

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

This was my most painful injury on a tablesaw. I was ripping some walnut plywood for doors on an old Unisaw with the original JetLock fence. This fence could lock down at any angle to the blade and it was customary to measure its parallelism every time the setting was changed. When I checked it for my final cut I noticed it was slightly toed in at the back of the fence. I tried feeding the plywood anyway and the first five made it through Okay. In feeding the sixth, either I didn't push it far enough or it got cockeyed but the panel slipped on top of the blade and kicked back at high speed. I was struck in the abdomen and knocked down instantly. I sat there for 20 minutes before I could get up and go home. The soreness lasted for several weeks.

Advice

Certainly a splitter would have prevented the panel from getting on top of the blade. Better yet would be a t-square fence. The Jetlock was terrible and caused problems I've never had since only using t-square fences like the Beisemeyer.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

This happened to my boss one day while working in his cabinet shop. He wanted to make a stop dado on some oak door frames and he was swinging the far end of the piece down onto the dado blade to start the cut. His left hand was above the dado blades holding the wood against the fence. Partway into the cut the dado blade grabbed the wood and shot it back at the wall behind him. With the wood out of the way his hand dropped into the blade removing the end of his left ring finger.

Advice

Looking back it's easy to say he shouldn't have done a lot of things. First, the tablesaw probably isn't the best way to make this cut, a router would have been safer. Second, I think he shouldn't have had his hand on top of the blade like that and moving it into the blade. Incidentally, he stopped working in the shop after his accident.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was positioning the height of the tablesaw blade and was using a combination square to measure with. The measurement had to be exact, so I found myself holding the square with my left hand at the blade and my right hand alternating between turning the raising mechanism and rotating the blade to distinguish absolute height. I have no idea why, but I reached down and under and went for the switch instead of the crank. The saw came on and nicked my thumb and forefinger. Not much damage...not much blood, but it scared the heck out of me. Just thinking that my fingers were that close to the sawblade made me weak in the knees. It could have been much more severe.

Advice

It's easy to let your mind wonder while performing simple, mundane tasks. I suspect that was the cause of my accident. It's like those times you make a sandwich and put the bread in the refrigerator and the mustard in the breadbox. I now make a mental exclamation point each and every time I go for the power switch on a tool.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Employee was attempting to tenon a table leg in the upright position. The bottom of the leg was thrust backwards, pulling his supporting left hand down and into the blade, severing part of his thumb.

Advice

Use a tenon cutter. The simplest home-made devise would have prevented what happened.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was attempting to cut the lid off a completed box. The box began vibrating between the fence and the blade. There was no guard or splitter behind the blade. the box did something (I still have no idea what, it was so fast) but it flipped my left hand acrost the top of the exposed blade. I took the last two fingers of my left hand off except for some skin holding them on. That was 22 years ago. I now have lost the movement of the last joint of the fingers. All feeling has returned.

Advice

I saw needed one of the guards that is adjustable and mounted from above. I did not use any push sticks. The guards that are now available I had not seen 22 years ago. I would also now clamp the box to a jig such as the Shop Fox Jig. This would have removed the fence from the table and not caused the box becoming caught between.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was using a dado blade to create a lap joint for a project. It was not cutting smoothly and I did two dumb things to try to help with the last 1" or so left to dado. I pulled the piece backwards over the blade and was pushing down HARD directly over the blade with my left hand. The piece kicked out and my left thumb went into the blade, dadoing it on the inside (palm side). This happened on 12-20-97 and although it cosmetically healed after the initial microsurgery I still cannot actively bend it.

Advice

The doctors told me that the most frequent injuries they see are from dado blades. They are very dangerous when proper procedures are not used. I now use auxiliary push sticks, feather boards, push pads, and the miter gauge to keep my hands out of there. This also includes the router which can also violently kick a piece at times. My hands are now never in a position to be thrown into a blade or bit.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

This happened about ten years ago. Was ripping a piece of press board apart when it broke. Unfortunately, I was in the "push" mode and fell into the blade. I caught myself with my hand right on the blade. Lucky I had the thing in the minimum height position, otherwise, I would have paid a lot more of a price than 42 stitches.

Advice

I now make sure that the push vector is not towards the blade. Also, I evaluate the strength of the stock I am pushing through. In retrospect, I was probably trying to rip a piece much larger than I should have been.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was in the final stages of completing a pair of jewelry box lid cutting a bevel on each of the sides. The lids consisted of a frame joined with dovetails with 3 rails and with 4 panels. It was late in the day and I was going to call it a day after this operation. I had cut these bevels before but had always used feather boards on the fence hold the lids flat to the table. Being in a hurry and unable to locate my feather boards at first glance (they were on my router table fence), I decided to just go ahead and do the cuts without them. As I was cutting the bevel on the last side I reached over the saw blade with my left hand to push down on the lid where it had started to ride up the blade it was pinched between the fence and blade. The lid for lack of a better word exploded. My push stick which I had in my right hand was flung into the running blade, and the thumb of my left hand received the full force of the lid being forced upward. The end result was a severely bruised left hand, a broken left thumb, a bruise on the bridge of my nose where a piece of the box hit my safety glasses, a couple of splinters in my face and hand, and a destroyed push stick.

Advice

Don't do a cranial-anal insertion. Take the time to install a feather board on the fence for holding down the work. Think about what you are doing before touching a piece of work on a running saw. Never reach over a running saw blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

A Saturday afternoon, my family had been out , and had stopped by the shop to eat lunch with me. I had been pushing to complete a project, to conform with a deadline, was tired, and a little too relaxed, after an extended lunch, but pushed on. I was ripping stock, and not using my guard, (which would have prevented this accident). Approximately 30 minutes later, I reached(around,I thought) to grab the off-fall, and dragged my left thumb across the blade. It slammed it backwards, and sent a rooster tail of blood over my shoulder. I can't impress too much, how FAST this happened! I had to bandage it myself, which meant looking,(yikes), and then to the emergency room. Lost the nail, received some stiching, but a lot of the area at the tip was ground up. I consider myself lucky, I still have my thumb, although with a "dip" in it, and some loss of sensation. A majority of the feeling has returned, after a few years, but I still rub it, (it feels weird), as a reminder to myself to be safe.

Advice

Ask yourself ..."is it worth it " The deadline can be important, but not at a loss of blood, or digits. The combination of long hours, and the sense of being late can cause a woodworker to do stupid things. Use the guard. Make it work with you! Any injuries I have received have been by NOT using a guard. Walk away if you're feeling tired. This is something I do now, I have re-discovered how important... all of me... is! Remember, if your hale and hearty, you can always pick up the next day, but you can not if your leaving parts of yourself laying around the shop. I have damaged, but still have "all ten".

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping parts for a Cub Scout project, and made the mistake of looking at the next piece while cutting. Because I was working with rough wood I was wearing leather gloves. I was reaching across the blade when it grabbed the tip of one finger and took a small bite out of the end of a finger. The finger hurt only slightly more than the embarrassment.

Advice

Don't try to rush, especially in repetitive work. Organize such work so you don't cross the blade. Have a radio or tape player (not TV) going if it helps you concentrate. DON'T LET YOUR MIND WANDER (unless you want some fingers to wander off!)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Ripping a narrow section to square a 6" block. No blade guard. Not using push stick. Reaching over the blade. Looked away. Did not push the block all the way past the blade. The blade caught the block and projected onto my left upper chest area. I pretty well broke all the rules. Good lesson at a small cost.

Advice

Concentrate on what you are doing at the moment. Don't think ahead or make a move without concentrating on it. Use the protective accessories provided with your tool. Don't reach over or behind any saw blades. No loose clothing, clean area won't distract you from the task.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Intermediate

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

I had the blade guard removed. Shut the saw off, turned to leave the shop, and dragged my left index finger across the spinning blade. Cut the finger to the bone. Finger is misshapen, lost some feeling.

Advice

Use blade guards, pay attention until blade stops, even if machine is off.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I couldn't wait to try a rip with a new saw blade. The splitter and guard had been removed for another operation. This was the last cut for the night, so I thought I'd just rip this one piece to see how the blade cut. I don't know why, but I stopped pushing the ripped piece before it cleared the blade. I saw the piece start to vibrate between the blade and fence and turned off the power to the saw. But, before I knew it, the piece came back at me so fast I couldn't believe it. Luckily, I was not directly behind the blade. The piece hit a wood door 10 feet behind me and cracked it, and bounced off the ceiling, leaving a huge dent in the drywall. I have the piece nailed to the wall of my shop and look at it every day to remind me of the stupid things I did that night.

Advice

1. Use the splitter and blade guard whenever possible. I have the Uniguard and it is terrific. 2. Always push the piece completely past the spinning blade. 3. Do not stand directly behind the blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Cleaning up the shop. Cutting scrap pieces so as to fit garbage container. Not using fence or miter guage. One piece bound and came back at me, hitting me in the center of the chest. Bruised rib, and the next day my chest looked like I had been hit by a shot gun.

Advice

It doesn't matter what the purpose of the cut, USE THE GUAGE AND DON'T STAND DIRECTLY BEHIND THE BLADE!!!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Happened in my shop, but a friend was the victim. He was sawing narrow strips from a narrow piece of pine. On the last strip, the blade grabbed the piece next to the fence and started to "sling" it toward the operator. The operator tried to prevent the piece from being forced backward by holding the piece. The force of the saw was much stronger than my friend. Cut his right thumb close to the bone and the heel of the same hand. About 14 stitches.

Advice

If you saw narrow strips in this manner, use a wooden sacrificial pushstick made from soft material which will allow the saw blade to easily saw through the push stick. But better still, try not to saw narrow strips from narrow strips. The piece of wood is hanging in my shop in its own frame with the blood and saw groove plainly visible.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Hurt but OK

Description

In a hurry to finish a job I made a new sliding table for the tablesaw without handles and hold downs. First cut I had my thumb in the path of the blade. I thank God that the blade did not protude more than 1/4 of an inch. My fingerprint was changed for ever.

Advice

Remember to attach hold downs and handles to all work aids for tablesaws, shapers, routers, and etc. before use. Seeing a cut once is more than any of us want to see. If in a hurry to finish a job have established checklists for making new aids and setup of tools for all tasks that you do over an over. Don't think once that you've done everything unless you compare to your checklists. Last of course, Go play golf, fly fish, or something to keep all digits attached. Frustration leads to injuries.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping a wide mahogany board which was warped and heavily stressed. It was crooking all over the place as I was cutting it. I didn't realize how bad it was stressed until I got about three feet from the end of the cut when it split all the way to the end. The rest of the details are sketchy since it happened so fast but the part between the fence and blade kicked back at me hitting me in the gut. Luckily the board wasn't moving too fast to do any damage other than knock me down.

Advice

The wood in this board was too unstable for ripping on a tablesaw. A bandsaw would have been better but only experience can tell you when to use a different tool. If you look at a board and hear that little voice - listen!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was new to woodworking and did not really understand what a "kickback" was. I was using my husbands old tablesaw which had all the safety equipment taken off. I was cutting a piece of 2x4 in half without the use of push sticks and fences. I also did not know to stand right behind the board I was cutting. Well, I guess I pinched it going thru and the 3 foot piece came right back at me and hit me across the abdomen. I was lucky all I got was the wind knocked out of me. I did not touch another tablesaw until I had saved enough and bought me a quality one with all the safety equipment in place and I read several books and talked to other woodworkers before I cut again.

Advice

Obviously if you are a beginner, read everything you can get your hands on. Ask more experienced woodworkers in your area if you can drop by and they could show you a few pointers, or take a class.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping several pine boards that were approximately 5' long. On one of the rips, I ripped more than I had intended to. My push stick broke, and my hand followed through into the blade, and ripped my right index finger. What did I do wrong? 1. No blade guard. 2. Weak push stick. 3. No outfeed support.

Advice

Use your blade guard on every possible cut.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Here's one for your database: I was working late on a project, cutting parts on the tablesaw. I had been using a plastic pushstick from one of the mailorder houses, and carelessly left it lying on the tablesaw table. Somehow in putting the workpiece through the saw, the pushstick also wandered out into the blade. It danced once on top of the blade, then came at me at a good clip. In spite of my shying away from the flightpath, the handle of the tool caught me on the lip. Two stiches and a visit to the emergency room later, i was actually fine. BUT, it could have been much worse!!

Advice

Keep your workspace clean.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping about an inch off of a 4 inch wide crown molding. The blade was set at a 45 degree angle more or less. The fence was on the left side of the UNISAW's blade. I was standing on the side of the fence opposite that of the blade. When I finished the cut and switched off the saw my hand passed the plane of the blade and the offcut came flying back at me. It was about 6 foot long with a very nice sharp edge (45 degrees) worth of oak. It sliced my lower arm near my wrist. It really didn't bleed that much. The offcut had slipped out from under the holddown I was using. I confess that I did not have the splitter in place. I have a beisemeyer blade guard and a delta splitter that can be pushed under the throat piece. I doubt the splitter would have made any difference.

Advice

Make certain of your anti kickback devices and placements. I plan to add more anti kick back devices to my setup in the neighboring future. Also make certain that you have a first aid kit handy..... Hydrogen peroxide, neosporin and bandages.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was trying to "resaw" a maple board using the tablesaw - getting a 1/8" panel sliced off of the face. This is something you shouldn't really use a tablesaw for, bandsaw should do that, but I don't have a bandsaw big enough for resawing. After successfully slicing the 1/8" panel off the face, I tried to slice *another* 1/8" panel from the back face. That was a bad idea. By now the piece of wood was too thin, and I had not noticed that the wood had slid into the hole on the saw body through which the blade comes up, until the back end of the board I was cutting "fell" off the edge of the table support, and into that hole. At that point I had realized what had happened, and was holding a board with no table support on a spinning blade, standing in the "line of fire" and no access to the power switch to shut it off. Hmm... While I was trying to a) get myself out of the line of fire, and b) hit the power switch with my foot, the wood finally caught in the blade, and "exploded" into shards of maple that launched themselves through the shop at various directions and speeds. The worst injury I received was bruised fingertips (as the wood was thrown through and past them), and a slightly bruised stomach as I couldn't get entirely out of the way of one of the largest pieces...

Advice

think-think-think. Before making *any* cut on any tool, envision it in your mind beforehand, watch that everything fits ok, run it through with the power off first, see if anything is out of line or whatever. Also, avoid the use of a tablesaw for resawing wood.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

This happened yesterday and scared the ... out of me. I was trimming a long piece of plywood on the tablesaw without a blade guard. I was only cutting off about half an inch and as I usually do, I was standing in front of the saw feeding the piece hand over hand past the blade. Anyway, while I was bringing my right hand back for another grab on the plywood, my left hand slipped while trying to feed the piece through. At the time my left thumb was directly in front of the blade about a foot away. the slip was so bad my hand shot out and my thumb missed the blade by less than 1/2" to the left. I can still recall the turbulence of the air around the blade as my thumb went by.

Advice

I don't think the guard would have helped as my thumb would have just slipped under it. I should have been pushing the plywood only with my right hand from the rear instead of feeding it hand over hand. I should have used a feather board to keep the stock against the fence and not used my left hand to try and feed the stock, only guide it. I feel very lucky.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting a small (too Small) piece of oak using the rip fence and it caught and kicked back the piece. sending across several of my fingers. In the process removing several layers of skin. I t also bent back and probably dislocated my little finger. I can't fully straighten it out.

Advice

If it doesn't feel right DON'T do it.....

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a board that was obviously too small. The Sears tablesaw split the piece and threw them both at me, breaking two fingers on my right hand, the other hitting me in the neck, leaving a large bruise.

Advice

NEVER..NEVER attempt to rip a board or piece of wood that is too small for your tablesaw. Also, if you have a Sears tablesaw with one of the standard rip fences, take it off and throw in in the trash. Be smart: Pay the money, get a good, accurate fence and maybe a couple of board buddies to keep the wood from flying in your face. The top-notch rip fence is cheaper than broken bones. My fingers ran about two-thousand dollars...a good fence and board buddies ran about four hundred...and my wife was on my case throughtout the the entire two month healing period. With a little common sense, I could have had healthy fingers and the fence to boot. Never rip a board without some kind of antkickback device attached to your machine. Don't kid yourself...those machines in your shop can be LETHAL.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Intermediate

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a 6" wide oak board (3' long) fence to right of blade and using a push stick - but was using my left hand on back left corner of the board. Not real sure if board kicked or what happened but but I cut off first and middle finger and also hit thumb. I was able to have fingers reattached and after 6 months have fair movement and feeling. still woodworking.

Advice

install all guards that come with woodworking and NEVER think it won't happen to you

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was using a King contractor table saw, I was building a Doll house for my daughter and all I had left to do was the roof. I had to cut a 45 deg angle on a Pine plank. I used the guide to cut the angle(Dont try this at home). I started to proceed with the cut when suddently I saw smoke comming out of the piece of wood. From experience I knew that letting go the piece of wood was the worst thing I could do so instead I tried to cut the power to the saw. By doing so I leaned over to the right(almost behing the work piece) to try to turn off the machine but I was already too late, the piece got stuck between the blade and the guide and got projected toward my abdomen. The wooden projectile whent pass my abdomen and landed on my craftsman tool chest. Since I was to an angle to the right I received a severe cut to the abdomen and dented the tool chest. Lucky I was not standing directly behind the piece of wood it would have probably cut me in half.

Advice

Now I am using a joiner or compound miter saw to cut all my angles. If One day you ever have to cut a long plank on a 45 deg angle, dont use the guard or if you do use tonnes of feather board clamps, it should make the cut a breeze. Good luck. Sorry for spelling mistakes, English is not my mother tongue.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

Using a dado blade on a short piece of wood (approx. 10" in length) and no fingere boards or other safety aids. Cutting a 1/4 inch wide grove on the side of a piece of pine 4" in width and 3/4" in thickness, the board kicked back and severly cut my palm. Lucky there was no damage to hand other than many stiches. Was late at night and I was most likely tired and should have quit much earlier.

Advice

Follow instructions in manual and in addition, purchase additional safety material before beginning to use such equipment. I have since heard the the table saw is perhaps the most dangerous of all power tools.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Cutting 3/4 oak, into 3/4 strips, 12" long. Blade height about 2". Pushing through by hand, no guard available. On last strip, decided to stop and use push stick. Push stick slipped, took left thumb directly down on to top of blade. Left about 1/8" of skin attached, after going directly through top joint of thumb. Shattered top bone, joint and next bone down. Thumb sewn back into place but joint inoperative. Feeling has returned to almost normal.

Advice

Keep blade height as low as possible, keep stick pressure just enough to move wood, not force it, if you have a guard, use it. If it's getting in the way, try tying your shoes with one hand, try playing cards with one hand, try woodworking with one hand. It's been 4 years, and I'm still finding things that are difficult.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting dados in 1/2" wood using a technique I saw Norm use on the New Yankee Workshop, i.e. nibbling. The blade was only 1/8" above the table and I had a zero clearance insert. I had removed the blade guard. As I was passing the wood through using a push stick, the wood kicked back. My hand slipped off the push stick and went into the blade injuring the first and second fingers of my left hand. I went to the emergency room where they stabilized and dressed the wounds. Now I have to see a plastic surgeon. Luckily, no bones or tendons were cut but I do have superficial nerve damage. Don't know what I could have done to prevent this because I try to be very careful in the shop.

Advice

I don't know. Removing the blade guard to cut dados may be the problem. I don't know how to avoid that.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was putting a small groove, about a quarter of an inch deep, into the face of numerous amounts of mahogany base. The boards already had a beveled cut on the top. The bevel and small groove were part of the design. After running a large portion of this base, I became a little too comfortable. My pace begun to increase and then IT happened. As I was quickly feeding the base through, my left hand index and middle fingers pushed down a little too close to the outside of the board where the bevel was underneath.(remember, I am cutting face down) The bevel had a quarter of an inch left of the edge before beveling down and this was the edge that was against the fence When the board tilted on the bevel, the saw blade quickly drug it off the fence and across the blade with my fingers still on it! If the blade was at a normal cutting height, I would have lost several fingers and part of my hand. Fortunately, it only got the underside of two fingers, but the damage was severe. It looked as if I had ran my two fingers through a dado blade, leaving only the fingernails and skin on the topside along with most of the bones. I had to have multiple surgeries and missed two months of work. My hand is now listed with a 30% disability, but I do not allow it to hinder my performance at work.

Advice

First it would have been safer to run the bevel cut after the design groove cut. It would also have been safer to run this large quantity of pieces through a feeder machine. Most important of all, don't get too comfortable when using woodworking equipment, those things can bite! Be careful and be alert. I have years of experience in woodworking and I enjoy this trade, but it can be dangerous. Always expect the unexpected and put safety above all else. Thanks for your time and GOD BLESS. Derrick Banks e-mail: sawco@stsi.net

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Had the blade guard off and did not use a push-stick. I was ripping 3"-thick stock into quarter-inch panels; I would rip one face then the other, cutting half through each pass. The stock was sawed so thin that it fell into the hole with the blade, kicked the stock into my chest and then whacked the end of my left index finger into the bone.

Advice

I, for one, will leave the blade guard on and use push-sticks.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was making a series of repetitive rips, after an eight hour day in the shop. About rip number 20, I reached down to pick the board up while it was still on the blade. I actually laid my hand on the spinning blade. They say you will not feel it, but it felt like my fingers were hit with a sledge hammer. Bad cut, but as the Doc said, "you'll still be able to count to ten". I ended up lacerating the first three digits, cutting off the tip of the second. I was able to save the tip, so all that left is some ugly scars. I WAS EXTREMELY LUCKY. That was four years ago, and to this day, I close shop when I get tired. But being only 42 years old, I have suddenly been accepted by many of the old timers at the wood shed!

Advice

1. Never have your saw blade higher than 1/8" above the surface of the wood. I know there is an argument about torque development within the saw motor, but a cut that is only 1/8" deep will most probably result in only a tissue wound. I feel that this is the best advice anyone can give to a woodworker. 2. Never, Never attempt repetitive cutting procedures when you are tired.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting a 1" X 6" strip of Oak from a 4" x 6" board. The blade was raised about 1.5". I had a feather board in place, and was using a push stick. I had my safety glasses on, my ear plugs in, and NO blade guard installed. This was the first morning of a week's vacation I had taken to devote to woodworking. As I was pushing the board through, the piece rode up on the blade and shot back at me like a rocket. It struck my left hand. At first it kind of stung, until I looked down at it and saw the blood. I turned off the saw, and locked up my shop, and ran cold water on it. Then I got dizzy. After a trip to the emergency room, I found out the block had broken my finger. After 2 years, there is still a slight scar, and it still hurts on cold days.

Advice

Use the blade guard! Be extra careful when cutting smaller pieces. Do not push your work on the outside of the blade (it will pinch and kick back.) Trust your instincts. If you feel unsafe, stop and figure out a better way.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While cutting a stopped dado joint with stop blocks, I experienced a kick back that brought my left hand back through the blade. Safety guards had been removed to allow the wood to be lowered into the blade. Lost middle and ring finger in the accident.

Advice

Find another way of cutting if safety guards have been removed.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

Blocking out 1/2" plywood into 12" squares when a piece of plywood was thrown back into my stomach area, causing bruising of the kidney and related areas.

Advice

The major cause of this accident was due to a lack of attention due to being tired. Do not work in and around power machinery when tired.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

while making a blind dado, I tried to plunge the work piece on to the blade. I had the blade set to wide, and to high. the board kicked toward me and my left thumb fell into the dado blade. This caused a 7/8th " groove to cut into my thumb. resulting in severed tendons, nerves, and a couple of nasty chips to the joint and bone of my thumb.

