

Tool Type

Power Plane

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was using the power plane to remove material from a molding strip prior to coping it. The strip was already rather thin. I was rushing to finish the job and not paying attention. I was holding the strip in my left hand as I planed with my right. As I guided the plane toward my left hand, I switched my grip and placed my left little finger in the path of the power plane. The plane lacerated the finger. Should have gone to the doctor, but needed to finish the job. Compounded my ignorance by being my own physician. Everything worked out alright, but I should have done what I had usually done in the past, which was to secure the work piece with clamps before carrying out the operation. That way my left pinky would have been out of harm's way.

Advice

Don't rush, plan your operation out and then REALLY think about what you are going to attempt.

Tool Type

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Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was planing the edge of a panel on a jobsite. It was being held by a friend while I planed it. I forgot to mention, I was working into my fourteenth hour that day and was trying to finish the job. As the planer veered too far from the middle of the edge, it slipped down and I instinctively reached up to grab the edge of the plane. Instead, the tip of my middle finger touched the cutterhead. It was nearly to the bone and bleeding profusely, but needing to get the job done, I wrapped it up and kept working. Later at the clinic, they said it was chopped up too much to suture and x-rays showed I hadn't nicked the bone. They cleaned it up, butterflyed it and sent me home. The cause was clearly fatigue and not thinking clearly. This is one of those accidents I tell others that it would never happen to me. Oh well.

Advice

I have found now that when I am really tired, I stay away from table saws, shapers and other equipment that can be dangerous. I would rather have someone mad at me for not finishing something than have to make a trip to the hospital minus a digit or two.

Tool Type Power Plane

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Close Call

Description

Day 1 with a power planer. Was using the planer to take the top off a post after I had got it almost right with the hand saw. The planer was at eye level. A couple of times the planer bit into the wood. Later on I tried planing some other wood and noticed a ridge. Somewhere earlier, when I had it a eye level, I had taken two chunks out of the blade. Thankfully I was wearing a face mask but I have no idea where those chunks went. Then to top it off, I cut my finger looking at the blade.

Advice

Don't try to use a tool for a job until you are comfortable with it, and not just so that you can use your new toy. Always wear adequate protection and don't work near your eyes.

Tool Type

Power Plane

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was a kitchen cabinet installer who used a drill like a third hand. I got into the habit of drilling with my right hand and when finished, quickly transferring the drill to my left hand to put it down. I was using a power planer on a cabinet and when I was done I instinctively handed the tool to my left hand just like I would if it were a drill except I grabbed the body instead of the handle of the plane while it was still spinning. The corner of the blades slashed a deep gouge in the side of my left index finger. A very helpless feeling when a machine bites you.

Advice

When in a production environment, you must take time to assess every situation or you will get hurt. PAY ATTENTION!

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

I had been planing away forever, when the blades, which had been getting progressively duller, hit a nail. I turned over the planer and felt the blades with my thumb. They didn't seem that dull, so just to prove it, I pressed the trigger with my thumb still on the blades. The blood was omnipresent. I found that there are few places on the body that continuously communicate the sense of pain over a 5 week period like the pad of one's thumb.

Advice

The thumb is neither a sharpener nor a piece of wood.

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Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was using an electric Craftsman hand held planer and nicked my finger with the blade while cleaning out the dust shoot. This was a completely avoidable accident that happened due to stupidity. The dust shoot was clogged up and I stuck my finger in it to clean it out. The stupid thing about this was that the planer was still running. When I stuck my index finger in the dust shoot, my middle finger wandered underneath the planer and the spinning blade peeled my finger open. While the cut did not go all the way to the bone, it was still severe enough to necessitate about 15 stitches. That area of my finger is still number 2 years later.

Advice

I'm actually glad this happened. It taught me a valuable lesson – respect AND fear your tools. The other thing it taught me was to be careful about getting in to a rhythm. I had been planing for about 30 minutes when this happened. I had become careless and tired.