suddenly grabbed the part from my left hand and spun it around at the same 2300 RPM. The block smacked my left thumb twice before I could pull my hand away, and then I still had to turn the thing off by pulling and releasing the trigger. My thumb had a small cut above the knuckle and a big knot, and my thumbnail was slightly brusied. I was lucky. It could have been much worse.

Advice

1. If you are Counter Boring or any procedure that remotely requires a Drill Press, use a REAL Drill Pess. I chucked that Sears POS that day. If you don't have one, beg borrow steal or change your design.
2. Use the right bit for the job. I went out that day and bought a set of forsner bits.
3. ALWAYS CLAMP YOUR PARTS!
4. A fence can also help when doing this type of operation.
5. Keep your hands away from the sharp parts.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

Drilling 54mm holes with saw-tooth forstner in 200x150 while holding it with hands, did about 20 pieces fine, then the bit caught spun the wood around and took a chunk out of my thumb

Advice

clamp when drilling small pieces of timber or using large drill bits