Advice

Take smaller bites, or use a router table with and use multiple passes

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping a narrow pieces of stock. It was a repetitive cutting situation, and I allowed my vigilance to wander. I was not using featherboards or a push stick. I allowed the tip of my middle finger to come in contact with the blade. I was not using a fast feedrate, so I was able to pull the finger out of the way, suffering only a small gash. I was lucky. It could have been much worse.

Advice

First, from my perspective, a good first step is looking at these stories. They certainly made me aware of how easily misfortune can befall a person running the power tools that are used in our hobby-profession. Secondly, in my case, and in many of the stories related here I should have followed these principles -Never let your attention wander from what you are doing -Always use the guards, pushsticks, featherboards and other safety mechanisms to minimize an operators risk of injury -Never allow your fingers to come within 4 inches of a running blade (Falls under the above) -If you are tired, or find your attention wandering, stop working, or maybe turn your attention to other activities in the project which do not demand the rigorous attention that power tools demand (sanding by hand, cleaning up the shop, etc.)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was watching a friend rip small chamfer strips on a tablesaw with the blade tilted into a sacrificial board attached to the fence. Another person was helping pull the board through the blade when it reached the last foot or so. The operator was standing behind the blade when the person pulling the strip moved the strip sideways causing the strip to shatter and kickback. A splinter penetrated the abdomen approximately 6 inches. The end result due to improper treatment was gangrene and a near fatal accident.

Advice

First never stand behind a blade, don't let someone finish the cut by pulling the piece through the blade, use a proper jig and tilt the blade away from the fence.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Often accidents do not happen when you are cutting good wood. Mine happened when cutting scrap. This accident occurred when I did many things that were not the usual. 1) Working on the opposite side of the saw blade. 2)pushed material through the saw with the hand that I didn't normally use. 3) Because it was scrap matter being made into kindling I wasn't watching. As a result my natural hand is now very impaired though I do have 4 1/2 fingers but, much reconstructive surgery was required and it does not work the same.

Advice

Moral of the story a perfect cut on project material in terms of practices, concentration, and performing thing in a repetitive not different manor are just as important cutting material for a project and cleaning the shop.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I wanted to dado a groove for a drawer bottom in a 1/2" thick piece of maple 18" long by making a couple of passes with the tablesaw blade raised 3/16". Near the end of my planned first cut I used a push stick to finish the cut. The board pivoted counterclockwise into the blade and, before I could let go the push stick, several things happened, seemingly at once. I scooted left, heard a loud pop, felt a stinging in my right palm, and heard the board strike the back of the shop. I didn't actually see the board in flight as it was moving at high speed. The handle of the push stick took a small divot out of the center of my right palm. Even though I saw it coming, I couldn't quite get myself out of the way fast enough.

Advice

Featherboards, high pistol-grip push sticks with long bases, Grip-Tite magnetic featherboards, and some common sense. Even a small piece of wood moving at high speed can seriously hurt you or someone else.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was new to woodworking and didn't even know what a feather board was, and I was using a molding head on my table saw to cut a decorative design in some scrap pine a little over an inch square to check the depth of cut and center position of the cut. The pine had a knot that caught in one of the blades of the cutter, bending the table saw insert down, magnifying the problem by allowing the cutter to take a huge bite out of the wood. Needless to say, the junk of pine came back at me before I had a chance to react, striking me in the lower abdomen. It knocked the wind out of me to the point that I was forced to lie down for over an hour before I could function again.

Advice

Check all the wood that you plan to use and look for knots or stress that can cause problems when making cuts, even pieces of scrap for test cuts. Always use featherboards, and never stand directly behind the blade of the saw.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was setting up for a dado cut with one of those adjustable, V-shaped, dado blades. I was new to using one of these, but had made 50-60 cuts with it so far, and understood what I was doing. The cut I was setting up was pretty wide, and I was double checking that the blade was going to clear the insert, was at the right height, etc. before turning the saw on. I was being careful, paranoid even, with the plastic key removed from the power switch so it couldn't accidentally be turned on, and with the saw unplugged, just in case. I was turning the blade by hand, to make sure that the teeth wouldn't hit the insert, and somehow managed to get my middle finger caught between the table surface and one of the blade teeth. Carbide tipped blades, especially new ones, are *sharp*. The momentum of the blade turning, even very slowly (I wasn't spinning it, just turning it), was enough to drive the tooth into my finger. I probably should have gone to the ER, since it took me a couple of hours to get the bleeding to stop, but I didn't. No real damage, but I do have a nice scar to remind me to be careful, and that even being paranoid careful isn't a guarantee that I won't get hurt.

Advice

I don't think that this was really avoidable. I suppose I could have used a push-stick to turn the blade, but that seems unlikely in practice.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

My accident occurred while attempting to create a stopped dado on the tablesaw: with 20-20 hindsight, an absolutely foolish thing to do. As the wood was lowered onto the blade, it kicked back - badly spraining my right thumb and worse, dragging my left hand into the dado blade. I was amazingly lucky: I permanently lost the fingernails on my ring and middle fingers but only grazed the bone and didn't lose the pulp (fingertip). The only reason the injury wasn't more severe was that I had installed a new zero-clearance insert in the saw just seconds before doing the cut, and my hand bounced away rather than being sucked into the saw.

Advice

The router is the proper tool for this kind of cut. I've seen two other reports just like mine - lowering wood onto a dado blade is an inherently foolhardy move. I suppose it could be done safely with an intricate support and clamping system, but I'd never try it. Another tip: zero clearance inserts not only improve your results, they increase safety!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Ripping some 6" wide 6/4 Poplar to make some temp supports for another job. Was using a push stick; came to the end of the board-cut - the unsupported cutoff side of the rip, teetered over the rear edge of the table saw, as it was falling off, I instinctively reached with my left (free) hand (I had the push stick in my right hand at the time) to catch the teetering piece. The tip-side of my left-hand thumb came into contact with the side of the ripping blade and immediately sent my hand flying past my face to a position behind me. I remember the dull thud sound, followed by an intense numbing sensation on the tip of my thumb. I realized that something bad had just happened. I finally looked back as saw that I had my thumb still attached (thank goodness that I use a zero-clearance insert) but that it was bleeding profusely from the tip. I had blown away a postage-stamp size area, about a 1/8 in depth. Bled like crazy. Immediately ran upstairs (hiding it from my young daughter and son) thrust it into a bottle of peroxied and tried to pack it with NEOSPORIN. It was ragged and bled so heavily that it pushed the ointment out. I remembered some military training, did an improvised-modified field dressing. Had my neighbor (an ER surgeon) check it that night. Long story short? healed great - 2 weeks still have intense pain on the tip - nerve damage.

Advice

Never, Never, get your flesh near any spinning, rotating object. Wait. we have more time than fingers! If you do not use the factory blade guard - buy an aftermarket one for \$300. I bet my emerg. room bill could have exceeded that! Be vigilant! Be patient! Protect yourself. And please, have fun and enjoy woodworing! It has relaxed me from Corporate management responsibilities!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

This does not describe an accident but, having read many of the submissions to this site I changed my tune regarding blade guards. For many years I labored on a Shopsmith postage stamp table, never using the blade guard, doing many operations which would now seem exceedingly dangerous. For example, trying to cut pieces far too large for the table. I always used push sticks-devices and was very careful to keep away from the blade but even with these precautions I could have been injured severely. I am lucky to have all my fingers. Therefore, last night, I installed the guard on my new Delta CS and intend to learn to live with it.

Advice

Read these pages, FWW had a survey at one time which indicated that very few accidents have been reported where the blade guard, anti kickback devices and splitters were installed. Take it to heart.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting a piece of Lexan (like plexiglass) without the safety cover and anti-kickback device. The material got caught and it grazed my stomach before flying into a cardboard box about 15 feet behind me. I had to pull it out of the box.

Advice

USE the SAFETY device! Im telling you I won't use a table saw without one now. As long as it is lined up with the blade it will work.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Several years ago I was cutting cabinet toekick braces (20" long) using a miter and fence on a tablesaw. I looked off for a second, the board got twisted and one loud whang later, I was missing some fingers. After several hours of surgery, my fingers were reattached. They work, but not too great.

Advice

Use the right tool for the job. This would have been better done with a RAS. Use the guard. I always do now.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping hard old oak 2 1/2" thick for workbench legs. On the last one, I picked up the finished piece and drug it back into the blade. I suppose I was tired or inattentive. The board slammed into my chest sending me breathless into the wall. Usually when I lift things this way I lift them higher which would have sent this one into my face. My sternum (connects the ribs together in the middle) was seperated from my ribs, my heart was bruised and I had an open gash in my chest. About six weeks later I was able to lift things and work again... Although I still don't use a guard all the time I do push work completely through without attempting to lift it back toward myself.

Advice

Push your work completely through and don't attempt to drag it back accross the table, that is a really bad idea.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting 3" x 3" pine squares. I had cut all of them but this last one. I made the cut and noticed I was off square. So I ran it through the saw again and it twisted just enough to catch the blade. The blade picked up the square and hurled it and my upper right arm. I always wear a full face shield.

Advice

Never work when you're tired. When cutting small squares use the t-square instead of the rip fence. Use a jig if possible.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

ON A BUMPERSTICKER: I REMOVED THE GUARD FROM MY TABLE SAW AND CUT OFF PART OF MY LEFT INDEX FINGER. THIS HAPPENED 1 WEEK AFTER I BOUGHT THE SAW. I REMOVED THE GUARD TO DO A JOB AND GOT TOO COMFORTABLE OPERATING THE SAW WITHOUT IT. LATE ONE EVENING, AFTER MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER WENT TO BED, I WENT BACK OUT TO MY WOODSHOP TO FINISH SOME PROJECTS. I NEEDED TO RIP ONE MORE SMALL BOARD BEFORE ASSEMBLING THE PIECE. I WAS ONLY TAKING OFF ONE QUARTER OF AN INCH. INSTEAD OF PROPERLY SETTING UP THE SAW FENCE; SO THAT THE LARGEST PORTION OF THE BOARD WAS AGAINST THE FENCE, I WENT A HEAD AND STARTED RIPPING THE BOARD. IT HAPPENED WHEN I REACH AROUND TO GRAB THE TWO PIECES OF WOOD, TO PREVENT THEM FROM SHOOTING BACK AT ME OR INTO THE WALL. BY REACHING AROUND AND GRABBING THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BOARDS, I CAUSED THE BOARD TO BIND WITH THE BLADE. THE BOARD KICKED BACK AT ME, DRAGGING MY FINGER ACROSS THE BLADE. THE DAMAGE WAS TOO SEVERE TO RE-ATTACH MY LEFT INDEX FINGER. FORTUNETLY, I ONLY LOST 1/3 OF THE FINGER, BUT IT IS STILL GONE. THE BLADE PULLED SHREDDED MY FINGER IN A WAY THAT THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT TO ATTACH.

Advice

NEVER, EVER REMOVE THE GUARDS. IF THE JOB REQUIRES IT, REPLACE IT WHEN YOU ARE DONE!!!! I WISH I HAD. -CHUCKKEEB@AOL.COM

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

My high school woodshop teacher was working on a project for me, cutting stopped dados in a piece of 3/4 mahogany 12x12. This was the top of a speaker box, and overhung each side by an inch or so. He set the fence to cut the dado in an inch from the side and cut the dado. Fine. Instead of moving the fence, measuring and cutting the second dado, he reasoned that he could have the exact same overlap if he fed the piece in backward for the 2nd dado. As he reached to turn the saw on, he told the class, "This is how NOT to use the table saw, and if I see any of you do it, you're outta here." He was holding the piece flat against the table with his right hand, and pushing the piece toward the fence with his left hand. He began to draw the wood over the blade toward him when, as you would expect, the blade caught the wood and flung it over his right shoulder, impaling it in the drywall. When the wood went flying, his left hand suddenly had nowhere to go except into the blade. Before he could get his hand stopped, he had completely removed the tips of his first 3 fingers, down to the length of his pinkie. As he was standing there bleeding on the floor, he said, "See - I TOLD you this was how not to use the saw."

Advice

Don't use shortcuts that compromise shop safety; a little common sense will save a great deal of pain and medical bills - possibly even funeral expense. Respect your machines - they can and do cause injuries and death.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was doing a test cut on my table saw. I stupidly used a short piece of 2X4, and I didn't hold it tight. Needless to say, it kicked back right on my left tit. I yelled out and cursed in at least three languages. The LOL thought I had chopped off a hand or something. No blood on the outside, but my tit turned all kinds of neat colours, purple, blue, green, red, yellow, etc. No permanent damage.

Advice

1. Don't rip short pieces (2-4") on the TS. 2. Make sure you have a good hold and enough pressure on small pieces of wood when cutting on the TS. Use pushsticks if you're too close to the blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting 1/4 inch luan plywood to make drawer bottoms. I was cutting a 20"x48" piece off from a full sheet. I did not have any guards on the saw. At the completion of the cut, the piece between the blade and the fence kicked back. I sensed the kick back was going to happen and had a microsecond to think what to do before it actually kicked back so I put my right hand up to protect my head and face from injury. The plywood went between my second and third fingers and slid the full 48" length tearing up and gouging flesh the whole time. The wood gouged out a 1/4 inch wide laceration 3/4 of the circumference of my second finger and to the bone. It severed the nerves to the finger and after two years I still do not have feeling in the finger and probably never will.

Advice

This operation should be done with a panel saw or a clamped straight edge and a circular saw. If you do use a table saw, take the time to put the guards back on the saw and use a helper to support the overhanging end of the wood so you as the operator can better control the work piece between the blade and the fence.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I needed to rip a piece of trim for the exterior of my house, (about 3ft long, from ~1x5 to ~1x4). I remember thinking, "boy this piece of wood is really cutting smoothly. I was apparently asleep, because I pushed the board on through until I pushed my right index finger onto the blade. I right away woke up and my first thought was "I can't believe I just sawed my finger" I shut off the saw, and looked at it being glad was all there, other than the big gash (about 5/8" long about 1/8" deep). I decided that I'd better clean it some because it didn't really hurt yet, so I hurried up to the sink to rinse it off, trying to hold it upright to minimize the blood dripping on the floor. After getting it rinsed I used some paper towels and to keep in the blood while I found a bandaid (my wife was out of town, so there was no one to help).

It probably should have had stitches, but it was Sunday, and I wasn't in the mood for some doctor or nurse poking around in my sore finger. When my wife made me go to the doctor later, they said it should've been stitched, but it was too late then. It took a month or two to heal so that it didn't require lots of cleaning maintenance. Luckily I work in a clean environment, so I was able to leave it unbandaged a lot of the time. I forget now, it took 6mos to a year to heal completely. If I'm digging with it, like in a bucket of ice that's kindof stuck together it'll hurt a little. I kept the bloody soaked paper towel I first used as a reminder.

Advice

Use push sticks!! Stay alert when sawing (of course I would have thought I was alert then, except that I sawed my finger, so apparently I wasn't)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

The mount of the blade guard-antikickback pawls on my Toolkraft 10" tablesaw had broken and I had not been able to replace it. I was ripping 1/4" plywood into a 14" x 14" square. Having just recently checked the saw to assure that the blade was parallel to the miter guage slots, etc., I thought I was working with a well adjusted-properly aligned tool. As I pushed the piece of plywood through the blade to cut off the last side....WHAM! The piece kicked back violently. I was standing slightly left of the cut line, but as the piece came off the blade it spun counterclockwise as the blade rounded of the left leading edge corner. One of the pointed corners of the plywood caught me a couple of inches to the right of my navel and just below my belt line. Fortunately I was wearing a double-pouch leather tool belt that dissipated most of the blow, which was still enough to knock the breath out of me and put me on my knees for a couple of minutes. When I regathered my senses I unplugged the saw and started checking to see why it did that. I found that the outfeed end of the rip fence was near 1/16" closer to the blade than the infeed end, which caused the piece being cut to become pinched between the fence and blade, causing the kickback.

Advice

Unless you have one of those high-dollar rip fences that is without a doubt "self-aligning", double check the distance between your rip fence and the blade before making any cut after moving the fence from a previous position.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was building a doll house for my daughters and needed some pretty small pieces, about 1/16" thick by 1/8" high, too small I guess. Not wanting to kick up too much dust in the small workshop in my basement, I decided to move my portable tablesaw through the snow outside. I carried the saw, wood and GLOVES out to the shed. Everything was going fine, had the rip fence (which incidently I can't find now!!!) all set up for the proper thickness, I was all warm and cozy in my snowsuit, complete with my thick thinsulate gloves. What could happen to ruin this perfect woodworking day?? The gloves, how would one know the gloves would ruin the day. On what was to be the final cut, and indeed it was, I moved the wood closer to the finish line, my warm gloved fingers edging closer and closer too! the blade.....with a force greater than a brand new 10 hp. shop vac, the saw blade grabbed my glove, which were holding my fingers, and hurled them into the blade. Now I never considered myself to be a strong man, but somehow I found the 500 lbs. of torque required to pull the glove, remember, with fingers inside, from the blade, pull the power cord and head for the house to shock our babysitter who was watching the kids while I remodeled my appendages. A quick taxi trip to the hospital, paid for by a bloodied five dollar bill, tip included, and three stitches later I was on the mend. To this day, 5 years later, I swear to god there ain't no life in the top of my left thumb and I have learned to respect my table saw the same way one would respect a grizzly in the woods.

Advice

If it's cold enough outside to wear gloves, drop the power tools, grab the kids and a sled and do something else for them!! Loose clothing and power tools mix about as well as booze and power tools, respect 'em man.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was in my shop on 2-20-1999 after a 6 mo hiatus creating a hose reel for a new 50' air hose I just bought. I was cutting up pretty good sizes of 1/2" plywood (8"x13") and bigger using just the fence. I had to make two 4"x4" pieces. I ripped a longish 4" wide section (now using a push "shoe"). Then I made a mistake. I just rotated the 4" wide (must have been 14" or so long) and fed it thru the saw. Uch! It did not feel right AT ALL! Instead of listening to my first instinct I made a second cut. The piece caught, bound and rotated. It was drug thru the blade along with the push thing, my thumb and forefinger. Two hours of microsurgery later I was put back together. Somewhat. I cut thru the thumb joint and destroyed it. I do not know yet how much I will be able to bend it. The forefinger did not destroy the joint although I cut through the nerve and tendon. It was a horrific sight that I hope to never see again in my life. I will have to go thru physical therapy to regain the use of those two fingers and don't really have any idea on the long-term prognosis.

Advice

1. If you have not used a tool for an extended time, review safety procedures. 2. LISTEN to your instincts! If a cut feels wrong, it probably is. 3. Keep them fingers AWAY from the blade

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While I was ripping a 3/4 x 3/4 stock down to 5/16 (I was taking off a bead I had routed) I cut the top of my left index finger. I was using a push stick with my right hand as my left hand (index finger) was holding the stock against the fence. I was concentrating on keeping the stock tight against the fence so the reveals above and below the bead would be equal. At the end of the third or fourth cut, my finger slipped into the spinning blade. It removed about half of my finger nail, nicked the bone, and mangled the skin on the end of my finger. A few sutures later and my finger is about 3 mm shorter.

Advice

I usually use my finger boards that fit in the miter slot for this kind of work, but the stock was too narrow and they would not reach. Like a fool, I did what I had done before and took the chance of allowing my finger to get within an inch or so of the spinning blade. When I returned home from the clinic, I finished the cuts by removing the fixtures that hold the finger boards in the miter slots and using it to hold the stock against the fence with my hand. This kept my hand a safe distance from the blade and did a better job of keeping the stock tight against the fence. I have now ordered a set of magnet finger boards. Never take the chance of getting your fingers close to the blade or bit. If you have done it before, never do it again. I was very lucky to have only lost the end of my finger.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Accident Description: I was ripping 1-1/2" strips of laminate from a larger sheet with no blade guard or splitter. As I was approaching the end of an 8' pass, the strip caught and kicked back and the whole 8' strip shot past me and hit the other side of the shop. When the strip started to catch, I was already starting to duck to the left, but it was such a close call that the first thing that I did was to check myself for a cut throat. After I put on some fresh underwear, I went and checked the laminate strip. It had been shattered as it passed back between the fence and the blade and it looked just like a serrated, razor sharp steak knife - only 8' long.

Advice

Use a blade guard and a splitter and be extra careful cutting laminate with a tablesaw - maybe use a laminate trimmer with the strip cutting attachment.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I had glued up a drawer for my first project - a workbench. Due to an error in measurement it was too long. I decided that I could use the tablesaw to cut about an inch off the side boards. I used the rip fence as a length guide. Well about halfway through the cut I must have skewed the drawer and it kicked back. I didn't even see what happened. There was a bang and something hit me in the shoulder. The next thing I saw was the drawer laying on the floor and my shoulder hurt like hell. I had a really BIG bruise for about two weeks.

Advice

I was very lucky. The drawer could have hit me in the face or head and done permanent damage. Never cross cut using the fence as a length guide. Use a good quality mitre gauge with an extension fence if the piece is long.

Tool Type

Experience

Injury Severity

Description

I was guiding a small piece of plywood thru the table saw to create a dado (so there was no blade guard). The saw kicked back and my thumb slipped onto the blade, causing a severe cut (8 stitches, and still no feeling after 1 year)

Advice

Use push sticks. This is very simple.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

18 month old son stuck finger into fan housing on contractors table saw motor. Required 13 stitches.

Advice

Build a housing to completely enclose the saw. Suggest any open frame (vs cabinet type) tool have the motor enclosed, those fan covers WON'T keep out small fingers, and those aluminum fan blades are very effective at causing damage.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Working in my Garage shop, in the summer, with the garage door open, and my back to the driveway. I was ripping some 1x4 red oak (irrelevant, actually). As I was nearing the end of the rip, the next-door neighbor's ankle biter rammed me in the back of the legs with his "Big Wheel" The distraction was enough for me to clip my thumb on the saw blade (No guard in place) Took a little micro-surgery, but I retained my digits. I'm sure I expanded the lil fellah's vocabulary, quite a bit.

Advice

In retrospect, I guess I'd have turned the saw around so I could see the little **^\$&# coming.. and I ALWAYS use my blade guard, these days. Always try to ensure a distraction-free environment, bfore doing ANY work around powered equipment.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Intermediate

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was cutting a 1/4inch thick poplar strip into 1 inch wide strips. Was using a push stick (the length of the stock) but the wood began to "chatter"(bouncing up and down). I took my left hand and placed it across the fence to press down the chattering wood. The blade was higher than I expected and the blade tore two big gashes out of my third and fourth fingers.

Advice

Use a featherboard on the fence to hold down the wood as it passes through the blade!!!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was in our shop working with two other people. We were cutting 4'X 8'lexan sheet with a thin kerf plastic cutting blade. We were doing multiple sheets per pass and the sheets were being worked down to a manageable size (1' X 2'). Some passes we would get a sheet that would catch and jam which should have been a big warning sign. Finally as I was standing directly behind the saw one sheet let go. It kicked back and spun rapidly hitting me in the groin and then continued on to leave a good sized dent in the industrial metal cabinets behind me. I ended up with a good sized bruise in the most uncomfortable area, but it could have been much worse.

Advice

Never feed multiple sheets always one at a time Try and position yourself (when practical) to the side of your work.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I had just purchased my table saw. I had no idea what kickback was. My father was helping me make a workbench out of 2x4's and plywood. In the course of cutting the plywood. I had made a mistake in my measurements and needed to rip about an additional 1/2" off of this 8' piece of plywood. The piece was too wide to place the wider portion of the plywood between the fence and the saw blade. So I adjusted the fence to 1/2" away from the saw blade and started cutting. All of a sudden there was SNAP, POP, SMACK! The 1/2" strip got pinched between the fence and the blade. The blade shot it back. Luckily neither my father nor I was standing directly behind the saw. The piece that shot out traveled about 10' and pierced (went completely through!) a 3/4" piece of plywood! I keep it as a reminder. Whew! Close call!

Advice

Always rip with the wider portion between the fence and sawblade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was cutting a piece of 14" x 14" plywood down to exact size. Because of the way I was doing the cut, I managed to twist the piece against the fence creating a fabulous opportunity for kickback! The saw cut a nice quarter circle in the plywood before it launched the piece across the shop and broke my small parts box.

Advice

ALWAYS be careful not to stand in the way of kickback. Never give the piece an opportunity to twist! The force of that piece was impressive!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping some 1" pine on my tablesaw. I had the blade set a little high from the previous cut I had made. The pieces were between 12 and 36" long. (I was using up some scrap to make blanks for a craft for my son's Cub pack.) After cutting several pieces, one got stuck between the blade and the fence. I shut off the motor and made to grab the piece, before the blade stopped. My thumb brushed against the still moving blade. I got a pretty bad cut (no stitches, but it bled like crazy, and two weeks later, it's still not healed completely).

Advice

My table saw does not have a blade guard. If it had one this would never have happened. If the blade had still been under power, I would have likely cut off the end of my thumb. To much haste, I guess.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

A couple of days ago I was tapering some cherry table legs for a table I am making for my wife. I was using a taper jig but a normal table insert, not a zero clearance. I was in a hurry to cut the legs and get home when one of the wedge cutoffs fell between the blade and the insert...Needless to say I have a bruise 1 1/4" x 3/4" about 2" from my navel between my ribs and pelvis. I might be a wimp but ^%%\$@\$#\$!! Did that hurt.

Advice

Take your time, pay attention, never rush. If you dont have time to do it safely, do it another day. I should have changed inserts, and payed attention to the cut off.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was sizing some glued-up panels for a large furniture project and I didn't realize that I had missed scraping a rather large bead of glue off of the backside of one of the panels. I was not using a panel cutter of any kind as the panels were relatively narrow. I should also mention that the tablesaw had no guards of any kind on it. I placed the panel on the saw and began to push it through. The panel rocked right to left along the long bead of glue between the wood and the table. This lifted the wood up off of the table over the blade insert, where the blade, set to just a little thicker than the panel, stopped cutting and lifted the wood right off the table surface where it began to spin. The blade left quite a crescent shaped gouge in the back of the piece. By instinct, I tried to push down on the piece as it was about to fly up into my face. As I pushed down, the wood was swept off the right side of the table by the blade, and I plunged the area where my left thumb meets my hand right down into the blade. I was immediately rushed to the emergency room where I required 20 some odd stitches to reattach the palm side of my thumb. I was cut from the bottom of my thumb, all around it on the palm side, up my thumb between the index finger and thumb, nearly right to the end of the thumb. The doctor said that if any more meat had been removed, they would either have had to take the thumb off. This happened 3 years ago and not only did it take me 4 to 5 months to recover, but it still doesn't work correctly.

Advice

Today, I believe in and use safety guards. I am still using the stock guard that came with my Unisaw, but soon I am planning to purchase either the Brett guard, or the Biesemeyer guard. I still have nightmares about losing my thumb, and I wouldn't want to wish them on my worst enemy. USE THE GUARDS!!!!!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a 2" oak board. Pushed it through with a push stick. After the cut was made I held the board in place with the push stick as I didn't want to push the board off of the table and risk damage. As I bent over and turned the saw off, the oak board crept back into the blade and shot across the top of the blade. I was struck in the nose and mouth, and lifted and thrown about eight feet. The result was a laceration across my nose, the nose was broken, a deep laceration from inside my nostril to my lip, three chipped front teeth, and a cracked molar (which I lost).

Advice

When ripping a board, always run it all the way through the blade and off of the table. I have purchased anti-kickback wheels and will not operate the saw without the guard. I'm lucky to be alive!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Due to my stupidity I did not take the time to set my table saw up properly and failed to use a push stick while trimming a narrow and thin piece of wood. The wood was to be used on a sweet and low holder. While pushing the wood through it moved unexpectedly and my right middle finger made contact with the blade cutting into the end of my finger 1 inch. I lost part of the bone and finger.

Advice

Listen to your wife if you have one. Otherwise do it the right way.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting a groove out of the back of some wood when a piece of wood about the size of a pencil impaled my right middle finger. There were two pieces and the small one I could get out . My mother and father were with me so they drove me to the hospital where a Dr. whom was not very brite tried to pull it out like you would take a fence post out of the ground. I heard a snap and the Dr. said well I got itI said while you have the finger dead please go in and make sure you got it all out . He said no I'll just exray it . I pleaded with him for about five miminuts before he went back in and found three or four more pieces.. He then had it exrayed and said its ok! The next day my finger was about one and a half inches around! needless to say another trip to the Dr. but not the first one. After the surgery I found out he broke it off and left a piece about one quarter of an inch by three quaters of an inch long imbeded in the bone. I wish that was the end but not so. Two more surgerys later and five more pieces of wood later I find out that my finger has a staff infection in it but not the type the you can cure with just a shot or two. Two more surgerys too but tubes in my arteryys so I can have intervienous feeding for six months. Thats right six months .you want to talk about being sick I thought I was going to die and sometimes wish I would!

Advice

Spend the money for a power feeder . Even tho I had twenty five years as a pattermaker just one small slip up can cost you a bunch and can get any one.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was using my table saw and at the same time had some loud classical music on the radio. I like classics real loud. I always turn the saw off after a cut, but I left it on just to get another piece of wood. I got distracted and didn't return for a while, all the time enjoying the music. When I returned to the saw, I reached down to clear a piece of scrap near the blade, never hearing the saw. I just touched the blade and tore a terrible hole in my thumb. I required a skin graft and months to heal. This is all after 40 years of using power tools, accident free.

Advice

Don't work with power tools with the radio or music turned on!! Turn radio off just before you start using the tool and then back on when you are completely finished.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping a piece of wood using push sticks. To this day I can't figure out what happened, but it happened in a hurry! There was a loud bang, the push stick twisted in my hand and the short piece of wood that use to be against the fence flew pass me and struck the blade of the bandsaw about ten feet away. It hit the bandsaw blade with enough force to move it from between the cool blocks. I assume somehow I pinched the wood against the fence. Funny thing though I had a premonition that something was wrong an instant before the event. My injury was a little skin lost around the base of the thumb.

Advice

Always use a guard, make sure the blade is parrallel to the fence and don't ignore those little feelings you have about your set up being wrong.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Cutting a piece of wood too short against a fence. The piece twisted and flew across the room with great violence.

Advice

Never cut a piece against a fence so short that it can twist. When cutting against a fence use multiple push sticks if necessary to hold the wood firmly against the fence and the table and push firmly and continuously until it clears the blade. When cutting against a fence stand enough to the side so that if the saw throws the wood it will not hit you.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Attempting to cut a piece of 1/4 inch plywood about 2 ft X 1 ft. The guard was not in place on the tablesaw. At the end of the cut I released the piece of plywood and reached for the shut-off switch. The plywood bounced and hit the blade throwing it back at me. It struck my arm right at the wrist. The wrist was broken in two places. I bought a pair of board buddies that day.

Advice

Use the guard. Do not let go of cut wood until saw stops.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping down a cedar 2x4 to mill a board for a project. I was ripping it on the 1.5" wide edge so that the cut peice would be about 3/4 by 3 1/2. Anyway, the dogs upstairs started to play and I thought that I should stop, but I was almost all the way through the board, so I went to finish. The coffee table upstairs went over. Instinctively I twisted to look in the direction of the noise and I turned the little finger of my left hand into the blade (I am right handed, so this was my free hand). It kicked back with so much force it felt like my arm was pulled out of the shoulder socket. I turned the saw off and examined my finger; no bone damage, but all of the skin and some of the muscle tissue was gone. I went upstairs and cleaned it out while it was still numb. At the hosptial I got 3 stitches. My finger is about a blade width shorter now, and I feel really lucky!

Advice

If the dogs had been out I never would have been distracted and wouldn't have cut my finger. I should have stopped when they started and waited it out. If there is a distraction in your shop or in the area, take care of that first!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

As often happens, this can all be traced back to the fact that I didn't have the blade guard installed and did not use a push stick. I was ripping a 1x6 down to about 4 1/2" (which left about 1" on the left side of the blade) and was pushing the board with one hand on either side to prevent kickback. I took my eye off the blade for a fraction of a second near the end of the cut & that's all it took. Hopefully, the memory of 10 stitches going into my thumb will kick my brain into gear next time.

Advice

ALWAYS use a push stick & keep the guard installed whenever possible.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was ripping a board on my table saw, and towards the end of the cut, I grabbed my shop-made push block to finish feeding the stock. In order to prevent the board from wandering away from the fence, I was exerting a large amount of pressure down and into the fence. Just as the cut was nearing the end, the handle of the push block broke off, and my hand fell to the table, millimeters (it seemed) from the spinning blade. I realized that I should not have been pressing so hard on the push block. Also, I think I was trying to fight my saw's tendency to pull a board away from the fence in front of the blade. I believe this is due to misalignment between the blade and the fence.

Advice

Use commercial pushsticks that won't break, rather than shopmade wooden ones that might give out at the wrong moment. Never force a workpiece into a tool. Be sure your tools are properly sharpened and aligned.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Seems like this happens too often. Got a little too comfortable cutting stopped dados when my left hand slipped and sliced into my left ring finger.

Advice

Never cut stopped dados on a tablesaw, its not worth the missing fingers.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Nearly killed myself crosscutting with the rip fence. Piece jammed hard against blade as it twisted stopping the blade dead. No injury but if the blade hadn't stopped I'd hate to think of the consequences.

Advice

Don't crosscut with the rip fence.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was resawing a 2x4 with the tablesaw and wasn't using a pushstick. The light in the shop was dim and I couldn't see the sawteeth sticking through the top of the workpiece, but thought I was clear. The saw cut through the tip and fingernail of my left index finger. Luckily, it missed the bone and healed with only a slight scar.

Advice

Plenty of light on the business end of your tools, and always use a pushstick, no matter what you are sawing or how clear you think you are.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was attempting to route out a section of a oak board on the table saw to use in a lap joint. Did not have a dado blade. The blade guard was removed during a previous cut that would not have been possible with it on. As the wood was passed through the blade, the breaker blew when the saw motor loaded up. Because the lights went out also, my attention was diverted for just a moment. Since I never stand behind the wood when it is cut I was not hit in my body when the work kicked back. Unfortunately my left hand did absorb the bulk of the force. My little finger took all the force just above the base of the knuckle joint on the side. As you could imagine it got cut from the blunt force and stung like a jackhammer hit it. I bandaged it up and went about my work. A week later the gash was healing but the finger was still very sore. The back of the hand was swollen and palm black and blue. I finally went and had it x-rayed only to find a fractured joint at the! base of the finger. (boxer fracture) Could of been much worse. In a cast for a month, It will be a while before I regain full use of motion and strength.

Advice

1. Ofcourse use the blade guard, always! 2. Use a router to do router work and NOT the table saw. 3. Be sure to have the correct power setup in your shop. My saw now has it's own 30 amp circuit. Be sure the shop lights are on their own circuit. 4. NEVER EVER take ANY chances when using a table saw. The results are, more often than not, life changing.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was finished cutting a strip of wood and had the scrap piece still on the saw table. I went to pull scrap piece off and wood was cocked when I picked it up and it pulled it into the saw with me still holding the wood. The outcome was an amputation of the right thumb.

Advice

SHUT OFF EQUIPMENT BEFORE REACHING INTO IT. AT ANY TIME.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

When I was in high school I took woodshop hoping to get an easy A. I was ripping a piece of walnut on the table saw. I had zero experience with power tools. I did not know what pushsticks were and there was no blade guard on the saw. When I reached around the back side of the blade to pull the piece through, I laid my left hand on the blade. My thumb and ring finger were completely severed, my index finger was ripped out of the socket, and the middle finger was badly cut at the knuckle closest to my palm. Two years and 6 surgeries later, I have two working fingers on that hand, the middle and the little finger. In the winter my left hand is a major consideration, it hurts from Oct. to June because I have only 30% circulation in it.

Advice

Use the blade guard ALWAYS!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping 1/2" from 1x6x18". I was wearing safety equipment and have been using the table saw for over 20 years without a accident. I had just finished ripping the board, turned the saw off (thank God) and was reaching over the blade to pick up the piece. My saw is positioned to the right my basement exit which has sliding glass doors. Just as I was reaching for the board, a bird flew up against the door, making a low clucking noise and loud thump on the glass. I looked up...fatal mistake...My left hand dropped down slightly, and the slowing blade caught my thumb about 1/2" from the knuckle. It cut all the way to the underside of the thumb nail which was all that held the tip of my thumb intact. Sawed the tip of the bone off which remained in the outside portion of the cut. I could see it. It was sewed up, but I have no feeling in the tip of my thumb now, at least not to the point of being normal. May never come back says the doc!

Advice

Never take your eyes off a running machine while you are in close prox of it..even if it is turned off...!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

This injury occurred in 1987 while working a student job at the university where I now manage a woodworking facility. I was crosscutting a 3/4" x 12" x 18" piece of plywood to 3/4" x 12" x 12" against the rip fence. The poorly designed, poorly maintained rip fence loosened and moved while making the cut. The movement of the fence caused the workpiece to be kicked back, the motion of the workpiece forced my hand into the unguarded blade. My right thumb and middle finger were held only by the flesh, I had cut right through the end knuckles. After 6 hours of surgery I was lucky to have only a little nerve loss, a little more circulation loss, but two frozen knuckles and right thumb and middle fingers 1/4" shorter than the left. That the accident occurred at a University that happened to have a pre-eminent reconstructive hand surgeon on the faculty was another stroke of luck. Prior to this experience, I had had little experience with a tablesaw prior to this accident. I had had almost no training on the job. I was essentially told, "use the tablesaw to cut this". Any one of: high quality equipment, routine maintenance, user education, and proper use of guards could have saved me my fingers. To this day I swear that this accident wasn't my fault, but that of my direct supervisor for the reasons mentioned above. You simply do not stick a novice in front of a crappy, unguarded tablesaw without telling them how to use it.

Advice

Again know what your doing, understand your the principles of your task, take care of your equipment, and always use appropriate safety devises

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a 1/2" deep saw kerf in a redwood 2x4 about 3 feet long. I was using a push stick but no guards. Just as the cut was almost complete a laborer, whom I had hired to help with some of the grunt work and clean, asked me a question. I looked up at him. The push stick slipped and my right hand went into the blade. The ring and little fingers had cuts that required stitches. There was a diagonal cut completely through the first joint of the middle finger leaving it attached only by a piece of skin. After a long and very expensive reconstructive surgery and six months of physical therapy I have no movement in that joint and never will have. Now, after a year and a half, the feeling is returning.

Advice

If you have helpers they should be instructed not to interrupt while a power tool is running and always use the guards.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I had borrowed a table saw from a friend for my new shop and was thoroughly enjoying having the ability to make accurate cuts (as compared to my circular saw). I had even made my own "push stick" out of plywood. One time I was ripping an 18" piece of 2X4 (making a 1 inch cut) and as I was pushing the final inches, didn't take notice that the push stick was going right towards the blade. When the push stick hit the blade, it ripped the stick from my hand and sent it flying. I quickly turned the machine off and back away and to the side of the saw. I was lucky my hand didn't go onto the blade or was speared by this push stick.

Advice

Pay attention as to where the stick is when you are cutting small pieces of wood. The push stick can be helpful, but it's no guaranty against stupidity.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Blade height too high. Guard off. push stick not big enough. Got nervous as i realized blade height too high. Tried to adjust hand on push stick. Next thing I know I'm off to the hospital with mangled ring finger, right hand. Sorry this is point form but one handed typing is a bitch as im discovering. (This just happened 3 1/2 hrs ago and my hand is bundled up, waiting for surgery tomorrow)

Advice

BLADE GUARD!!! BLADE GUARD!!! BLADE GUARD!!! GOOD PUSH STICK!!! GOOD PUSH STICK!!! BUY ONE, DONT CHEAP OUT AND MAKE ONE, BUY SOMETHING DESIGNED FOR YOUR SAFETY

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was very tired. I was in my shop crosscutting a 6" piece of wood on the TS. My mind was elsewhere. I needed to crosscut a piece the same width as a rip I had just made and like a dupa was too lazy to move the rip fence away far enough to get enough clearance. I figured I'd use the fence and pick up the dimension exactly. The blade guard was on the shelf. I knew better, but thought I could get away with it one time. You can guess what happened. The cut piece got caught between the blade and the fence and the saw kicked it back at me at about 200 mph. Fortunately, it hit me in the protective tire I have, just above my right hip. At least I was smart enough at the time to stand slightly out of the line of fire. I was lucky to escape with nothing more than a nasty-looking abrasion and a dollar bill-sized purple and black souvenir. Plus a new respect for the power of my TS.

Advice

Let this post serve as a reminder that total concentration is necessary whenever using power tools. If you feel tired, shut off the lights and come back another day. And if you are taking any medication that carries a drowsiness warning -- or God forbid, have had a few drinks -- don't operate any machinery. Let's ALL work safe!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping some very thin strips on the table saw and was not able to use the guard. As I was pushing the piece of wood through it kicked back and my ring finger on my left hand caught the blade. At first I thought the board just hit my finger until I saw all the blood. I chipped the bone and had to get stitched up at the accident room.

Advice

Use the guard when possible, make sure the blade is sharp, and when you have to rip thin strips try to rip them from wider boards and keep the widest part of the board against the fence. Oh yes and keep your hands back and use push sticks. I am not afraid to use the table saw but I am a lot more aware of what I am doing and think twice when I do something and use the safest method possible.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

It was my first time using a tablesaw. My husband gave a co-worker and I a brief lesson on the use of the saw. It was about the third cut that the wood back spun off the table and hit me in the ribs. The wood was a 12" X 12" piece of 3/4 inch plywood. It hit me with such force I could not breath. Without the help of a co-worker telling me to breath, I would have passed out. I fractured a rib and had internal injuries that still linger a year later. I am reminded regularly how lucky I am to be alive. Being a first time user, I had no idea that this could happen.

Advice

Learn all of the possible hazards before using a power tool! Not knowing could result in a tragedy. It can change your life in an instant.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was using a table saw to cut a groove into a corner of a picture frame so that I could install a contrasting wood color spline. I failed to use a proper jig. Couldn't use guard or push stick. The jig got caught between the blade and the fence. The blade pulled both my hands down and into the turning blade. The left middle finger caught the top of the blade and ripped the nail off and damaged the nail bed. The right thumb was more severely damaged as the blade cut deep enough to sever the outside artery and take a large portion of the bone. Only a small section of bone remains to hold the thumb. Of course some muscle, tendons, and tissue damage resulted. No pain at first--just like someone hit my hand with a big mallet. On the way to the hospital the pain was bad. I have use of both hands with full motion in both but the thumb is still a little numb on the outside. A reminder, always, about not thinking the cut through in my head first.

Advice

Think about all the cut options and work them through in your head first. Choose the safest method available to you and your skill levels.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was using a Unisaw to reduce the thickness of a foot-long 2x6 to about 1-1/2 inches. The splitter had been removed because I had the blade set up as high as possible. I was using a pushstick and a featherboard, but this only helped a little because the featherboard pushed against the bottom 3/4" of the 5-1/4" piece. As the piece passed by the blade it started toeing. In apparent slow motion I watched as the piece climbed up onto the blade and - whoomp! - it disappeared. Seconds later I looked down to see that the piece had struck me in the ribs, breaking a little skin and generating a nasty bruise. I still have a 90-degree scar from where the corner of the piece struck me. I incorporated the piece into my workbench, and I see it every time I'm in the shop.

Advice

Don't use a tool for a purpose it wasn't designed to do (ie, a tablesaw is not a planer). Keep your body out of the danger zone (12" either side of the blade, extending forward and backwards to infinity). Even when you're using safety equipment (featherboards, splitters, pushsticks), there is still danger around the tool!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

My index and middle finger of my left hand were injured on a Ryobi table saw....I started a rip cut but did not have a push stick ready. As I reached down to get the push stick my fingers were cut along the long axis....fortunately I received excellent care at hospital emergency room..the attending physician was an osteopathic physician and cleaned the wound and started an antibiotic...he called the hand surgeon at home and arranged for an appointment at day surgery the next day.....excellent surgical care involving suturing a nerve and a skin graft resulted in good function of the two fingers but some numbness persists.

Advice

Do not work in your shop when you are tired....Plan your cut, make sure there are no obstructions....I was not using the blade guard that came with the saw.....I buy plastic push sticks from wood working catalogs and replace them often... if you are injured...seek care immediately....cleaning the wound and antibiotic therapy are important because these injuries often penetrate bone

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Wood worker for nearly 20 years with no close calls. Late at night in my shop, NO BLADE GUARD or PUSH STICK. (thought those were for wimps) I tried to rip a 2 foot piece of pine, was tired, the wood got caught in the blade (sideways??) and pulled my hand in to the blade, removed the index finger (not cleanly) I am a paramedic, but seeing your own fingers mangled is not fun. I had to call an ambulance (no one home to drive me) (my co workers) took me to the hospital!! After 3 hours of surgery I have 3 inches (index finger) and dislocated my 2nd finger! Being stupid may have cost me my job!! But the good news is that after 4 weeks of therapy I'm back at my shop (against my wife's wishes)

Advice

SAFETY FIRST PLEASE! BLADE GUARD (BUY THE BEST EQUIPMENT U CAN AFFORD)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting a dado with a stacked dado head across a plywood piece 18" wide. The board was 28" long with this particular cut 24" from the rip fence. The board bound, kicked back violently, and drew my hand into the blade. I haven't lost any fingers yet, but extensive surgery was required and still may be necessary.

Advice

Don't cut dados further out from your fence than half the width of your board. Better, make a crosscut sled for dados. I will.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was making edge banding and needed to rip several 1/2" wide strips from an oak board about 6 ft long. I was new at using a table saw, and realized the value of using push sticks, but thought I could use the pushstick on the waste side of the work piece, instead of the part between the blade and fence. As I completed the cut, the narrow strip got pinched between the blade & fence, turned into a missile, and launched itself past me, impaling itself into the sliding door to my shop, about 15 ft away. (Lucky for me, I had read the part of the saw manual advising not to stand in direct line of the blade.) I patched the outside of the door, but left the inside unpatched to remind me of this incident.

Advice

Read the manual thoroughly, and either get instruction from someone more experienced, or buy a good book on the proper use and reason for safety devices. (I assumed push sticks were merely to keep your hands away from blade, didn't realize they were also to control the workpiece.)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

"I'll just...uh,oh!" I was ripping a small test piece and the cutoff looked like it might kickback. Because my brain was busy thinking about my next step (what I'd do with the test piece) and not on what I was doing at the moment my left hand didn't bother to consult my brain before it reached in to steady the 1/4" thick cutoff and got too close. Fortunately I was obeying other rules and the blade protruded only 1/8" through the top of the wood. But that 1/8" of blade tore up the tip of my left middle finger down to the bone. In fact the ER doctor had to nip off some of the bone (with what looked like wire cutters)to sew up what was left. Now that it's healed, I have the nail back and that finger is 1/8" shorter than my right middle finger.

Advice

Always avoid the phrase "I'll just..." It means you are thinking ahead and not about what you're doing. Power tools don't care how long you've been a woodworker. You get no points for experience. And they can't tell flesh and bone from wood. Oh yeah.. pushsticks, pushsticks, pushsticks!

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Intermediate

Injury Severity Hurt but OK

Description

I was just cutting 1/4" plywood for drawer bottoms and not paying enough attention. Kickback, big time. One of the pieces kicked and hit my right thigh edge-on. Cut my pants, broke the skin, and left a heckuva big black&blue welt. 4" to the left and it would have hit something far more sensitive than the front of my thigh.

Advice

Don't daydream. Follow the rules. I didn't. When cutting to a fence, use a spacer block instead. Clamp that block to the fence and make sure the wood clears it before the wood reaches the blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I had just finished building a corner cabinet in our dining room and was helping my wife put her china into it. Some pieces were too short to display well over the door rail. Even though it was nearly midnight, I went down to the shop to cut some small blocks out of 3/4 in. pine to raise them. After cutting the blocks on the table saw, I turned the blade off and reached over to pick up the blocks. My left hand flew up and smacked me in the face, but I didn't realize what had happened until I saw blood spots. By dragging my hand over the still-spinning blade, I had managed to turn my thumb pad to "hamburger" (surgeon's term-- he said he quit counting at 16 individual cuts) and took out a large chunk of nerve and vein on the inside of my index finger. Even after surgery and extensive PT, I am unable to bend the index finger past 70 degrees and I have no feeling on the inside. That finger also gets extremely cold in the winter. Fortunately, I am a righty, and so its not much more than an annoyance. It does keep me from taking up guitar (a longstanding goal) since I can't squeeze over the frets.

Advice

NEVER, EVER work with power tools when you're too tired to concentrate. 2) Watch the blade until it is at a dead stop. 3) LEAVE the blood spots in place as a constant reminder of your stupidity !!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was taking a woodworking class, and I needed to rip about an inch off of a cherry board for a dovetailed box we were making. The instructor had two assistants to help students with the power tools. Unfortunately, I got the one who wasn't very good. :-(We had had a demo of the table saw two weeks earlier, and had all run one board through it. The assistant didn't impress upon me the importance of maintaining pressure all the way through, nor did he remind me to stand out of the way of the wood. Close to the end of the cut, I must have let up on the pressure, and the wood kicked back and hit me square on the hip bone. Knocked the wind out of me, gave me a *nasty* bruise, and scared me half to death. Took me a few hours before I was willing to go back to the shop at all.

Advice

Make sure that the person teaching you how to use machinery is competent to teach, not just to use, the equipment. Take good notes when you first learn how a machine works, and review the notes. Always ask what the greatest risks of a given machine are.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was trimming a considerable amount of stock to length on the table saw. My mind was not completely focused on what I was doing and I was thinking about the next step. I powered down the saw and stepped around to the back side, knelt down, picked up a handful of cutoffs and tried to place them onto the table top. The blade was still ideling down. One of the chunks I was holding confronted the blade. The blade had enough momentum to drive the 3/4 2X2 stock into a callous on my hand. The callous was ripped in half at the base of my ring finger. I was not using a blade guard.

Advice

This accident happened for two reasons. My project was still in the works in my mind. I had not thought it out well enough to know where I was going from the trimming step. And, the most important reason, not only was my mind distracted but I was suffering brain fog from some over-the-counter medication I was taking for a cold. My saw barked at me and it now has my undivided attention. It does not however have a blade guard. A clear mind will protect me better than relying on a blade guard.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was using a single blade molding cutter to cut the barrel channel on a maple pistol blank. I had done this many times on rifle stocks. I had a mark on the table and on the stock and on each pass I would stop just short of the tic mark I had made on the table so the cutter wouldn't suddenly engage the full depth of the channel. I was taking about 1/32" with each pass. The finished channel was to be .75" wide and .75" deep. On the last pass I went just a tiny bit too far and the blade suddenly did exactly what I was trying to avoid and took a full .75" cut. In a split nano second the kick back rotated my thumb down and into the cutter. I was holding the piece by what was to be the butt of the pistol with just my left thumb and forefinger. What actually happened is that my thumb and fore finger never came off of the work and my thumb was split lenthwise through the whole nail. I couldn't bear to look at it so I had my hand over my shoulder and I could feel the blood dripping down my neck. I turned off the saw and started looking for the end of my thumb that I felt sure was laying on the floor somewhere. Not finding any loose parts I lowered my hand and to my delight the thumb was intact only it was forked. I squeezed the sides together with my left fore finger and drove to my doctor's office and he sewed it up with a sacking needle and told me he wasn't going to deaden it so maybe I would remember.

Advice

The time it takes to make a proper jig is far less than a trip to the saw bones and much cheaper.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I work for a construction company and I do a lot of mill work with large table saws with automatic feeders on them. One day I was running the saw and noticed that the feeder would leak oil when it was running but not leak when it was off. So being the smart guy that I am I turned the feeder on and took the cover off of it, thus exposing the gears inside of the feeder. I had a rag in my hand and was cleaning up oil when the rag got caught in the gears and took my pointer finger with it. So after a trip to the hospital and a little bit of time off work, the final damage was, the loss of the end of the pointer finger.

Advice

Don't do repairs on moving machinery! If you have no choice, be careful you keep well away from dangerous parts.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was using a cheap benchtop table saw that my friend got for free, and had managed to resurrect, but it obviously needed more maintenance than we gave it. The saw sounded noisier by the minute, and I thought "I hope it holds up until I'm finished milling this last pile of wood." Suddenly, the motor froze and the centrifugal force of the locked arbor sent the nut and the blade flying. Fortunately, we had weighed the stand down with a bag of cement, and the blade came to rest wedged into the cement, after flying off and tearing through the bag. If that bag wasn't there, the blade would've kept spinning, and no doubt would've stopped in my thigh bone.

Advice

Trust your ear and intuition. If a machine sounds or feels too crappy to use safely, it is. Walk away and finish the project when you have a safe tool to work with.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Not an accident, fortunately, but an experience that caused me to finally wise up. For years, I'd used my table saw without a guard or splitter until one day last summer I was ripping 8/4 maple with a lot of internal stresses. Of course, the kerf closed up and stalled the saw. I was a bit unnerved by the second or two spent fighting the motor while I reached for the switch, but chalked it up to chance and went back to work. After all, I was in a rush and didn't have a bandsaw. A few cuts later, the same thing happened. This time, I knew, just knew, that if I pushed one more piece through I was going to lose a finger or two. This time, I stopped and did what I should have done they day I brought that saw into my shop: purchased a good guard and splitter.

Advice

Listen to those alarm bells in your head--they're always right. Don't use a saw without a guard and splitter, it's just not worth the risk.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Had bought a new Dust Collector for my TS. After assembling the collector and attaching it to my saw, I ran some test cuts to see how well my new toy worked. What I didn't realize at the time was that the DC was louder than my saw, and my ear protection made me even more "deaf". I was standing behind my TS, and decided to brush some of the dust inside of it into the DC chute. For some reason...I didn't stop to check to see if the saw was off or not. After a couple of seconds of waving my hand around inside the saw...WHAM. I had raised my hand into the moving blade. Two fingers (middle and ring) came completely off and a third (index) about 75%. That was 5 weeks ago, and luck for me, I had amazing surgeons. They put all three fingers back on and I'm expected to make a near full recovery...in about 6-12 months. Still...I'm lucky. Oh...BTW...I'm right handed, and it was my right hand. That's been fun.

Advice

#1: I was rushing, and not paying attention to what I was doing. #2: I had new equipment that was distracting me. Always STOP and take a moment to examine the situation. I've been woodworking for 20 years without a major accident...until now. Just take the time to pause and THINK about what you're doing. Cut Safe.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Cutting little pieces. Fence not being used not but not far enough out of way. Let little pieces collect between fence and blade. Kaboom!!! Was using plastic push stick and ... frankly I don't know exactly what happened other than hand was 1 foot from blade one second and over my head the next. Part of push stick went thru palm of hand. Two carbide tips were never found again. Hand ballooned but other than trauma, I was pretty damn lucky. Several days later I mounted errant blade on walnut plaque with this caption: "Dumb, plain dumb"

Advice

Don't do that. Study as much as you can on what is safe and what is unsafe relative to all tools but particularly tools with that many horses wanting to be free. And once you know what is right and what is wrong...don't do the wrong. I have had about 5 minor kickbacks...each one was same type of stupid.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cross cutting a 5ft long board, the wife was assisting me. After the cut was complete and I hit the off switch, she slid the board back on the table. Thinking the board was falling, I grabbed for it with my right hand dragging my fingers across the still spinning blade (guard had been removed for a rabbeting operation earlier. I know I know). One trip to the Dr. for 18 stiches in two fingers later, alls well for he that has learned.

Advice

Put the guard back in place, and don't do anything that requires another person. The unpredictability of another persons actions around a saw are not worth the risk.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

after more than 10 hours in the shop, I made a little mistake. Needed a small piece and tried to cut it out of a little bigger piece I'd previously tossed in the scrap bin. It was warped but I just needed part of it. KICK-BACK and my left hand, which had been forcing the piece against the fence, suddenly had nothing between it and the blade. It went in sideways and I lost about 1/4" off the tip of the middle finger and 1/8" off the tip of the index finger.

Advice

Don't work too long; properly prepare all stock and, once something is deemed garbage, don't change it's designation.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While making a plunge cut on a piece of Walnut I hit a knot. The 1x4 flew back toward me with the first two fingers of my left hand following into the blade. plastic surgery was required to repair the top, inside of both fingers.

Advice

Don't make plunge cuts. If you are injured have the presence of mind to take control of your own well being at the hospital and not let just any Doctor practice on you. I have seen too many fingers that don't work because of the poor surgery in the emergency room.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

My shop is connected to the house and wife had been on me for a long time to get a dust collection system to help with the problem of dust getting into the house. So one day I look up and she's pulling into the drive way with a new collection system in the back of the truck. So this is really all her fault. To make a long story short, while working late one evening I noticed a lot of dust in the shop, now having a new \$500 collection system this didn't seem right. After examining the tablesaw I was using I discovered the collection chute had become plugged. So, like an idiot, I turned the saw off and reached under it to clear the chute. The blade had not stopped when I reached under the saw and the result was a strange feeling in my right hand. Needless to say I really didn't want to look. When I did finally take my hand out I found the ends of the first two fingers not there any more. The first one was so badly chewed up the doctor could not save it, the second they re-attached, however, after MUCH pain for about 3 months with the bone sticking out the end the doc said it had to go too, and it was removed. 28 years of wood working with NO accidents, and it only took one careless act to keep me out of the shop for almost a year. However, in those 28 years I can't think of a time when I had a reason to reach under a tablesaw (except to change the blade, at which time I always unplugged it and made sure it was off). If I had not gotten the dust collector...who knows?

Advice

I keep ALL the guards on my tools, BUT, that doesn't mean they are safe. There is NO guard under a tablesaw, NO signs to tell you that you shouldn't be sticking your hands in there and nothing to keep you from reaching right in and grabbing the blade. THINK before you act when it comes to power tools, they can and WILL hurt you if don't use common sense and act with respect. One careless moment cost me (and the insurance co.) \$18,000 dollars and two fingers, and almost a year out of the shop. It's also a little tougher these days holding onto the wood to complete some projects. Happy woodworking, God I love it!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Cross-cutting small pieces with a crosscut sled and pushed the sled too far. The sled fell off the back of the saw and I reached for it instead of letting it fall. I touched the back of my little finger to the blade. I was quite lucky, the fact that I cut lengthwise along the back of the finger spared the nerves, so I have complete feeling, however the first joint needed to be fused (the bone was shattered into at least 12 pieces. The fusing has reduced my grip by a great deal, maybe 50%!

Advice

1) Learn what safety devices and procedures you need. 2) USE THEM!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I am a remodeling general contractor and was working on a job by myself installing two banks of large windows. I had to re-frame for the new windows, which required that I rip almost every piece of wood. I had to rip several pieces of brick mould to 1-1/8" X 8' long. I was using a Rousseau table with a makita 10" light weight saw installed. I was holding the brick mould next to the guide with my left hand past the blade and my right hand was feeding the material. I was being very careful doing something I knew to be unsafe. My knowledge proved correct when I touched the moving blade with two of the fingers of my left hand. When I saw a spray of flesh and blood rising from the saw, I knew I was in trouble. I didn't even look at my fingers but squeezed them with my right hand to stem the flow of blood. I rushed to the hospital and was relieved to just have "superficial" cuts requiring 10-12 stitches on my first and fourth fingers. I was saved by only having the blade barely above the work. Two days later, I was cutting again. This time more safely.

Advice

Use fingerboards to hold material next to the guide. Never perform two separate tasks with each hand while operating a table saw Always keep the table saw blade a minimum height above the work Always have a plan in case of emergency. If you work at different locations, always know where the nearest hospital is. Avoid injury at all costs.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

This happened to a co-worker. He was ripping a piece of stock by himself and did not have a push stick handy. There was also no guard on the saw. He pushed the stock half way through then reached around the back of the saw to pull it through. In doing so he squeezed the stock together causing friction on the blade. The stock kicked back through the saw and took his fingers with it. Four of his fingers were cut off. The doctors reattached them and he is working in a different industry now (ironically drafting).

Advice

Use push sticks, guards and your brain. They are all there for a reason.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was working on installing a built-in desktop at my house. I decided that I needed to support the top with a 2" x 2" securely screwed to the wall stud. All I had was a 2" x 4" board but I knew it would be a simple enough thing to go over to my dad's house about 2 minutes away and rip it to 2" x 2" on his tablesaw. When I got to his workshop it was a mess as usual. There were paint cans, pvc pipe and various other things piled on the tablesaw. I figured since I only needed to rip 2 boards barely 2 feet long I would clear enough space to do the job. Naturally, the push stick had not been returned to its proper place. After looking for the push stick for about 30 to 45 seconds I decided to go ahead without it (after all, it was just two boards). As I was finishing pushing the first board through the blade guard, something bumped the board and my hand slipped off of the board. I nearly cut half of my left thumb off. The blade went about 70% of the way through my thumb just past the last joint of the thumb. I shattered the bone from the last joint out and had significant nerve damage and tissue loss. My dad happens to also be a general surgeon and he rushed me to the hospital a little over a mile away. Thanks to the surgical skills of the orthopaedic surgeon I still have my thumb. With physical therapy I was eventually able to regain practically full use and around 95% + of the feeling in my thumb.

Advice

Make sure you keep your work area clean and return items to their proper place so they can be easily found next time. Make sure you have plenty of room to maneuver and work. Always observe proper safety precautions no matter what your level of experience or how long it takes to do the job safely.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

A friend needed a short length of monofilament fishing line from his shop. Unable to find his utility knife to cut it with, he spotted his tablesaw. He wrapped the line around both hands and eased the line into the spinning blade, assuming it would chew the line apart. The line caught in a blade gullet and wrapped around the arbor, pulling both hands into the blade. He lost parts of 3 fingers, and also suffered serious cuts from the line as it was pulled tight around his hands. He is no longer a woodworker, and cannot stand to be in the same room with a running saw.

Advice

Use the proper tool for the job, and never, ever use a power tool for something it wasn't designed to do.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was using a crosscut box and cutting multiples of the same item. On the last cut i failed to remove the piece from the box, leaving it where it was pushed away from the rail of the box. I then pulled the box back towards me and the wooden piece was picked up by the blade and thrown towards me, bouncing off the stop block, ricocheting towards and knocking over a lamp and finally coming to rest on a cupboard.

Advice

Don't let multiple cuts decrease your concentration! Always pay attention to what each action may cause.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

One Sunday I was a little disturbed due to all the children competing with the pastors sermon at church. We came home and after lunch I decided to work a little in the basement, where my shop is. I needed to rip a couple of boards for a door frame at a house we were remodeling. I had just replaced my tablesaw blade with a new Freud 60 tooth carbide bit blade a few days prior. I had cut three boards and was on the last one. Almost through the board, my left hand flew up. I looked at my hand and saw the mauled fingers and knew what happened. I called my wife and wrapped my hand in towels. On the way to the hospital my wife started to stop and I asked why she was stopping. She said "do you have all your fingers"? I said yes. The surgeon sewed my left ring and index fingers back together but I lost the middle finger from the first joint up. I had one more surgery after that to try and rebuild the nail beds but they are better than not having any at all. The fingers never really hurt except the pins I had for a few months. I have very limited use of the middle finger but the other two are 95% normal except for the nails.

Advice

Don't use your power tools, especially saws, when you are distracted by events or tired. Remember, the saw is the boss, not you! I was lucky I didn't lose my whole hand. Now I'm in the tablesaw club. Not an honor.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I know better but: I was cutting approx 6" squares out of 3/8 ABS plastic sheet with the stock against the fence. When I noticed that one of the pieces wasn't quite square, I decided to try cutting by holding one corner a little ways off the fence. Well the saw didn't like that and decided to throw it back at me with tremendous speed. Luckily it missed me. What exactly happened, I didn't see. I've seen kick back like this before, but it still amazes me how fast a 3hp saw can throw stuff when trapped. I listed my skill level as intermediate even though I have used table saws regularly for years because I never do anything advanced with them like cutting coves, I've never used one for dados.

Advice

Don't take chances; if you don't think it is right don't do it. There's some good articles on the web explaining kickback, there worth reading. I think you can find them in WWA's article search.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was attempting to cut a 1/4" x 3/8" stopped dado in a peice of wood by lowering the wood onto my table saw blade. On the second pass the wood was grabbed by the blade and kicked back, taking my hand with it. My right index finger went lengthwise through the blade set at 3/8". I bisected the finger going almost all the way through the bone, through the first joint and exiting just short of the second knuckle. The nail bed regrew slightly uneven so my nail has a perfect seam down the middle. The first joint, to the surprise of the doctor, did not fuse and moves freely. There is some pain and weakness from the joint but that may deminish as the bone regrows.

Advice

Use the proper tool for the job! If you are going to do something you know to be dangerous, use a long stick.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While ripping some narrow, 1/2-inch thick strips on a table saw with the blade set about 3 inches high, I reached over the top of the blade to help guide the strips as they came off the back side of the saw. As I did so, I dragged my thumb into the saw blade. The blade removed a large chunk of flesh, which resulted in a visit to the emergency room and the lose of sensation in the tip of my thumb for almost a year.

Advice

1. Always check to make sure that the blade is not set any higher than it has to be for the task involved. In my case, the blade was set about 2 inches higher than it needed to be. 2. Use feather boards to keep the stock in place as it goes through the blade. 3. Use push stick to guide the stock through the blade. 4. Always think about what you are doing.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While cutting a larger piece of wood into smaller widths, a buildup of already-cut pieces was accumulating behind the blade. While the saw was still running, I reached over with my left hand to move the buildup before the pieces fell off the table. Somehow a piece that I was moving caught the moving blade and kicked back dragging my hand back thru the moving blade. It cut thru my left thumb and left index finger, cutting completely thru the bone of my finger leaving a gap in the bone the width of the blade and left a mess of the nail bed. It's a toss up as to how the finger will heal and whether I will need further surgery.

Advice

Always obey safety instructions. Turn the saw off when you're not paying attention to the blade. Don't do stupid things just to save time. When in doubt turn the saw off.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I'm so embarrassed, because I know better. Was cross cutting trim to length. I finished all the pieces, put the saw away (contractors saw), and went upstairs to install the trim. The last piece of trim (why is it always the LAST piece?) was a tad too long. Saw is now on the floor, so I run a cord over to it, squat in front of it, and put a clamp on the blade guard to keep it out of my way. I wanted to trim off just a sixteenth or so, and I wanted to be able to see the cut. I started the saw, and all hell broke loose. The clamp holding the blade guard out of the way started sliding down the splitter (due to table vibration.) I saw it start to drop, lept out of the way, and heard it hit. I was sprayed with bits of broken plastic, one good sized hunk nailed me in the finger, hard. Then the metal screw in the clamp made it to the blade, and that launched the rest of the clamp. Thank goodness I had the sense to get the heck out of the way. I had a bruised finger, a busted up, useless clamp, and the incident busted a tooth off of an \$80 10-inch blade. The most damage was to my pride.

Advice

There is no such thing as "one quick cut." ALWAYS set up all safety gear, or DON'T do the cut. That clamp was holding just fine until it wasn't. Close call.....too close.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

With the guard removed I was ripping a long board. I had no support for the wood coming off the end of the saw ... so, to counteract the weight of the wood I applied pressure (with both hands) to the push stick to hold the wood down on the table saw as it passed through the blade. The push stick slipped off the end of the wood and I threw my left hand into the blade. The back of my left rolled over the blade. My little finger had to be reattached using bone from my arm. I lost 3 knuckles and cut through 3 tendons. 3 surgeries, months of rehab and a year later my hand is about 90% of what it used to be.

Advice

Never take a shortcut if you have to compromise safety. (Paul Ford)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was making a small box, cutting for the lid. Rushing, didn't use push stick or guard. Blade hit a knot in the wood, kicked back. My left hand (which was holding the piece flush) slipped into the blade. At first I thought nothing had happened, because it felt fine. Then I noticed my left index finger was bent. I had cut through the bone, but missed the nerve and artery. The doctors said I was extremely lucky. After surgery and 2 months rehab my finger is fine but 1/8" shorter and has some nasty scars.

Advice

Don't be an idiot, use a guard or a push stick.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was deep cutting 4"x8"x6" pieces of Fir into 1/4 inch planks for jewelery boxes with the blade raised about 3".No guard. Craftsman's factory job would not allow the cut with it in place. I had to flip the pieces to complete the cut and did not want the fall piece to pinch the blade. The handiest thing to hold the kerf open was my steel dial calipers. Yep. They fell into the blade and whizzed past my left ear doing 120 mph. Then embedded into a paneled wall 9 feet behind me. Three inches to the right and I don't think I'd be here.

Advice

Buy the guard that will work for the job you're doing. Better broke than dead. Don't improvise just to save time. Turn off the saw and take an hour to find the right tool if you have to. The alternatives are too gruesome to contemplate

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was trying to cut a small rectangular piece of plywood into two squares across the small dimension on my table saw. The guard, (with anti-kickback pawls) was off since I had just been cutting some 4X4's. I don't think I pushed the piece far enough past the blade, because when I moved my hand to turn off the saw, the blade kicked back the piece between the fence and the blade and threw it at god knows how many miles per hour right into the back window of my brand new truck that was a good 20 feet away!! Luckily I was way to the right of the blade and it missed me. It didn't break the window, but it sure hit it hard.

Advice

Don't get lazy with safety equipment just because you're in a hurry. It may take longer to set everything up just for one cut, but it sure is worth it. And use featherboards!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was making some final cuts in a piece of rosewood. The cuts had to be exact and smooth so I was using an 80 tooth cross cut blade and standing directly over my work. Rosewood is notoriously tough and while I was going very slow and watching the piece come out of the backside of the blade, I felt barely a rub on one finger and jerked that hand away immediately. At the end of my finger you could see where my fingerprints had been temporarily removed by the top of the blade.

Advice

It's unfortunate that even experts require reminders that you must always respect your tools. and There was no severe damage because the blade height had been set to barely beyond the depth of the cut required.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping a small 1/4" edge off of a thin piece of wood on a bench-top saw. After the cut was finished I reached behind the saw to pull the thin strip out of the blade guard. The saw was still running and it caught the wood strip and pulled it out of my fingers and left a long sliver in my thumb. If the blade guard was not in place it would have been worse.

Advice

Wait till the saw is all the way stopped before pulling stuff out.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping a 12" long piece of walnut that was ~4" wide. The blade guard and splitter had been removed from the right-tilt saw and I was using push sticks and featherboards. As I was finishing the cut, pressure was accidentally applied to the cutoff piece. The blade caught this and flung it straight back. Fortunately, I was slightly off to the side so the wood glanced off and hit the wall behind me. My push stick went into the blade, leaving a nice 1"+ gouge as a reminder. All of this happened before I could react to the problem.

Advice

I made a couple of mistakes: 1) Improper use of the push sticks. Accidentally applying pressure to the cutoff side of the piece forced it into the blade (a bad thing). 2) Not standing behind the fence side of the blade. If I was standing in the correct position, the kickback would have missed me (+ it would have been very difficult to push the cutoff into the blade)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a short piece of poplar (7" x 3") without a guard. I stood to the right of the fence and hooked my fingers over the fence to push the board while keeping my hands away from the blade. The piece pulled away from the fence after I made the rip cut and the blade pulled the piece and my hand over the blade. The piece of wood went through a drywall covered wall 20' away from the saw and I needed four stitches in my fingertip. I was extremely lucky to only receive a scratch!

Advice

Always use your saw's guard. If you don't like the guard, save your money and buy a better guard that you will use. Use pushsticks everytime your hand goes past the saw blade, EVERY TIME! It's just as easy to push a piece through the saw with a pushstick as it is with your hand.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a small board down when all fo the sudden my push stick broke, letting my hand slide right into the blade, since I was putting an extremely large amout of pressure on the board and push stick. After I had realized that my hand was gone, my arm was slipping into the blade as well. Surprisingly, I felt no pain in the first 4 seconds, but after about the 6th second, I was screaming. I managed to yell for help just before I passed out. My wife heard my call and took me to the hospital unconcience. After about 3 weeks in a coma, I woke up and started a 5 month recovery. To this day, I haven't found my arm or hand. Maybe one of my German Shepards ate them, I don't know for sure.

Advice

Don't be a dumby and put too much pressure on the cut!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting a small board 6" x 6" x 3/4. After finishing the cut I left the board on the table(very stupid) and reached for the power switch. The blade had caught the edge the board and the wood was ridding on top of the blade. Picture a major league fastball coming right at you. It ended up hitting me on the back of my hand (very bruised and 6 stitches) and then my stomach (another nice bruise). I couldn't believe the violent force of such a small piece of wood.

Advice

The blade guard is going back on and paying more attention. I've worked without it for 3 years but it caught up to me.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was using a Stacked Dado blade to cut a groove along the edge of 24" X 24" piece of 3/4" plywood using the rip fence as a guide. My Father-in-Law (who has NO woodworking experience) was on the other side of the saw (safely out of the plane of the blade) to catch the piece as it came off. All was well until the very end of the cut. At the last inch of the cut, I felt the plywood lift up a bit. The first thing I thought was "Ooops. That part of the groove isn't going to be deep enough." Instead of finishing the cut and making another pass, (this is embarassingly stupid) I tried to actually BACK the workpiece into the blade! The saw caught the workpiece and it rotated counterclockwise into me at a high rate of speed. The corner caught me a couple inches to the right of a very sensitive portion of my anatomy. Luckily my gloved hands were able to deflect some of the energy of the spinning piece. All I got was a slight bruise on my hip-bone. (My pride is another story) The workpiece recieved a huge gouge across it. Since the piece was being made for a door for a cabinet in my workshop, I used it anyway. I now have a reminder not to be stupid right where I can see it.

Advice

1) THINK!!! 2) If something goes amis during a cut, find the safest way to get back to "ground zero" (workpiece in hand, saw off) and re-think the cut. Don't try to correct something mid-stream. 3) Wear gloves. While they WILL NOT protect you from the blade, they will protect your hands (to some extent)from flying pieces of wood if something does go amis. Had I not been wearing my gloves, I probably would have reflexively pulled my hands away which would have made the workpiece hit me even harder than it did.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a 2 by 4 into a 2 by 2 to fill in a gap between the wall and the door jam at three in the morning so I could be done with the door fitting. I was on my fourth cup of coffee and still barely able to stay awake. I was about three inches from being all the way through and without a support on the other side the board pinched the blade and shot back into my ribs, breaking three and giving me a nice bruise. As the board hit me, I leaned forward and my left hand went over the blade, cutting off my middle and ring finger and grazing the other fingers. I ENDED UP WITH NUMEROUS STITCHES!

Advice

DON'T WORK TIRED AND HAVE A SUPPORT FOR LONG BOARDS!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Have only had Table Saw for a couple of months. Was trying to cut a flat side to a dowel (my first mistake). Because the dowel was less than an inch wide I had lifted the blade guard (my second mistake). I knew the cut could be difficult and I had "tacked" the dowel onto a larger piece so I could push the larger peice through. With everything lined up I started the saw. Woops! Guess that piece isn't quite as straight as I thought so I reached out to straighten it (third mistake). I also wasn't looking where I reached, but at the wood where it met the miter gauge (fourth mistake). My fingers really weren't that close to the blade, but my thumb must have been stick straight out (totally careless -- fifth mistake). Of course I had the saw blade much MUCH higher than I needed it (sixth mistake). All of those stupid mistakes added up to to the tip of my thumb getting all but removed above the last knuckle -- it was dangling by a piece of thumbnail. The ER doctor sewed it back on and I have seen a hand specialist several times now. It is 2 1/2 weeks after the accident and I still don't know if I am going to get to keep the tip of my thumb or not. If I do there is no doubt it will be 1/8" shorter. If I don't then I am told I qualify for reconstructive surgery, but I am not entirely sure what to expect except there is a skin graft involved from the pad of my hand I have been told to expect it to be very painful. Finally, unlike some of the other injuries, mine hurts like crazy. The whole ordeal has been one long agony.

Advice

1) Use the blade gaurd or find another way to cut the wood. Period. No exceptions! 2) Don't cut dowels on a table saw without a better jig than I had... 3) Do not adjust project after the blade has been fired up. 4) Keep your eye on where your hands are in relation to the blade at ALL times. 5) Don't raise the blade any higher than 1/4" higher than you need to make the cut.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

ripping narrow strips from 1" STOCK, left index fingertip got in the way of the 60 tooth blade

Advice

it is well known that repetitive work leads to a loss of concentration leads to what is known in my family as a BRAIN FART. USE JIGS READ BOOKS TALK TO OTHER WOOD WORKERS. STILL HAVE THE FINGER, THE NAIL IS CROOKED, AND WILL BE ALWAYS NUMB, EVER TRY TO PICK UP NAILS WHEN THERE IS NO FEELING IN THE DIDGET? NUFF SAID, BE SMART.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting a 3 foot long piece of walnut. I started to cut and my guard fell on the saw blade. Metal shards went flying into my arm. I bent down to turn off the saw and the board kicked back and busted my face. It hit me in the mouth and knocked out my 4 top and bottom teeth. That little insident required 8 new teeth and 20 stiches above my upper lip.

Advice

Check guards and don't be smiling when you turn off the saw. In case of kickback.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Working on a table for my wife one evening after dinner. Just finished making a cut with the table saw. I set the panel on top of the saw. My wife and 4 year old came out into the workshop My wife was standing at the door and asked me a question. I turned around to answer her and heard the "click hum" of my table saw starting. Jumped into the air, my daughter jumped back and my wife and daughter both had eyes as big as saucers. Turned off the saw, hugged my daughter and told her again why she can't touch dad's tools. Gave thanks to my dad for teaching me to always lower the blade after I finish with the saw.

Advice

Lower the blade before you leave the saw. Keep an eye on kids around any type of equipment. Don't expect them to follow the rules.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

No Blade Guard, probably not the sharpest blade (me or on the saw). Cutting 3/4" plywood without a push stick. Something (possible knot) kicked the board and sent my left hand into the blade which was probably set way too high as well. My palm was wide open and my middle finger was essentially hanging backwards. Resulting injury included a destroyed joint at the base of my middle finger, nerve damage to (as you look at your palm) the right side of thumb, right side of index finger, both sides of middle finger and left side of ring finger. Part of the fingernail on the ring finger was removed from the accident. I'm posting this 20 years after this accident happened. I can not make a proper fist with my left hand. The destroyed joint won't allow it. Along with that, my left middle finger is 1/2" shorter than my right one. As for the nerve damage, I have "sensation" in those areas affected but the fingers will never feel like they did before the accident.

Advice

All the other reports here cover the basics. My only advice is to teach you children the proper respect for power tools as well as their safe use.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Trying to resaw thick stock to make some wide 3/8" strips of stock. I was using a blade guard, push stick, but no featherboard. I used my left hand instead. At the end of the cut, with the blade guard 2 1/2" above the tablesaw top, something (don't know what) shifted causing my left hand to go into the blade. The blade went through my index finger lengthwise from the top, through the first 2 joints then traveled across the backside to my thumb, taking the first bone and ripping it out through the pad. End result: index finger--splinter of the first bone left, 2 shattered joints, broken 2nd bone, nerve cut, artery cut, all tendons cut, all flesh missing on inside of finger. Thumb, well I still had my nail above the first joint, that was it. They had to amputate both fingers. Way too much damage for any reconstruction.

Advice

THINK about the proper tools to use for the job. I should've used the bandsaw for resawing 2 1/2" stock.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a board on my table saw on evening. It was going to be the last cut of the day and in fact it was the last cut for the project (adding wainscoting to a room). I finished the cut and reached over the blade to pick up the board when the blade hit the bottom of my thumb cutting to the bone and require 10 stitches. I felt I was lucky that it caught my hand on the back of the blade and kicked it out rather than pulling in under.

Advice

Use the blade guard, do not get in a rush to finish and be careful and do not get complacent. I have been doing woodworking for over 30 years and this is the first injury I experience.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was assisting a student in a local H.S. woodworking course. I was lining up the blade tooth with the pencil mark for a cross-cut when for some unknown reason the gentleman decided he would turn the saw on for me. The blade cut into my right thumb requiring stiches.

Advice

This is a one man operation! Know who you are working with be aware of the actions of all others while around power tools. No, I didn't hit him!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

This happened a few years ago when I just began woodworking. I was ripping some boards on an old, old, craftsman tablesaw. You know the one, with the table that's about as big as a monopoly board and a motor that couldn't power a go cart. Anyway, I had shut the saw off and the blade was slowing down, when I looked away and reached for the cutoff piece of wood next to the blade. I set my thumb down square on the blade. Luckily it wasn't moving very fast, but it managed to put a inch long gash into my thumbprint. Unfortunately they really couldn't stitch it up so I have a nice scar down the middle of my thumb. It didn't hurt too bad at the time, but man did it bleed all over the place. No permanent damage.

Advice

Keep your eyes on the blade at all times. If your tired, take a break and get out of the shop for a while. You need to be alert in there. Most of all, always use all the saftey protection (glasses, ears, guards) and you should be ok.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Was putting a partial dado in a board. For some reason I still cannot understand I decided to lower the board onto the blade and then push it the rest of the way. The board flew from my hands and created a deep purple bruise just east of "Mr. Happy's Neighborhood." Yikes.

Advice

Don't turn your brain off when you turn your tablesaw on. If you do, add a protective groin cup to your woodworking gear!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Building a formal alder table for kids for christmas. Ripping 4/4 24 inch lengths about 5 inches wide. Visitors interrupted work. Came basck to the shop to "make just a few more cuts." Very tired, and daylight was gone. Shop lighting poor, but I didn't need to "see." Ripped board began to tilt over the end of the saw table, and I (foolishly) reached for it to pull it back. Saw blade caught my right thumb below the joint and ripped (not neatly at all) it open to the nail. Cut was particularly nasty because the saw didn't "slice," it "ate" meat about 1/4 inch wide down to bone. Many, many stitches, pohysical thearapy and 45 days later, I can button my pants again. Careless, stupid, first significant accident I have ever had in my shop. I'm a project director with over 1 million-safe manhours jobs typical of my teams. Embarassing, painful (!!!), expensive, etc. Mainly stupid. But I did it.

Advice

Don't work when tired. Have adequite lighting. Don't reach across the saw blade to keep wood from falling -- use a table extension. THINK!!!!!!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Running with the guard off. Somehow lightly brushed the blade when reaching for a piece of wood. Roughed up the end of the finger. No stitches but needed to be cleaned out and trimmed up.

Advice

Watch what you're doing and don't lose attention.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Only had my new Triton Tablesaw and Circular Saw for a day and DESPITE coming and reading this very database for a wake-up call, I still almost cut my hand apart. The long and the short of it is, the tablesaw was running and out of the corner of my eye I noticed one of our dogs come into the workshop. I only turned slightly, at the hips, to yell at the dog to get out of the workshop so it didn't "distract" me, and I felt my hand brush the gaurd over the spinning saw blade. If I hadn't of had the gaurd in place (at least I was doing something right) I am sure the blade would have made mince-meat of my hand. I went and sat down for an hour after that feeling decidedly sick at how close I had come to badly injuring myself.

Advice

The only thing that saved my hand was the safety gaurd above the blade, it may be inconvenient but ALWAYS USE THE GAURDS While any machinery is running, let nothing distract you, ABSOLUTLY NOTHING, NO DISTRACTIONS

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

On a contractor sized table saw. Metal rod hidden in wood caused the piece to 'kick back' violently. My left hand was on the out feed side of the piece. When the wood kicked back my thumb went into the blade. It tore off 75% of my thumb pad and cut the tendons that control the thumb. Two months and 9 doctor visits later it is barely usable.

Advice

Check wood for metal and always be aware of possible kickback. I used to think that \$200 was a lot to spend on a metal scan device. One small accident will cost you at least this much in deductibles or co-payments and many times this in inconvenience.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Ripping wood, knicked index finger, then jerked and through hand closer to blade cutting into thumb. Ten stitches to close wound and to save thumb from 1st. knuckle up.

Advice

By all means keep your eyes on what you are doing and do not get distracted. Tim Pursley Hattiesburg, Ms

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was ripping a 2' long 1x8" piece of Walnut into 2" strips on a 3 horsepower cabinet style tablesaw. After the first cut I picked up the 1x6" piece to bring it back for the next cut. It slipped out of my hand and the end landed on top of the blade. The board flew back at me and hit me in the pelvis with such force that it knocked me down. A trip to the doctor made me realize how lucky I was. If the board had hit me an inch higher or an inch lower I could have suffered significant internal damage or loss of my private parts. Fortunately for me I only have a lump the size of a golfball on my pelvis and a bruise that is 8" in diameter and growing.

Advice

Don't underestimate the power of a tablesaw. Use a splitter with anti-kickback pawls. A blade guard would have helped in my situation also. Most of all, pay attention to what you are doing.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Did not use push stick, right middle finger feel on blade of Tablesaw

Advice

USE A PUSHSTICK..your fingers should be nowhere near the blade

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was using my new Ryobi Table Saw to Rip some narrow pieces of pine. I always have the guard in place and even decided to use a push stick since the wood was so narrow. As I was feeding the wood in with my left hand I was using the push stick with my right hand to keep the wood against the fence. Pushing down a little too hard the stick slipped off the wood and my hand slammed down on the guard. Didn't really think about what could of happened until afterwards.

Advice

Push sticks are definitely there to keep your hands away from the blade but if you use them wrong you can slam your hands into the blade with some extra force. Practice with the push sticks to familiarize yourself with the blade off.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While building a bar for our basement, I was cutting a thin strips off of the edge of a larger piece of oak. I carefully used my push stick to run the last piece through and reached down and turned the switch off. As I walked away, I realized I forgot to pick up one of the pieces. I walked back to the saw and reached for the strip, not realizing the blade had not fully stopped. I heard "tink-tink-tink" as the pointer finger of my right hand was pushed violently away from the blade. This was one of those moments when you really don't want to look at the injury but by the time I did I had a palm full of blood and blood was already dripping from my elbow. Fortunately the injury was not as bad as it could have been. I had a large chunk of flesh ripped from the tip of the finger and the bone was nicked. The doctor shoved what was left of the flesh back into the hole to help protect the exposed tissue until part of it finally flaked out (yeah - that hurt too!) I ran around with a ball of gauze on the finger for a few weeks while the skin grew back. I now have a little "numb spot" to remind me not to be stupid

Advice

1. Basic law of wood working - DON'T TAKE YOUR EYE OFF OF A MOVING BLADE! 2. It ain't turned off until it stops moving! 3. Don't ever tell you wife "You know, I've been doing this for 25 years without an injury (I said this about a week prior to "tink-tink-tink".

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I have carpal tunnel syndrome. I had been using the table saw when my hand acted up and my finger fell on the blade. It took a piece of meat out of the tip of my finger. I came rather close to cutting into the bone, but it's all ok.

Advice

Use a push stick!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a section of pine for a panel on a small bench. I was about 2 inches from the end of the piece (using a pusher and blade guard), when my 4 y.o. son fell over his little red wagon behind me. (My shop is my garage.) I whipped around to see to him, and I heard the blade make that lovely spanging sound of hitting an embedded nail. My left hand had come across the piece, my thumb slid under the guard, and I *nearly* severed the thumb completely at the first joint. Likely the guard kept my hand from being pulled in. It's been nearly a year and I still can't feel the tip of my thumb.

Advice

If you must have small children about you when working with power tools, train them to know when it's quiet time. I've taught my son to stand in a particular place, behind a panel in my garage, where I can see him while standing at my saw. He also wears goggles and a hardhat that we got him from Home Depot.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While working on portable tablesaw, feeding 3/4 x 4 stock, without blade guard, I managed to feed in about 1/2 inch of the tip of my thumb. Took out a nice 1/8" kerf of tissue about 7/8 of the way through and realized: "Hey something's wrong here." (tipped off by the mist hitting me in the face, aka blood). But it did scribe a perfectly straight red line up the middle of my white tee shirt to the top of my head. Well, it only hurt for a second as they say. The good news is it missed the bone, missed the fingernail, and it was on my left hand (which right-handed dentists don't use much). But it healed up very well, and even though it cut the nerve, sensation came back about 70%. Looks like a normal thumb still. Lucky? You Bet!

Advice

1.Never work when your tired 2.Use the blade guard and other safety devices, because it CAN happen to you! 3.Get your hand surgeon's pager number and his permission to meet you at the ER, regardless of what he would charge for an emergency (forget about your insurance) before you have an accident.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was ripping a board on the tablesaw for a cabinet project I was making. I had taken off the splitter for doing some dadoes and had not put it back on after finishing. Now, as I ripped a 3 inch wide piece of 4/4 oak, it pinched against the fence and shot back into my crotch about as fast and hard as a 3hp unisaw can shoot it! Well, it doubled me over for about 10 minutes on my home-shop floor until the waves of pain subsided enough for me to go back to the house. Once inside my wife asked me what was wrong and while I fished a bag of frozen peas out of the freezer for a "poor man's icepack" I told her what happened. Needless to say, I was black and blue for about 2 weeks. Most of the time you WANT swelling down there, but not the hard way!

Advice

USE A SPLITTER!!! I use it religiously now and have not had a kickback since. (I also stand a little to the side if at all possible as well.)

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Close Call

Description

I was putting a bevel on a small block of wood one night, and I was not using any safety equipment. The wood got hung up between the blade and the fence. before I knew it, it was flying back at me. Hit me square in the chest and hurt like the dickens. Took about two weeks before I felt right again.

Advice

Using safety equipment can be a pain, but so can a severed finger!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Resawing on the tablesaw, depth of cut-height of blade was only 1.5". Used a piece of scrap as a push stick, approximately .75" x 1.25" x 18" length. After pushing workpiece all the way through blade the push stick was still engaged in blade. I began to draw push stick back when it contacted blade and kicked back. Drove push stick into the palm of my hand then fired it over my shoulder. Abrasions to the palm of my hand, no medical attention needed, minor pain and discomfort.

Advice

Use a proper push stick, whether shop made or purchased, with rounded corners. This would have eliminated the abrasions (cuts) to my palm, as they were caused by the sharp corners of the stick. Also, push your push stick all the way through the blade rather than withdrawing it half way through.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Actually this is a non-accident I will never know what happened to the missing carbide tip on my 10" table saw blade. It was only discovered upon removal of the saw to clean and have it sharpened. It could be anywhere. So much for just cutting a rabbet or anything else without an eye or face protector. I can only imagine if it had hit me full force.

Advice

Obvious

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Just before Christmas, 2001, I was pushing to complete some candle boxes for gifts for family and friends. On the night of the 21st, I was at the task till about 2 in the morning. Started in again just after lunch on the 22nd, still pretty tired from the session the night before. Was ripping red oak for the corner pieces, turned the saw off, and reached over behind the saw for a dropped length. Lost my balance, and reached back with my right hand to stop my fall. Tried to stop the coasting blade with my hand, but it didn't work. Evidently I hit the inside of my hand first, then the force of the blade turning flipped my hand over, whence the blade walked across all four fingers. Have some really nice scars now as a constant reminder to pay attention to what I'm doing at the moment, and to NOT work the saw when I'm tired. Haven't used a blade guard in so many years, and still don't.

Advice

If you're tired, stay out of the shop. When you're through with the event, shut down the saw and lower the blade, even if it takes time away from your project. Always have a phone nearby so you can call someone for assistance, even 9-1-1. I could have bled to death, for I fainted a couple of times before anyone stopped by the house. Thank God for the wonderful coagulation process! Kent Fletcher
Grandview, TX

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While attempting to cut a recess into a pce of red oak, the blade grabbed the board with my hand holding the outfeed side, to keep it flat against the fence, and my hand was jerked towards the top of the blade and caught my right thumb. A long deep shaving, down to the 3rd layer of skin resulted. A nasty gash that left no skin to stitch back! It is an open wound that must heal and grow back on its own.

Advice

This could have been avoided had I not been watching an Indy race, and decided to run down stairs and "whip off" a couple quick cuts to get a head start on a router fence I was building! When you go to the shop, PLAN on staying there, with a PLAN in mind!! Also, taking smaller bites out of the pce and sneaking up on the final dimension, would be and IS a wiser thing to do!!
STOP...THINK....PLAN...THINK...PROCEED...!! SAVE YERSELF A LONG, SORE, AND ANNOYING HEALING TIME...!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was trimming about 1 inch off an 18" x 18" piece of 1/8 plywood that was slightly cupped. I was standing to the right of the blade and using the fence to guide the work, holding the work flat to the table with my right hand as I pushed it through (no push stick). When the cut was completed I relaxed my right hand while reaching for the cut off switch with my left hand. Because of the cupped plywood the work was snagged by the still turning blade and it threw it back striking my left forearm and the bottom of my ribcage on the left side. The skin was broken in both places, and because I'm diabetic this required medical attention. The worst thing was the scare and I wouldn't use the saw again for about 10 days.

Advice

Wear safety glasses at all times!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While crosscutting 3/4 MDO, a 20"x30" piece kicked back and caught the back of my right hand, completely peeling the skin back from the bottom of the knuckles to the wrist.

Advice

Use the splitter

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was making a jewelry box and decided to use the table saw to make a groove on the edge of the top. Using a thin blade placed the piece vertically to run it across the blade using the fence as the support. All was going fine until the back edge of the piece was no longer supported by the table saw insert. I didn't think to change to a zero clearance insert and the wood piece was thinner than the opening of the insert. As soon as the wood cleared the insert it collapsed down pulling the ends of my 2nd and 3rd fingers into the saw. I was lucky that the blade was only set for a 1/8" depth of cut or it would have cut off the fingers. As it was I only had the fingers cut across the base of the nail beds. Still it required hand surgery at the hospital. I had a good surgeon and you can't even see the damage but I have no feelings in the end of the fingers.

Advice

Always use zero clearance inserts for all but angle cuts!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was ripping a 9 long x 2 wide x 1 thick piece of locust when I experienced a saw kickback. The saw, a Craftsman 10 table saw with a zero-insert, had the blade guard and its integral splitter removed. The fence is a Vega with a stainless steel face attached. There is no outfeed table. I was using two magnetic Grip-Tight hold-downs (from Mesa Vista Design) attached to the steel fence. I have used these frequently and had come to trust their ability to hold boards safely. I did have a slight problem attaching the rear Grip-Tite at the right height to securely grip the board, which seemed a little looser than the front roller. But after setting the Grip-Tite several times, I decided that it was probably ok for the short board I was ripping. I had ripped all the way through the board and was using a push stick under the Grip-Tites to push the board all the way out while standing to the right of the fence and wearing safety glasses. As the board was almost all the way out of the saw blade area there was a loud bang, a metallic twang, a blur of things flying by, and a crash of glass. I turned just in time to see the lamp on the desk across the room slowly tumble over. After turning off the saw and dust collector, I inspected the damage. The inner pane of a double paneled thermal window was mostly on the desk and floor. Fortunately all body parts were in same condition as before event and the outer pane of the window was still in tact (meaning no drop-everything trip to Lowes). In analyzing the event, I observed that the board had contacted the blade at the very end of the cut. After thinking about the setup I have concluded

Advice

Lessons learned - re-learned. 1)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting a tenon ,had cut one side and loosened clamp and dropped the wood and it fell on to ts blade. It came at me at about 150 miles per hour hitting me below the belt line, knocking the breath out and small cut. However the next day my lower extremities was every color of the rainbow.

Advice

Always have a firm grip before loosening clamp on tenon jig.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

school accident This accident happend at school. I was not hurt but the teacher was. He's been sour with me since then. I was cutting a one by one on the table saw. The stock had a 45 degree angle on the end to be cut. I put it on the push board to square the end. At that point the scrap I hade removed from the stock shot throught a 34 inch gap put in the push board by previous cuts using the dado head. It struck my teacher who thankfully was turned the opposite direction instructing another student on the proper use of the planer. With out looking aroud he shouted "Daniel get to your seat".How he knew it was me I will never Know.

Advice

My advice for wood Workers who want to use the dado head cutters on their table saw, is to use two push boards - one for dado heads and the other for plain cuts. If this is not an option make 1 push board that is compatible for both jobs.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was cutting small end groove on end of Red Oak boards approximately 10" Long. All was going well, finished about 40 of them, only one to go. Pushed it through, pick it up on back end of cut, and accidentally let it hit top of blade. The force pulled my right ring finger into saw blade. Luck was with me and blade was only up 1/8". Cut 90% of finger off just above first joint. The hand surgeon was excellent and re-attached finger. Have limited feeling in end of finger and the total cost was almost \$10,000.....could have bought a really nice tool for that!

Advice

Simple. Take your time and USE THE BLADE GUARD!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting 6x7" piece of 3/4 oak down to 5 1/2 x 7 (with the grain), and it bound between the blade and the fence. It ripped my thumb into the blade. I immediately looked at it to make sure it was still attached to my hand. Thank the Lord, it was still attached. It all happened so fast, but it looked like the face of my thumb danced on top of the blade for a while, and when I pulled out, it cut a 1/2 groove through the tip of it, right down the middle. Almost a month later, I'm working again, but have a new-found respect for the tool.

Advice

Pay attention! I was thinking about the next step in my project when this happened. I didn't notice that the piece was slightly cupped. Need to cut a cupped piece with the open part of the curve facing down (so it looks like a frown). Cutting the way I did it, it can rock, and get bound like it did. Stay focused on the task. Human parts are no match for tools that are made to cut through hardwood.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was making a sharpening jig from one of those "why didn't I think of that?" plans from a magazine. I had been working in the shop for most of the day and was tired. I needed to make ONE MORE CUT on the table saw. In the process, realized the blade was not high enough and reached down to raise the blade. Really stupid!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! the piece bound and and the kick back took both index and second fingers into the blade cutting off the index finger just below the first knuckle and almost severed the second at the finger nail. Ten years and several operations later, I have limited use of both fingers involved.

Advice

1. you're tired, DON'T PUSH YOURSELF FOR "JUST ONE MORE CUT" Leave the shop!
2. No matter how many years of experience you have, IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While cutting a piece of white pine I hit a knot and the board shattered knocking my left hand into the blade. 3 fingers ended up getting cut. 5 hours with 15 stitches and 2 broken fingers I left the local emergency room. I am lucky in that all fingers are attached and still working. The tip of one finger is still numb and aches in the cold. The minute the e.r. doctor saw my hand he exclaimed table saw ! when I asked how he knew he stated many of the table saw injuries he has seen involved 3 fingers to 1 degree or another. He must have seen a few of these injuries as he did an excellent job stitching me back together.

Advice

PUSH STICKS AND FEATHER BOARDS....USE THEM !!!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was mid-way through ripping zebra wood when I thought I should get a push stick. It was out of reach, so I thought I'll be really careful and get it after finishing the cut. I kept my eyes on the blade and my fingers, until I was abruptly reminded that I also have a thumb. My thumb was chewed up a bit and with tissue missing, it couldn't be stitched. Luckily, it healed quite well.

Advice

A potential kickback from turning off a saw in the middle of cutting a small piece of wood might be dangerous, but that's probably what I should have done at the time.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Trying to get a little creative on my portable tablesaw and tried to slice a 3/4" piece of poplar in half (didn't have a band saw at the time, or planer). Blade bit it, along with three of my fingers. Happened so fast I didn't feel it at first - but saw the blood. Really didn't want to look at my hand to see the damage. I'm a tough cookie but the sight of my own blood is my weakness! Had to call EMS and take a ride to the local ER. It was very humorous for the staff the see a female with a tablesaw injury.

Advice

Don't be creative. Follow the rules!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a piece of luan with the blade set about a quarter inch above the surface. As I was about midway through feeding the 8 foot piece (it was already rough-cut, I was "just trimming the edge"), I was changing hand positions, to smoothly continue the feed, and as I was retracting my left hand, it blocked my view of the blade. I set my thumb down on top of the blade and it jerked my hand to the back of the exposed cut. I am thankful it wasn't the middle of my palm! It took seven stitches to close a wound that looked like some bad hamburger, at least it didn't go to the bone. Two years later, I still have a tough scar diagonally across my thumb print and some numbness between the scar and the tip of the thumb.

Advice

As others also say - keep your eyes on the blade! Amazingly ugly things can happen in less than the blink of an eye. Never let your mind or your hands wander.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a 17" x 8' piece of 1/4" plywood. I need 12" so my left hand was 5" from the blade applying pressure to keep it against the fence. About 5' or so had been ripped when the flexible plywood hit on something on the outfeed table and stopped. My left hand was next to or real close to the blade and when the wood stopped my hand did not. My hand went into the blade at the little finger upper nuckle. The surgeon said repair was not possible because so much damage was done, so today I can only count to 4 on my left hand. Several factors caused the accident. 1- the blade was set way too high. 2- I was not really in the mood to work that day, I was "going through the motions". 3- No blade guard. 4- Outfeed table had damaged spot that made wood hang (sometimes).

Advice

Use blade guards, if you don't like the factory version, it might be wise to purchase an aftermarket one that you will use. If you are "out of sorts" or distracted mentally, stay away from machinery. I know blade height is a much discussed subject, but for me, I will always have the height just a tad above the blade. Keep the outfeed table clear.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping strips off a piece of oak stock, to make a circle gauge. One of the strips twisted, and a classic kickback occurred. The difference here, is that the strip was so thin, that it kicked down, between the blade and throat plate, catching a finger in the process. This was not more than a really hard twitch, but enough to pull an index finger into the blade. I did not lose the finger, just a chunk of the tip.

Advice

Standard stuff. always use a splitter and push sticks. Just actually use them :)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

This happened with my tablesaw on a sunny Saturday afternoon. My neighbor was going to throw away a bunch of scrap lumber, 1x2's, 2x2's and 4x4's. With my woodstove, I couldn't resist taking the lumber to cut up. Was down to the last three pieces of wood, going at a pretty good clip, when I accidentally came down of the blade (all the way up for the 4x4's). I felt the blade, and my glove immediately started oozing alot of blood. When I took my glove off, I discovered that I had nearly amputated my ring finger (about 3/4 way thru the finger, entirely thru the bone). Truly, this brought me psychologically to a place I never want to be again. I immediately put the hand into a glass of ice water and had the wife drive me to emergency. 3 hours of surgery, 2 days in the hospital, and after 2 months I am just starting physical therapy (finger was saved but first knuckle is stiff from being dislocated by the blade. Not complaining tho...God is good.

Advice

1) Put the dam guard back on the saw that you took off because it is in the way. 2) Never get complacent with a tablesaw, as it doesn't discriminate between wood and flesh. 3) According to all my carpenter friends (I am an ICU nurse)...leave the tools in the hands of a professional...lol.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Untrained and unsupervised I was working on a home made table saw making a toy rubber band gun. I had two cuts to make, one with the grain and one across. Made the first cut just fine, the second cut kicked back and flipped the board upward. Forcing it back down to the table took my right hand into the blade...I cut off all five fingers. I was 8. Thanks to some really great Doc's and alot of prayer all five were re-attached. Ignoring minor loss of feeling and one joint on my little finger, they work just fine.

Advice

Never use a tool you haven't been trained on and lock up your tools when you're done so your kids can't get at them.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping 1/2" plywood from 6x12 down to 3x12. After making the successful cut, I turned the motor off with my right hand and reached for the cut wood part with my left. Unfortunately, the saw blade had not stopped and was still spinning. The board tapped the side of the blade, and my hand shot forward into the blade. The blade made a perfect kerf right down my index finger to the base of the nail. A trip to the ER and all is back together, but deformed by 1/8" lost to the kerf forever!

Advice

ALWAYS wait for the blade to stop turning before attempting to place hands near the tabletop!! Take your time and concentrate on what you are doing. . . .not what you are about to do.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a number of cedar boards after completing other machining. Tablesaw was "inherited" without guards, and parts are no longer available. I kept telling myself that I needed to find a safer way to do the job, but never stopped to find the solution. I finally became complacent (read "unattentive") and stuck my index finger into the blade while clearing scrap. Thankfully I hit it from the side rather than across the teeth. Took a chunk out of my nail and finger tip, and warranted a trip to the ER for cleaning, a tetanus shot, and a professional bandage. No permanent damage except to my pride!

Advice

1. Safety guards are there for a reason. 2. If doing a lot of repetitive work, take regular breaks. I can now see how somebody would pull a chopsaw onto their hand as they shifted the stock for the next cut. 3. Before starting, assess the most likely risks and find ways to reduce or eliminate them. 4. Repetitive work warrants a jig (or sled, etc.) which will allow use of featherboards, hold-downs, etc. These too are safety guards!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting a new sacrificial fence for my dado blade when it grabbed the wood and pulled my left hand in with it. All of the tips of my fingers from the pinky to the middle finger were cut and my middle finger broken with the nail removed.

Advice

No matter how hard you practice safety mistakes will still happen but continue to refresh yourself with all of the safety rules. Don't let these mistakes discourage us from the things we enjoy.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

i was ripping thin stock on the Table saw, and reached behind the blade with my left hand to "save" the offcut from taking a dive to the floor. I contacted the back of the blade, and tore a large piece of it out, a little wider than the kerf. lesson learned? an offcut is NOT worth reaching for while the blade is still running!

Advice

After i had a chance to heal a while, I built myself an outfeed table, as I knew instinct would force my stupid fingers back into the same situation time and time again. Now, I do not have need for reaching over the blade to "rescue" an offcut. It can sit there till I have a chance to turn the saw off, and then retrieve it.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was making a picture frame with a slot at the top to insert a frequently changed sign out of heart pine. I had already ripped a 8' 2x2 into 1x2, cut the pieces to length and mitered the corners. I needed to groove each piece on the inner edges and changed to a stacked dado blade. I didn't use a push stick because I thought that the push stick would ruin the nice sharp edges on the miters. Instead, I ran each piece through halfway, shut the saw down, reversed the piece and ran it through again. Suddenly one bound while I was pushing it through and the resulting kickback forced the sharp edge of the mitered board into the palm of my right hand. My palm filled with blood and began dripping on the concrete floor. After washing off the blood, I could see that stitches were definitely in order. The sharp mitered edge cut deeply into my palm, just below the thumb, stopping about 1/2" from the heel of my hand, about 2 1/2" long with an ell shape on each end. I applied pressure and stopped the bleeding, grabbed a phone and called my wife to take me for stitches. While she was on the way, I went back down to the shop and shut off the lights and locked up. By this time, I was in one of those cold sweats that you get from the adrenalin rush. A couple of hours later we walked out of the medical center with 14 stitches and a large bandage. That was 11 days ago. It looks like I'll be fine when the stitches come out. I have full sensation in all fingers and my thumb will eventually regain a full range of motion. For the time being, it is still sore and stiff.

Advice

Use push sticks ALL the time when the pieces are shorter than the table. I designed one for mitered edges that doesn't contact the tip. It has an angle on the rear that's less than the miter so that the miter doesn't bottom out and a handle on top that keeps hands away from the blade. Keep the phone where you can reach it and use it with either hand. Mine was on my belt and on the same side as my injured hand. Think before you make a cut. Imagine what could happen. If you can't think of a safe way to complete the operation, use another machine. In my case, this would have been a router table.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Well I had only had the tablesaw for about a week. I was fairly confident since I was trained on the tablesaw for about eight hours by my grandfather who had been woodworking for 20+ years and had never been injured. It was an older Craftsman table saw and the fence it had was terrible. I knew that it wasn't perfectly parallel to the blade because of the way it was set up was using a ruler and measuring at the front and the back of the blade. I had a 12"x12" piece of 1/4" plywood and I needed it to be 1 1/2" shorter. So being new and all I thought I'll just use a 2x4 between the fence and the blade to set the distance. Well I did this and got the piece of plywood and turned the saw on. For my second mistake I didn't have a push stick. I was feeding it through and it went great until the last 3' of the cut. It became hard to feed and instead of shutting the saw off. I used alot more muscle and pushed it through. That left a 12"x1 1/2" piece between the blade and the fence. I lifted the large pice off and the small piece shot back and into the wall behind the tablesaw. Luckily I was standing to the left and it missed me. That was a close one.

Advice

1. Always put your keeper piece in between the fence and blade. 2. Make sure you have a push stick to push it through. 3. Make sure you have an accurate fence that stays parallel to the blade. (I bought a new fence after this) 4. Be safe and use your head.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping some thin pieces of stock and yes I was using a pushstick, problem occurred when the push stick slid off slightly and contacted the blade which kicked the push stick back into my palm resulting in a trip to the ER and stitches along with antibiotics. postnote...never!!! I mean never allow the ER nurse to give you a gram of any kind of antibiotic in the arm!! trust me your butt is a much bigger muscle, the pain was enough to make me forget my palm.

Advice

Just as you would keep your eyes on your fingers so to should you keep your eyes on the push stick.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was crosscutting a number of pieces to the same length on a table saw. I was working outside in Darwin, Australia, and it was very hot and humid. As there were many pieces to cut it got a little monotonous and attention wandered. I slapped the side of the blade with my second to last finger and carved out a large piece of skin and bone. If I had hit the front edge at least one and maybe all my fingers would be gone. Hand out of action for a week or so and permanent loss of feeling in the end of that finger.

Advice

Take regular breaks, especially during repetitive jobs or in poor conditions! Stop to get a drink, not a bandage!!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Been six months since my "incident", and it still seems like yesterday. Picked up some scrap fence boards from a neighbor, and decided to use the old tablesaw to cut it into woodstove size pieces. Guard or pushstick? Na, only gets in the way. Was almost done, blade all the way up, went to pick up a scrap of wood with my left hand and sliced 7/8 of the way through the middle of my ring finger, nicking my middle and index finger as well. Three hours of surgery and 4 months of physical therapy and I can bend my first knuckle of my ring finger about 50 degrees, but at least I still have my finger. Makes chording with my guitar a chore though.

Advice

Use the dam guard and pushstick. Don't use a tablesaw to cut scrap wood, it only makes you go too fast. If you are ever in California, you won't find a better physical therapist than Monique (or cuter, but I am a married guy...sigh...)

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was building a large plywood box for a friend to put some equipment into. Everything was going well until I had to cut some dados in the sides of the box. I had just bought a guard that fits over the sawblade to lock it into position while you loosen the nut on the blade. When I used it to remove the standard blade, it worked like a charm. I installed the dado set and made the cuts in the plywood. I then had to change the blade back to the standard blade and that is where I ran into trouble. I put my guard over the left-hand blade on the dado set because the guard would not fit over both blades. This left the right blade exposed. As I applied pressure to the nut on the arbor, the blade guard slipped and settled further onto the blade. Unfortunately, my hand was pressing quite firmly onto the guard and the thumb of my left hand was jammed into the exposed right-hand blade of the dado set. My thumb was perfectly positioned to have one of the VERY sharp carbide teeth cut a slice into the pad of my thumb. It carved a neat trench into the meat of my thumb and it bled like a stuck pig! I let it bleed while I found a bandage and some antiseptic for the wound. Now, three weeks later, my thumb is almost back to normal with no permanent damage.

Advice

Don't use a safety device for a purpose for which it was not intended. My guard worked well for single blades, but did not do well on the dado set that was in my saw. I would have been better off using a piece of wood rather than this tool. Make sure that you have a first-aid kit nearby and keep it well stocked. As well, don't forget, even when these blades are not spinning, they are capable of causing a lot of damage very quickly!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping some 2" x 6" x 8' pine boards in half to make protective tee-pee's to cover the bushes in the front of our home. I was using the customary safety devices (push stick, featherboard and outfeed roller), but when I cut the last board - for whatever reason - I reached for the board to clear it away from the blade and didn't shut off the saw. I cut my thumb sideways from the tip to the first knuckle. They were able to save my thumb and reconnect the tendon, but I will not know how much movement; if any, I will have until the pin is removed sometime around Thanksgiving. The factory installed guard had been removed for some dado's I had been doing and I had not yet replaced it. I am extremely lucky to still have my thumb and will be able to use it in some capacity - it could have been much much worse. SAFETY FIRST & FOREMOST !

Advice

Take whatever time is necessary to ensure safety around machinery, never RUSH through a project. Use ALL your safety equipment - even your brain! 1.) I didn't have a blade guard on - Always use a guard of some type. 2.) No job is as important as your body parts - take the extra time to ensure safety. 3.) Always think about safety and the safe and proper setup for each and every operation in the wood shop. SAFETY FIRST & FOREMOST !

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

This happened about 22 yrs ago. I was cutting a piece of walnut around 2 inches wide. I had to remove the guard to cut a dado around 1/2 inch deep. I had made several passes to achieve the acquired depth, when I was on the final pass, the wood was kicked back towards me in sticking in my stomach, blood squirting everywhere, not knowing what had happened (shock). When I woke up, I was in the hospital. I had lost the middle finger down to the second knuckle and part of the ring finger to the first knuckle. Major surgery had to be preformed. To this day my left hand does not close completely, and when it is cold out it feels that my fingers are in ice water. also I had received around 100 stitches to my stomach, because the wood had gone thru the skin separating the small intestine. I am still a woodworker either for fun or for business. Weeks after the accident, I had noticed there was a piece of metal imbedded in the wood. This will be the last time I get wood from a friends' house.

Advice

Ever since the accident, I bought a metal detector for wood because I have found metal and-or nails in wood even from a commercial wood saw mill. Take no chances.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was making some wooden handles for drawers. I had machined the piece to the shape desired and was cutting it off to the width needed. As i was pushing it through the table saw it caught and kicked back, pulling my push stick down and back with it. I raked the top of my fingers at the nails and the end of my thumb across the top of the blade and kicked myself through the Christmas holidays. My lessons were many. Don't work when you are tired. I was in a hurry to finish the job. My push stick was whittled away by too many narrow cuts and dangerously short. And the most important lesson for me: Never use the table saw for a rip cut less that an inch to an inch and a half. Use the band saw or get one.

Advice

I would have lost some finger prints if i had stuck the blade up more than a sixteenth inch above the wood. The bansaw is the most versatile tool in any cabinet shop.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting some pen blanks from a piece of Osage Orange that I had so that I could provide some fellow pen turners some of the colourfull wood. Running the 6 inch wide piece through so that I was cutting off 3/4 inch wide strips using a proper push stick and proper tablesaw fence when I felt the piece seem to rise up on the blade so I went to push the piece down and misjudged the distance and shifted the plastic guard over into the blade, which promptly cut through that and took the top half of the nail and about a 1/32 of an inch of meat from under the nail on the first 2 fingers of the left hand. Still bleeding a bit but nothing to be able to stitch as the back of the fingers were facing the blade.

Advice

Always be aware of where the blade is and where your fingers are in respect to the blade. Also do not go into the shop if you can not concentrate on what you are doing!!!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Eight years ago my wife and I were preparing our "grannyhouse" for my mother-in-law to move into from Canada. Normally I am screaming safety. I was rushing, was not wearing safety glasses, and was operating my tablesaw without the kick-back guard. I was trying to cut a mortise on the end of an 18" 2x4. I very carelessly I placed the 2x4 on end on the opposite side of the blade. (I don't remember why now.) The blade caught the 2x4 and sent it crashing into my right eyebrow. Immediately I knew there was serious damage. My 4 year-old son was watching this happen. I started going into shock. Luckily I did not get knocked-out; I might have fallen forward on to the exposed saw blade. My wife took me to the hospital where my heartbeat grew dangerously slow. (I was only 34 at the time.) I was fortunate that I did not suffer any blood loss, but the doctor said that if it hit me in the nose it likely would have killed me. I had to have surgery to repair my shattered sinus cavity. I literally was split from ear-to-ear over the top of my head and my skin was pulled down far enough to access the damaged area. (Just like in the movie "Face off") I now have several titanium screws and plates in my skull as well as one hell of a scar. My head swelled to the size of a basketball and I was out of work for a month. The trauma to my head caused hair to fallout sooner than it should have. No, I don't set off metal detectors, nor do refrigerator magnets stick to my head. (My son tried when I got home from the hospital.)

Advice

Don't be in a hurry when working with any kind of tools. Use your safety measures properly, and never operate power tools without safety glasses. In the past I had gotten minor nicks on my fingers from blades and just shrugged it off to carelessness. That was stupid! My late father-in-law cut off four fingers on his tablesaw because he didn't hear it running and set his hand down on the spinning blade. He had be woodworking for 50 years! BE AWARE of what's going on at all times. Don't allow distractions. Be careful and have fun.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Was running a 24" pine 2x4 through the table saw and using a featherboard clamped to the table to prevent kickback. Was not using the splitter and blade guard. Well, at the end of the cut the board bound into the blade. It shot back with such force that it shattered the oak featherboard and sent the cut pine back into my thumb causing my arm to shoot back and spinning me around. The featherboard never moved and the remains were still clamped securely in place. Was a close call. Ended up with a pretty bruised thumb. Glad the featherboard was there.

Advice

Use the splitter. I was lucky. even with the featherboard clamped securely the wood turned and shot back. Could have been much worse.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was cutting a Piece of 1/4" beaded plywood for a panel insert. The plywood was nearly square, however I was cutting the shorter side. Thought I would take a shortcut and get away with using the rip fence, no such luck. Panel twisted just into the cut and threw the panel back. Panel hit my hand and lacerated three fingers, 2 down to the tendons, and also broke my index finger in two places, have always been careful of the blade (dads missing 3 digits from two separate accidents on a tablesaw) so luckily I did not contact the blade, however still in a cast for 4 - 6 weeks and will have a crooked finger.

Advice

USE A SPLITTER and antikickback pawls when possible, also use a blade guard. Use what came with the saw or upgrade, just don't use nothing.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

while I was resawing a small board, I made the mistake of trying to cut it completely through. As soon as the cut piece was free it kicked away. My fingers were just barely in contact with the blade. I had three stiches in my middle finger and barely nicked my index finger. I was one lucky beginner.

Advice

My advice is to make sure you don't get in a hurry and try to avoid steps that are meant to protect you. I did not heed my own knowledge. I'm very lucky and will never get my finger that close to the blade again. This happened so fast I almost did not know it.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I had the same almost identical accident twice in exactly 2 months. The first one happened as I was crosscutting a wide board using my Powermatic 66 Cabinet saw with no blade guard. I fed the board through the blade using the fence. When I had almost completed the cut, I was using my left hand to reach across the blade to retrieve the board and my left thumb came in contact with the blade. It required 4 stitches and a 3/8in. round area could not be stitched. The second injury happened exactly 2 months later. This time I was ripping a 3 5/8in. piece of oak. I did the same exact thing, reaching across the blade with my left hand. Same thumb, this time much worse. The first injury hadn't completely healed. This time there were 5 stitches and a 1/2in. round wound. It's been 5 1/2 months since the second one, and a small part of the wound hasn't and probably won't completely heal.

Advice

I have bought an aftermarket overhead blade guard. (www.pennstateindustries.com)I have also added a Biesemeyer snap in splitter.It scares me to death when I have to make a cut without the blade guard. Please, either put the factory guard back on or purchase an aftermarket blade guard and USE IT! I always knew it would never happen to me. Well, it did! Twice!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting a small piece of Cherry on my Jet Cabinet saw using just the fence and a push stick. The piece caught the back of the blade and flew directly into my face. I ended up with a bloody nose and split lip and an afternoon in the emergency room.

Advice

I was not using a splitter. I would not recommend using a table saw without one (except of course unless you're using a dado blade or are using a miter gauge or sled). I've since installed a bis splitter in my saw.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting the groove for a breadboard end on a table top with the top standing on end while feeding it across the saw, What happened, who knows? The board caught, and the next thing I know I see blood. Went to doctor and had stitches across my hand below the thumb.

Advice

Use feather boards or something to hold pieces in place against the fence. You only think you can hold it, or use router-shaper table for groove.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I had been using the tablesaw a week earlier to make some dados in plywood. Therefore, I had removed the factory blade guard, splitter and cawls assembly as required to make dado cuts. A week later I needed to cut a 12 inch by 15 inch piece of 1/2 inch ply for another project. I was in a hurry (big mistake) and thought it would not be that big of a deal to just make the two cuts required without the guard-splitter-cawls (big mistake number 2). I setup the fence and made the first cut with no problem. I reset the fence for the second cut when it happened. I was approx. 3 inches shy of completing the second cut when the plywood began to bind a little between the fence and blade. I should have turned off the saw immediately. Instead, I put more force behind the plywood and tried to force it through (big mistake number 3). As I applied more force, I felt the plywood rectangle begin to rotate toward the blade. Before I could blink, the plywood rectangle rotated onto the spinning blade and became air borne. The piece shot towards me with such speed, I was impacted in the stomach and the board dropped to the floor. I was so stunned that I checked my fingers [all accounted for] and carefully lifted my shirt to assess the damage. I was worried the corner may have punctured the skin-muscle. To my relief, the corner of the board did not go into my stomach, but it hurt like heck. The 1/2 inch side hit with such force that it produced two perfectly parallel cut marks about 4 inches long on my stomach. No stitches thankfully.

Advice

(1) Listen when people say use all available safety devices: guards, splitters, cawls, etc... (2) If you don't have the safety devices, buy some before starting your next project. (3) Never force anything through the saw...if there is a bind, turn the saw off and correct the problem before proceeding. (4) No one is quicker than the saw blade. Don't think you can duck or move away real quick if there is a problem...prevent the problem before you begin. (5) Have fun!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I had interrupted my friend who was using the Craftsman tablesaw to cut some 3" thick doors, thus, the saw blade was adjusted about 3-1/2" above the table and the stock blade guard was removed. I was ripping a 1" x 3/4" x 36" L piece of stock and didn't feel like adjusting the setup for one cut then having to reset everything for my friend to resume his work. I was reaching across the table and over the blade with my left hand to keep the piece firm against the fence. I was pushing the piece through with my right hand. Once I got near the end of the cut, I noticed the pushstick was on the floor at my feet. I reached down with my right hand to grab the pushstick. I kept my left hand clear until I realized I had to stretch just a bit further and "Zzzzing!" -- my left hand caught the blade and cut my thumb to the bone. It split open like a fresh piece of produce and then began spurting blood. Luckily, a friend was working with me and could drive me to the ER, because I passed out as soon as I sat in the car. I cut my left thumb to the bone, severing my flexor tendon and two nerves completely. After 2-hours of surgery by a plastic-reconstructive surgeon, everything will be OK. The splint and stitches will come off in 4-weeks, however, it will take upwards of 6-months before my thumb has all the feeling and motion returned.

Advice

[1] Buy a blade guard, or fab one that will suit your needs. The price for the guard and the time required to setup-work around it is so little compared to the time it takes to recover. A Brett Guard is expensive, but not as costly as an injury nor the \$1500 co-pay for my insurance. [2] Properly setup the saw even if you're only cutting a single piece. [3] Buy or fab a pushstick tool that keeps your hands away from the blade and ALWAYS keep it accessible. [4] Don't reach across the blade EVER. [5] Don't stand directly in the path of the cut. JUST BE CAREFUL. MY INJURY COULD'VE BEEN SO MUCH WORSE -- I'D HATE TO SEE SOMEONE ELSE DO THE SAME THING.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

milling a 1/4" rabbit in a 1 1/2 x 6" piece of poplar for a drawer support...using mitre bar, no guard...kick back 40 stitches on right ring finger & 10 on little finger withh fracture of same.....happened 1/25-04 lacerations ok...still in rehab on the little finger break..

Advice

After 25 years my first accident!.....have added biesmeyer spltter(which would not have prevented this) and excalibur overhead guard & dust collection...the excalibur is excellent on dust and probably would have prevented the small piece from coming back to contact my right hand....whenever you think it will never happen to you and all those other guys are idiots, give me a heads up...obewank@aol.com

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

The dado blade was in my saw and I needed to rip down a 2x6 real quick. So I changed the blade but did not bother to put the blade guard and splitter back in for this quick cut. Half way through the cut the wood bound up on the blade and kicked back. I was using a push stick but had the end of it in the palm of my hand and the force sent the push stick into my hand creating a 1/4" wide by 1 1/2" crater in my palm. Of course no one else was home so I had to knock on neighbors doors to find someone to take me to the hospital. I got 7 stiches and fortunatly the push stick went in between the tendons in my hand. When I got home I found blood covering my shop floor. I left it there to remind me to always use the guards.

Advice

Always use the guards and other safety devices with your tools, and make sure any push sticks handles are wide enough to hold properly and make sure your hand is around the stick and not the stick in your palm.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Last cut of the day was a narrow piece of moulding to be cut on my JET contractors saw. No guard, and I have a Beis. aftermarket splitter on it. Forrest WWII TK blade. I made the cut easily, reached down, turnd the saw off and promptly tried to put my finger through the still spinning blade in an attempt to retrieve the piece I'd just cut. Ended up losing about 1/4" off the end of my finger although the blade cut "through" the finger and didn't actually cut "across" the finger. There was no piece to pick up, it was just gone. There was nothing to stitch. Stock guard would not have helped as the piece was too narrow and the guard would have to be moved-removed regardless.

Advice

Listen to the little voice in your head that says "I'm tired, I should go inside" and if you even THINK you hear it, turn off the tools and leave it for antoher day.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was setting the table saw blade height to just above the height of the material I was ripping (3/4" thick). I had placed the lumber (Soft Maple 4" wide x 14" long) next to the saw blade. Once I finished this task I saw a scrap of wood near my feet so I reached down to clear this.

As I stood back up I turned the power on to the table saw. I then noticed that the wood was still next to the blade. Instead of turning off the power and moving this I thought I could just slip the board back and out of the way. As I grabbed the board with my left hand (carefully) I accidentally bumped the back of the board into the back of the blade just enough to cause the board to kickback. I did have a splitter in place but the back of the board was between the splitter and the blade. The board caught the blade and kicked back hard into my left hand. It bent my thumb back and severely hyper extended it at the first knuckle. The board gave me a cut on the very tip of my finger and sliced a piece of skin from the bottom right of my thumb (luckily not bad enough for stitches). For informational purposes I was using a Jet Super Saw (non-sliding table) that is running on 220V electrical. My blade type is a Forrest. Both the machine and the blade are kept tuned and cleaned on a regular basis (once every 2 weeks). As you might expect, I had been working all day in the shop doing heavy cutting. The accident happened at 9:05pm EST. I was a bit tired and this was going to be my last cut of the night.

Advice

Listen to the statistics about accidents on table saws at night. Also...every time you go to turn the power on to a machine go through the safety checks to make sure your fence is securely locked and that there is nothing near the blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

The blade guard on my 15-year old Delta contractor's table saw was bent. Had splintered plexiglass. Got in my way twice with every pass of wood, it seemed (wood caught on the plex and on the splitter). So, I took off the guard (error # 1). Doesn't everyone? 8pm on a Saturday night (error # 2, a 12 hour day), I was pushing to complete the build of my new kitchen cabinets. While ripping stock, I was standing to the right of the blade (error # 3). Must have lost focus, as I looked away and pushed stock through the unprotected blade with my very unprotected hand (error # 4).

Advice

When you MUST remove your blade guard, make sure your blade is set at the minimum height. Totally focus on the blade. Errors will be costly. I fortunately didn't lose any fingers, but 2 surgeries later....

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I had rounded over the edges of some 1x4 stock and made the initial 90* cuts for roughing out the pieces. I have a Delta contractor's saw with a right tilting blade and had my favorite Freud 80 tooth set up. For whatever reason (or maybe lack of reason NOT to) I had the work piece on the right side of the blade which put the scrap on the left side of the blade. I was only trimming the very end off the board, so as I make my first cut the small wedge shaped scrap slides down the blade, rattles around in the gap between the insert and the blade for a second and then binds in place. The blade had grabbed the wedge and with a metallic CLANG shot it through the gap between the insert and the blade. After shutting the saw down and checking myself for holes (luckily finding none) I notice a 1/8" x 1/4" chip taken out of the right side of the insert. Unplugged the saw (I wasn't ready to roll the dice twice this evening) and rotated the blade around by hand to check for any signs of warping. Didn't find any warping, but did find one of the teeth missing on my favorite blade.

Advice

As with most accidents, this one falls under the DUH category. You look back at it and see EXACTLY what you should have done differently that would have made absolutely no difference in time or effort but would have avoided the danger all together. The rest of the pieces were cut with the work piece to the left of the blade and the scrap to the right. Each cut now the scrap fell harmlessly onto the table top with precious little opportunity to wedge itself between the blade and insert.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting a 10" x 8" panel from a 10" x 12" x 3/4" piece of plywood. After I finished the cut, I let go of the board next to the fence to turn off the table saw. There was some vibration as the saw slowed and the board kicked back striking my right hand. It happened amazingly fast. I had absolutely no time to react. Fortunately, the blade was not running at full speed (or I would have been hit with even more force). I only had a superficial cut on the back of my right hand with some bruising (to my hand and to my ego). It could have been much worse. This is the first and hopefully last kickback I'll ever experience.

Advice

I made several errors. 1) I should have used my cross-cut sled. 2) Apparently, I didn't push the board completely past the blade before I let go of it. 3) I had just removed my splitter for another operation and forgot to replace it. Any one of these would have prevented the accident. I'm making sure to do all three from now on.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting down a backsplash 4 5/8" down to 4 1/2" for a clean install, and between the warped fence and the wobbling blade (which needed a stabilizer at the least) the backsplash was twisted upwards and my right hand, dominant, fell atop the blade. I have what several doctors have called the "Indy 500" of tablesaw injuries. I severed 6 tendons, my ulnar nerve, part of my ulna at the wrist, and many of the little bones (metacarples) were turned to dust. My father was a woodworker-craftsman, so was his father and my younger brother. On the very first day of starting to work at this place, I informed the foreman immediately after using the saw for the first time that several things needed to be fixed and-or replaced or someone was going to be hurt very badly. Those were my exact words. Two weeks later I was the unfortunate soul. I can no longer work in the field, needless to say, and I am told Florida is the absolute worst place in America to get hurt on the job; especially when the liability and negligence from such an injury cannot be linked to the employer due to a law passed 3 or 4 years ago. The owners of the company never worked in a shop in their life. Right after I was injured, one owner bought a brand new hummer, the other a new porsche. It would have cost at the very least \$30 for a guard to be put on the saw, and my life would not be ruined like this.

Advice

If for some reason you do not feel comfortable using equipment on a job, no matter how new you are in town or desperate for money, DO NOT use the equipment. If the employer-s decide to do nothing about the problem, find another job immediately. A few more jobless weeks is far better than this agony I am going through now.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was assembling the last of 7 drawers for a chest when I realized that the 1/4" plywood bottom was about an inch too long. Having just used my tablesaw to cut the dados for the drawer bottom, I had removed the Biesmeyer splitter...and forgot to reinstall it before cutting the plywood. The plywood was slightly warped, and as I fed it into the blade, it lifted up, pivoted on its rear corner against the fence, and slammed back into the web of my left hand. At first, I was in shock about what just happened, but within seconds, my hand swelled up like a balloon, and the huge gash across the web began bleeding profusely.

Advice

That was almost 15 years ago, and I still have virtually no feeling in my left index finger. I do, however, have a gigantic scar which screams at me TO MAKE SURE THE SPLITTER IS ALWAYS INSTALLED WHEN RIPPING OR CROSSCUTTING PANELS!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Was ripping 1" thick Black Walnut and just as the blade was about to exit the board a chunk broke loose and the blade threw it back-wards. Fortunately I was standing to the left of the blade path and the chunk hit a glancing blow to the side of my rib cage. It stung and I have a little bruising.

Advice

Always stand outside of the blade path. I've seen beveled off cuts lunched back-wards and then penetrate a 1/2" thick drywall wall.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I had been cleaning up my scrap lumber pile, and was cutting up the leftover pieces to throw away. I was on my last piece, a 6" thick stair stringer, and was ripping it to remove the steps, and had the blade all the way up. When I finished ripping the board, I shut off the saw, and immediately reached in to pick up the piece I had cut off. In a split second, my 3rd and 4th fingers of my right hand hit the blade (which, of course, was still turning. I was lucky that the fingers weren't severed completely, but had to have 8 stitches to close the wounds. I had taken the blade guard off when I bought the saw. (I always thought the blade guards were more a hazard than a help.)I have now reinstalled the blade guard.

Advice

1. Use your blade guard. My accident would have been preventable had it been installed. 2. When doing repetitive work, take frequent breaks, and always keep safety precautions on your mind. Accidents happen very quickly. 3. Wait until the blade quits turning completely before getting your hands anywhere close to the blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

While cross cutting a piece in my cross cutting sled, I was pushing with my right hand on the exit cover. The saw blade cut through and hit my finger on the right hand, not deep but enough to bleed alot. I had added an out feed table to my saw, which allowed me to push the sled farther than I was used to. See below for my solutions, so this won't happen again.

Advice

First, put a push handle on the sled at the blade line for your hand to grab instead of the back of the sled. Second, calculate the distance you have to push sled to finish the cut for different thickness of stock and mark and drill a 1/4" hole at these locations on the outfeed table. Use your router control pin in these holes to act as a stop for the sled. Best advice, think ahead of what can happen, and do something constructive to avoid it from happening. Work safely out there, and Happy Holidays.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was a sophomore in high school and working for my Dad at his lumberyard during summer break. Often we would mill lumber for customers to various sizes, and that process would leave scrap cutoffs which after letting pile up for about 2 weeks we would make steaks for steaking off foundations. We did this by ripping the cutoffs down to 1x2, moving the fence out of the way, raising the blade, and passing the wood across the blade at an angle without the use of a mitre guide or fence. On this fateful day I was about half-way through my stack, pulling a steak through the blade when my right hand suddenly flew to the back of the saw. I was horrified, I grabbed my hand and ran down to the office, not knowing the damage I had done. I ran into the office dripping blood the whole way, the second I got through the door I saw my Dad at the counter he knew exactly what had happened when he saw my face, he ran over to me and asked how bad, (though I didn't know, I didn't have the nerve to look) I lifted my right hand to my amazement I still had all of my fingers, though the very tip (about 1/8 inch) of my middle finger was connected by a thread, and the finger next to it had been sliced open from the top to about 1/4 inch down (parallel to my fingernail). We went to the emergency room, though there was nothing they could do but clean out the wounds, and bandage them up.

Advice

NEVER NEVER NEVER use a table saw without some kind of guide, fence, jig, or sled. I am almost glad this happened, it has made me infinitely more safe during my workshop time.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

When I was cutting a piece of plywood for a storage box for my sand paper, the plywood got stuck on the micro splitter. I attempted to remove the micro splitter with the saw still running. My left thumb caught the saw blade and cut my thumb and also the tendon.

Advice

Don't rush and think twice before you work around a moving saw blade

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was using a push stick, ripping a six inch long piece of wood, no blade guard, splitter or pawls installed. The piece of wood flew back at me and took a 3 corner tear out of my right hand. Seven stitches and two weeks out of action.

Advice

Use the blade guard at all times, as well as the antikick back pawls. When pushing a piece through the blade, use a push handle that applies pressure over a large length of the work piece. A push stick only puts pressure on the back end, leaving the front end unsupported. Whenever possible, don't rip anything shorter than a foot.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Cutting 1/2" thick boards off 4"X 8" oak lumber. table saw was set up with blade set for two pass method. Feather boards and board buddies in place, half way through first cut on second peice wood reacted and kicked back, board buddie broke at rear, as board was moving backward, and all though I was standing to the left, I by reaction reached out to stop it. I had anti vibration gloves on. which saved me from really serious injury, thumb was pushed back and trapaziod bone broken. Happened so fast, didn't let board just kick off saw. Splitter was not on.

Advice

Even with all safety precautions taken, pay attention to sound of saw and feel of board passing through saw. Also, take less then half the thickness of timber, when cutting thick timbers.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was using a Rockler metal push stick on my Grizzly Left Tilt table saw with Forest WW2 blade. I was ripping a piece of ash about 5 inches wide to 2 inches. The blade caught the metal push stick and all hell broke loose. the saw spit the push stick and splintered the work piece. Aside from frayed nerves, I broke one of the carbide teeth off of my blade.

Advice

Never use a metal push stick (I dont even know why Rockler sells them). Certainly pay attention, but definately wear safety glasses. If I didn't have mine on, I don't know what would have happened (piece of ash hit my lower cheek).

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Believe me, I don't think a CLOSER CALL is possible !!!!! I was running some stock thru the table saw, with the left tilt blade tilted about 9 degrees to put a little bevel on a piece.

I had done three sides and was doing the last one, but . . . I wasn't paying enough attention. As the stock passed the blade, I felt the spinning dervish hit my finger. I yanked it a way in a mili second, probably not a mili second, but as fast as I could, thinking, there is going to be a lot of blood all over the place !!! As soon as the piece went all the way thru the saw, I hit the knee switch and turned it off and looked at my finger. My luck had held !!! no blood !!! Whoopie !! but . . . i did lose one layer of skin, or at least a couple thousandths of skin !! no kidding ! you could see the kerf on the top layer, but it was so shallow, that nary a drop of blood appeared on the surface.

Advice

use a jig !

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

After ripping a small strip from a wider piece. After turning the saw off but before the blade had stopped turning I reached to knock the small strip I had cut off of the blade. The tip of my index finger came in contact with the teeth of the blade making a deep cut. Required a trip to the emergency room and several stitches. An X-ray showed that I barely missed the bone. Several weeks later the cut has healed with only a small scar, however it is still tender to the touch.

Advice

This happened when I had another person working in the shop with me and we were hurrying to meet a deadline. I usually work alone and was distracted by the work the other person was doing and not concentrating on what I was doing which was a repetitive task. The lesson learned is to stop what you are doing when working with potentially dangerous machinery if you are interrupted.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Several factors lead to a kickback which broke my left index finger. I needed to rip 2 small pieces to final width. As usual i did not clear the first scrap before delivering the second piece to the blade. In 9 years this was never a problem. But on this particular day, I needed greater accuraccy from the rip saw than usual, so I decided to fix the long standing problem of the imperfections of the wood table insert. I ran the insert over the jointer and reinstalled and adjusted it. What I hadn't considered was that the blade condition of the jointer would leave some fine lines in the insert, which happen to taper toward the slot. Upon first use I discovered that those lines would ever so slightly feed the scrap toward the blade as it got pushed further back by the second piece. This alone would probably not have been enough, but also a few days earlier the blade had been replaced with an exceedingly aggressive, freshly sharpened blade. A dull blade will tend to ding the wood away from it. But thats not all either. I was cutting a piece of very stiff and tough wood with wild grain. You know the type that only chips if you plane against the grain, the sharper the planer blades, the worse is gets. Extremely stiff fibers. So once the sharp tooth hooked into it a little, it was like a brick wall. The 5Hp 3 phase motor had no problem accellerating that scrap and the workpiece to full speed in an instant. Hit my finger with incredible impact. Missed the knuckle - yippee. Swelled to about twice its size before I even changed my stance. Literally ran to the freezer for ice.

Advice

Make sure your table insert is in proper workin order. Beware of types of wood with extreme properties.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was cutting pieces for segmented turning. 30 degrees on 2 sides of a 2x2x10 piece of walnut. Cutting one side using the fence and no jig, was at best stupid. At the end of the cut the wood caught and hit me square between the eyes. @x 30 degrees equal a very sharp edge. Had i not been wearing the faceshield I bought only last week for the lathe, I would be seriously hurt.

Advice

Same ol' Same ol', its only 6 pieces and jigs take time, I'll probably be ok. Wrong. Find the safest way to produce the wood you need and use it. Theres a good reason experienced woodworkers have jigs hanging on every wall. Wear a full face shield whenever possible.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

finishing a cut on styles on a door set,i shut down power to saw, as blade was winding down i reached in to remove waste. removed top of thumb 1/2 inch dumb stupid crazy mistake. i was very lucky thats all that happened.

Advice

keep your hands out of the red zone,use push sticks ect, and for keepers wait to the blade stops before going near the blade to remove waist

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was making cut on a right tilt saw with the fence on the left of the wood. This different from 99% of the cuts that I make. No blade guard was in place due to the type of cut being made. I was tired and in a hurry to finish the cut, the last trim piece on a project. The cut was just being finished and the piece went to fall off the backside of the saw. I reached for it and got the blade with my right index finger. Well I now have permanetly ruined first joint. I clipped the bone just enough to destroy the joint. I will have my finger but with a straight first joint. Could have been worse.

Advice

What could have been done to prevent this.

1. Don't work when you are tired.
2. Don't hurry.
3. Figure out a jig to mke the cut safe.
4. Make sure you have an outfeed surface.
5. And most important, engage your brain!

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Hurt but OK

Description

i was just beginning to use my new contractor table saw and attempted to cross cut a WIDE piece of 1/4 melamine with the fence when the piece bound, spun backwards and TAPPED me in the gut. despite knowing better, i did the EXACT same thing about a month later with PLYWOOD which SMACKED me hard in the stomach and knocked the wind out of me. finally bought a sliding table which eliminated almost all of these problems except when i was attempting to make several INSIDE cuts on a wide 5/8 piece of melamine which kicked back because i was not holding on to the piece tightly enough to prevent it from tipping diagonally into the blade leaving a humbling minor gash across my forearm. finally, i tried jointing a piece of wood for my boss which was part of an old wine rack with MULTIPLE crescents and as the smaller cutoff pieces stacked up inside of the blade guard, one of them shot backwards and bruised my forefinger.

Advice

NEVER cross cut with the rip fence! use a jig saw on inside cuts and if you're ripping a piece of wood with potential for projectile, rip the piece thinner so that you have one long cutoff piece.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

doing repetition cuts on my table saw, I got my pinkie on left hand into saw, was very lucky to get out of accident with finger. A few stitches, and xray. All healed fine.

Advice

Do not relax while doing simple things with power tools!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping a small piece of wood, using a push stick instead of a push block. The piece kicked back and caught me in the palm, causing a 3 corner tear. It took seven stitches to close it.

Advice

Keep the blade guard down over your ts blade and use a long push block that applies pressure over 10-12 inches of the workpiece, not just at the back corner.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

While the wife and kids were taking a few days vacation in Myrtle Beach, I decided to start a small part of a large project of laying down laminate flooring. I had almost finished the entryway. I needed around 4 more cuts on the TS. As I have done 100 times before, after making the cut, I used my right hand, coming in from the right side of the blade to move the scrap piece away to the right. For some reason (fatigue and in a hurry) I grabbed the piece and instead of moving it away towards the right, I turned my shoulder and body to the left. This sent my right hand and fingers up and directly into the top of the blade. The blade grabbed my index, middle and 3rd finger and pulled them down for a second cut. A trip to the hospital, a hand surgeon and 2 days of sitting in a room 85 degrees (to promote circulation). The index finger required a partial reimplantation, surgery to repair the veins, tendons, bone, muscle tissue and nerves, the middle finger required surgery to repair the bone at the first knuckle and a severed tendon and the 3rd finger had minor nail issues. It is now the end of October, still off work, going through therapy (medieval torture!!) Long road ahead but Doc seems to think I can regain 100 percent usage.

Advice

I had taken off all of the safety features of my saw!!! Big no no from now on. I would suggest to not work with spinning blades of death while you are tired. I plan on reinstalling at least the blade guard.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Ripping thin stock. Kickback with a skewing of the piece, drawing the left hand into the blade. Left thumb cut off

Advice

Use featherboard instead of left hand to push piece into fence. Use only a Sawstop table saw. The extra cost is less than the time lost from work. Urge mass manufacturers to adopt Sawstop technology. Only if the users demand safety in their tools equivalent to their cars will our life be improved.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was not really comfortable with that tool and had not much experience on it either. I was working in a wood shop painting furniture when one day my boss asked me to cut some 3/8 veneer that were too long to fit at the base of drawers they were making. I start cutting the pile of veneer, everything was fine until i reach the end of the table and still have some cutting to do so instead of removing the veneer from behind the table and lift it up, i pull the veneer backward in the saw following my cut i just made. Really bad idea, all in a split second the veneer kicked aside throwing some in my stomach and my hands in the same way, i felt the air of the saw on my hands when it kicked. I have never touched a table saw since. I bought one and planning on using it for small wood project, i will be carefull and read this web site a lot before hehe.

Advice

Never pull the wood backward in a table saw, read a lot before using and be really carefull.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Pushing a 4/4 piece of solid cherry with index finger to make a 3/4" mortise cut (duh, no push stick). Middle finger (right hand) caught and pulled into blade. Split right middle finger down the middle to second knuckle. The blade shattered tip bone, bounced off 1st knuckle (destroyed), and serrated side of second bone. Good news, Dr. sewed up both halves and surprisingly, nail is regrowing. Looks and feels awful, haven't used the saw since. Anyone interested in a Robland X31?

Advice

Push stick, push stick, push stick!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

i'm in ninth grade and we were working in the shop when my teacher decided to let one of my classmates catch the excess board laying out over the side of the tablesaw after he cut it. knowing my classmates, me and a few others are the only ones that have had any shop experience. but before i agreed to do it two of my classmates were arguing over who was going to do it. while they were arguing my teacher had all ready started feedind the sheet of plywood through. as he finished up the board fell and they both reached and caught it pushing the board back onto the table with the saw still running causing the classic kickback throwing the board backward. i was standing behind my teacher when it happen. he moved out of the way, but i didnt see it coming. my teacher moved, and i barely excaped by what every one said looked like some funky dance move. the board hit the table behind me moving it back 3 feet. it was truly a close call.

Advice

always be the first to offer to do something.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting tapered maple table legs using a store bought jig. The wood started to bind and before I knew it the maple kicked back and hit me on the upper thigh. I thought my leg was broken and there was this large knot on my upper thigh. I was able to get in to my doctors office and there was no break but I did have a blood clot that required medication and monitoring. All is now well but I learned a greater respect for my tools.

Advice

When cutting taper legs use a bandsaw and make your own jig.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was doing some remodel work at the apartments and needed a shim 1" thick and the size of a 2x4. The 1"x 3 1/2"x3 1/2" chunk went kick back so fast that I actually didn't know what hit me!! Lucky I was wearing safty glasses (real lucky) the piece started at my upper lip and basicly rolled up my face. I've sustained worse but was worried that if I passed out I knew no one would be around. When all was said and done I had a bruised tooth, split upper lip, nose the size of a screwdriver handle, cut over the right eyebrow just above where the safty glasses ended, and a bruise behind the right ear where I fell on the tool bucket that was about five feet behind me. (yes it hit me THAT hard) I truly did not see it coming. You can imagine what I was wandering what just happened! since then I've had kick back throw material compleatly out of the shop overhead door and hit the wifes car (twice!!) Im no shmuck or punk dumbass that flys by the seat of my pants but I make a lot of sawdust in areas most wouldnt call a "workshop".

Advice

buy a full face shield and keep it hanging on the on-off switch. It will fit over glasses and safty goggles, is cheap(come on,10 bucks!!), and you only have to wear it for the 25 seconds that the saw is running. oh yea, the wife will let you use power tools again with out sounding like your mother. I really got lucky that I didn't: get scalped, lose an eye, lose a tooth, or get a trague (hole in the throat). my wife buys my "look nice in public" sunglasses now because of a crooked nose. It will happen, dont let kill you.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was doing every thing wrong on an old, dull saw. I was cutting in the wrong direction and the small piece of wood was thrown off the blade into my chin. My right hand flinched and my index and middle finger of the same hand hit the blade.

Advice

Don't be stupid like me. Have someone teach you how to use a tablesaw safely before you presume to use one without any safety info. I thought "it could not happen to me". That was stupid and arrogant. Don't make the same mistake

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Advanced

Injury Severity Close Call

Description

I was trimming small pieces of wood trim on the saw and i trimmed off the small edge of my fingernail. It was so close that it cut off the nail but didn't draw blood.

Advice

Buy the wood to the dimmension, when you need it that small. It would be worth the money.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Needed Medical Attention

Description

Using tablesaw to cut a too-small piece of wood. Used a push stick in my right hand. Used a second thin push stick in my left hand to hold and push piece against fence, but I followed the piece as it passed the blade maintaining 'right-ward' pressure with my left hand, essentially trapping the loose piece and pressing it against the blade. It kicked out, so there was nothing between my left hand pushing the push-stick right-wards and the blade, so the hand grazed the side of the blade, cutting open one finger, and avulsing the fingernail from the nail bed on another. It happened so fast. I saw the kickout piece fly, and then my bloody hand. I assumed for a few days that the kicked-out piece caused the injuries (as others here have wrongly assumed) until I saw the multiple curved parallel concentric scratches on one of my fingernails and then recreated the accident a few days later with the saw unplugged.

Advice

1. Small pieces should not be cut on a table saw in general.
2. A Grr-ripper is an amazing tool that can be used to safely push wood on a table saw or router, including small pieces when necessary.
3. My fingers and the thin push stick were acting as a featherboard, and as such were in the wrong place. This type of pressure, even with a featherboard, needs to come before the blade, and not besides the blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cross-cutting numerous lengths of plywood on a tablesaw, using a miter guage with attached strip of plywood to support the pieces. This was a production run involving about 20-25 pieces, so the task was quite repetitive. In an effort to speed things, I'd feed each board through the blade, afterwhich I'd pull the cut work back past the blade, replacing it with another piece, repeating the process. At one point -- acting in a bit of a hurry -- I pulled the miter bar directly out of the miter slot. Everything from that point moved in slow motion, as I watched the steel miter guage bar drift directly into the path of the saw blade. I instinctively closed my eye, heard a <bang!>, and the circuit blew. When I opened my eyes, my arm was covered with blood from shrapnel. Amazingly, the wounds were all superficial. I could even see small bits of metal sticking out of my skin, which I picked out. Fortune was smiling on me that day, as that miter bar could easily have been hurled through my chest or head. Oh yeah. I also wasn't wearing any safety goggles. Dummy! Dummy! Dummy! I got lucky THAT time and decided that I'm done testing the Fates.

Advice

Slow down! Don't rush things! And, for God's sake, ALWAYS wear safety glasses. THAT'S A NO-BRAINER!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

My table saw has a zero-clearance throat plate and a Microjig splitter which is inserted from the top into three holes in the throat plate. The splitter keeps the stock against the fence, which is to the right of the blade. The splitter is also a little narrower than the kerf, I suppose to prevent stock from hitting it and stopping dead. I was ripping a 3' board of S4S air-dried cedar. About 16" into the cut, the kerf began to close due to internal stresses. However, the wood on the left of the blade pinched the splitter and caught the back of the blade, forcing it upwards. The end of the board which I wasn't holding got about 4" above the table and threw the splitter. I was able to somehow return the wood to the table without it kicking back. I never found the splitter in my reasonably clean 10' x 12' shop.

Advice

Always be CAUTIOUS and ALERT in the shop. Even if you have all the best safety devices, accidents can still happen. Use properly dried wood and be especially careful with wood that has a tendency to move when cut.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting a piece of plywood into an 8" square using the rip fence. In pushing the piece past the blade, I did not wait till the blade came to complete stop before letting go of the piece. What happened was that the piece was caught by the blade and thrown back at me and hit me in the chest. It took me a few moments before I could breathe again and the bruise took a few weeks to go away.

Advice

- 1) Never let go of the workpiece until that blade stops spinning.
- 2) Do not stand directly behind the blade.
- 3) For this type of cut, use the miter guage with a backer board attached.

Tool Type Tablesaw

Experience Beginner

Injury Severity Hurt but OK

Description

I was cutting an 18 x2 1/2 in timber to trim off about 1/2 in on a Rexon BT2500A T/Saw. Curiously the blade safety cover has 'spaniel ear' side guards which although protecting the sides do not extend to the full length of the blade - but fall short by some 2 inches.

I had previously cut thicker stock about 1.1/4 thick but did not lower the blade before cutting the size down. I was standing 3/4 to the machine opposite the fence on the blade side and could clearly see the guarded blade and the fence. A plastic push stick was being used to feed the timber in. On the output side of the blade I was guiding the waste - (why I don't know), but I was tired.

Suddenly there was a BANG and I thought the blade had struck an anomaly in the wood - my fingers suddenly hurt too. In a moment, the timber had kicked up and back, hit my forefinger end thumb ends, bruising both and caused a hairline fracture in the thumb end-bone, the momentum of the kick dragged my thumb against the splitter and rising blade teeth, like a bacon slicer and removed a neat 1/8 bevel from the side of my thumb.

Advice

A featherboard and a second stick would have helped me here. The goggles I wore would have saved me from other flying debris - good call.

My advice for what it's worth is:

1. KEEP YOUR HANDS AWAY FROM THAT BLADE !!
2. Don't work when you are tired and especially don't work a TS when home alone - you may need help.
- 3 If you are buying a saw, make sure you get one with a fully guarded blade.
4. Keep it clean as sap build up can cause kickbacks.
5. Get anti-kickback pawls or dogs fitted if you can.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

years ago I fed a twisted poplar 1x6 through the table saw. as the two pieces separated the one between the fence and blade fell flat on the table, caught between the fence and blade, and cannon-shot backwards. i happened to be standing right in the line of fire, and the table of the saw was precisely groin height.

Advice

always use a secure push stick, don't rip twisted wood, and if there is the slightest question and at all possible don't stand directly behind the line of fire. unfortunately, these lessons are usually learned after the fact.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I know where to stand when using a tablesaw and I know not to reach for a cutoff before the blade runs down... I did it anyway and Pow, the kickback got my belly faster than you can say "OUCH!"

I'm ok (bruised both bodily and my ego)
I've learned another valuable lesson

Advice

Know your tools and the safety procedures for using them!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was VERY SAFELY cross-cutting a 12" wide poplar board on the table saw using a sturdy sled with clamps and hold downs. The sled prevented the use of a guard, naturally, but all-in-all it was a well practiced and widely accepted method of work. The fall-off on the left side of the blade was approximately 12" x 12" and it slipped off the sled as I was passing it through the blade. The vibration from the saw started spinning the piece very slowly, so slowly I didn't even notice it until just before a corner of it rotated into the back of the blade.

The blade picked up the piece of wood threw it like a Frisbee. It hit me about 2" below the belt line about 4" to the right. I went down immediately in the most agonizing pain I have ever felt, and yet I somehow still had the presence of mind to reach up and turn off the saw. I was disoriented, crying, vomiting and in shock.

I was in the hospital for almost a week, and I had a real hard time walking upright for a month (and bending over was out of the question) but eventually came through 100%. The doctors say that I was probably saved by the fact that I'd had my appendix taken out years before. They say it's likely that if I'd still had it I would have ruptured it and bled to death on the floor of my own shop.

Advice

So many of us work alone it's hard to say not to, but at least carry a cordless phone or cell phone on your person. I also have well stocked PROFESSIONAL first aid kits scattered around my shop with the hope that I am never more than 10 or so feet from a band-aid.

Remember to watch not only the piece you cutting, but the piece you're cutting off.

As a life-long "night owl", I wasn't tired or fatigued at 2 a.m., but I probably wasn't in the sharpest mindset of the day either. Even the simplest, most basic operations can be dangerous if you're not 100% in the moment.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was trimming one-sixteenth inch from the side of a two foot square of one inch pine tabletop on my 16 inch, 10HP industrial tablesaw. After trimming I reached to the right of the sawblade and lifted the top and swung it to the left, overtop of the still driven, uncovered blade. I fumbled it and dropped the piece on top of the blade. I remember trying to turn out of the way as I heard the blade dig into the wood, but I wasn't fast enough. Next thing I know I was on the floor and couldn't stand up. The tabletop had been launched at me hard enough to break my hip. A ride in the ambulance to the hospital and, later, 3 weeks of recuperation plus loss of feeling in my right thigh. I also get loss of blood circulation in my thigh when I sit for extended times.

Advice

If you don't have or use a blade guard, walk around the saw to retrieve your piece. Never suspend anything over the blade. I was lucky it hit me in the hip. In the head or chest and it could have killed me.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was cutting a piece of walnut when stock was kicked back. No guard came with the table saw and I had no feather board, just a fence. I was about 10" away from the blade and BAM! The stock blew up sending a knot into my chest that broke the skin and hurt like anything. I saw blood and did not realize where it came from until I looked at my right index finger and it was split diagonally across and down past the knuckle. For 3 weeks I had pain like never before and almost lost half the finger. NOT a pleasant experience. I only have about 30% of the feeling back and 20% mobility in that finger 5 years later when it gets below 60 degrees it serves as a reminder with pain.

Advice

Use every guard available read all safety rules and FOLLOWS THEM TO THE LETTER! Use a push stick and stand to the side when possible, wear a full face safety shield and be alert at all times, follow your instincts, if it doesn't seem right it most likely is not, STOP!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was pushing a piece of 1/4 inch Luan through the tablesaw when I felt it catch on something. Time stood still while my mind pre-viewed the Luan being thrown by the new 3 horse tablesaw and slicing my entire body in half. Fortunately, all I actually got was a nasty bruise across my abdomen just below the belt. It could easily have been serious internal damage.

Advice

I was never able to figure out what happened. But now I always check the tabletop, the fence, the insert, the blade, etc to make sure there is nothing loose or out of place which the work could catch on.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Was ripping a piece of oak 1 X 3 X 4" long to remove app. 1/8". Using narrow pushsticks and wearing safety glasses. Outfeeding part caught rising blade and was thrown into my forehead above glasses knocking me back, necessitating 7 stiches. I saved the block.

It was my first project with the saw, and I was immediately educated. As I drove myself bleeding to the ER, I was grateful it was not worse.

Advice

Reading this website makes every nerve in my body ache. It should be a drill to review one page before going out to work in the shop.

1. Instead of looking for results, try to think of all the ways a set-up can go wrong before you turn on the power.
2. Beginners: Read all the books you want, but read through accident reports just as thoroughly, nothing you read here will ever appear in a Taunton Press how-to book.
3. Make sure you know where the power switch is at all times and make sure you can get to it in an instant. If a cut begins to go wrong, don't try to finish it regardless, freeze if you can and power down.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

A co-worker of mine was ripping MDF door casings and trying carry on a conversation at the same time. He had no blade guard and also had the blade 1 1/2 inches too high. While talking and ripping he lost track of what he was doing and fed his fingers through with the rest of the rip. He lost his index finger inbetween the 2nd and 3rd joints and his thumb at the joint. Nothing could be reattached.

Advice

- 1.) Pay attention the the task at hand.
- 2.) Generally a blade shouldn't be more that 1/8 of and inch higher than the material.
- 3.) Always know where the blade is in relation to both hands.
- 4.) Respect you tools.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping some strapping to fit, when I hit a knot. My right hand got pull forward as the wood jump the blade. By the time I realized What was going on my right index finger was shredded on the underside. The guard was on but lifted enough when the wood started jumping. I required hours of microsurgery and 42 stitch all between the two knuckles (not the big knuckle). Fortunately I hadn't cut the bone, but I still can't move my finger fully (about 75%)and feeling is still coming back 2 years later. Fortunately I am left-handed

Advice

Never assume that the safety features on your tool is fool proof. It isn't. I had my blade set very low, just a eighth of an inch higher than the wood. I may have damaged my finger really bad, but I still have said finger. An eighthg more and I might not.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was doing a basic cross cut on the last 5 tongue & groove boards (with the blade guard in place) for the walls with the table saw that I purchased new 2 weeks prior (and had been using for the majority of this project). In the middle of the cut the blade "caught" on a knot in the wood (knotty pine). This caused the blade to kick-back the piece. At the same time this happened the entire blade guard assembly broke off and "flew" across my workshop. At the same time my left hand was pulled into the moving blade.

Thankfully my older daughter is like me and was calm enough to call the ambulance. She even went out to my workshop and got my severed fingers for the EMTs. Even after the local hospital had me immediately transported to the nearest hand trauma center I still lost my middle finger at the 1st joint, my ring finger at the 2nd joint, my thumb was completely shattered. The palm of my hand was cut almost completely through all the way across just under the fingers. I severed every nerve, tendon, artery and vein. It took 4 of the best hand surgeons in the state 7 1/2 hours to save what they could. Since my first surgery I have had 2 more and just found out 3 days ago I have to have another to remove part of my pinky (small finger). After doing a huge amount of research on my own I found out that the table saw I bought was defective (the bolt attaching the blade guard assembly). Regardless of this tragic accident I was still back in my basement 3 days after my 1st surgery with my circular saw trying to finish my project.

Advice

Never lose your respect for the danger using power tools. No matter how careful you are there is always the chance of an accident. Hopefully you never have a severe accident but if you do, just remember, life goes and you have to make the best of it.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Ripping treated 2x6 for railing spindles. Only 1 more 30 inch piece to go pushing through with right hand and removing cut offs with left hand, I must have blinked as I reached for the cut off piece and stuck tip of pointer finger into blade. Blade ripped finger length ways to first knuckle. Resulting in over 25 stitches to finger tip, loss of finger nail, and many lost hours from shop.

Advice

Never look away from that blade, let your work fall to a catch bin or have a helper take them from the other side of the saw. Always keep guards in place!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

using a dado blade, to plow an oak handrail upeasing, blade was set 5/16 above table, dado was 1/2 inch wide. pushing with right hand and lifting with left to work thru the radius. workpiece hung in blade and kicked back hitting me in the stomach, left hand was pulled into blade as workpiece was ejected. 1/2 inch dado across backs of index and middle fingers right across the joint. tendons ok but some bone removed and some nerve damage. 35 years experience and this is the first time I've ever touched a sawblade. typing one handed sux.

Advice

use the router table and make a jig to hold it.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

We had been called in to punch some work for a friend of ours. He was in the field as us (custom remodel) but insisted on using cheap labor. Basically we had to trim out a twisted beam that spanned the width of the porch we were screening. The simplest, and of course most cost effective, solution we could come up with was to cover the beam in various shims so we could properly apply the trim and end with a product that looked like it was of high quality.

So I started to rip shims. I ripped and ripped and ripped. We all went to lunch. About thirty minutes after we got back from being gone for too long my accident happened. I slipped reaching for the cut-off while still trying to manage the shim I had just cut. My station had been set-up in front of some very expensive french doors and I really didn't want to hear about how I messed-up and allowed a piece of wood to kick back and shatter the glass. The blade of the saw was higher than it had been, and I rolled my right hand into the blade. My right index finger was removed at the small knuckle below the nail. After 37 (no kiddin') stitches the end of the finger did not take.

The pain after surgery was something I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy, but still, not as bad as it could have been.

Advice

In the rush to keep the shedule after a long lunch with basically both "bosses" on this job things started to get sloppy. Where I had been the only person working the tablesaw and the chop saw, my boss was now bouncing back and forth between cut and install with his apprentice (I guess that's the right word, we are not union). My boss must have raised the blade on the saw. I had been keeping it low because I had just put a new blade on it and the blade was biting at the wood. I did not feel good about the situation, but a jobs a job. By the time the accident occurred I was cutting shims out of 2 by 4 that I could have just as easily been making on the chop saw. The piece I lost the end of my finger to was 3.5 x .5 - hmm, I totally need to rip shims to make that right?

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was readjusting my tenoning jig after a test fit. I received a short phone call, answered it and went back to the jig. I turned on the saw and proceeded to push the jig thru the blade. At this time I discovered that I failed to tighten the piece of wood in the jig, resulting in the wood being ejected out of the jig, back towards me at a high rate of "return". I stand about 6'3, which places certain parts of my anatomy just above the top of the table. This being said, the wood hit me square in the left teste area, then up under my chin then out to the floor. Over the next few moments it was all I could do to turn off the saw and slowly work my way to the floor.

I needed 4 stiches and still have a sizeable contusion.

Advice

The same we have always heard: Pay attention to what you are doing, keep distractions to a minimum.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

i was performing a drop cut with a peice of cherry. the blade was about one and a half inches high and the fence was set at 3 inches. i dropped the board down and pushed it through almost to the end. my left hand was in front getting ready to hold it while i picked it up. i was paying complete attention and even thought the cut through before i started. something moved and my left hand got pulled through the blade. i lost the tip of my index finger and the other three pretty much at the knuckle. thankfully my boss was right there to call 911 and help me. i was med-flighted to a hospital in boston. after 14 hours of operation they re-attached the middle and ring finger, but later removed the middle finger due to complications. its been one year and so far i've had 5 surgeries with maybe 2 to come.

Advice

BE CAREFUL. i still dont know exactly how it happened but all i thought about was my safety while i was making the cut. it was just an accident. its not exactly safe to put your hands in front of the blade. i recommend not doing it if you can. to anyone who has lost fingers and wonders how your future will look, its not that bad after you recover. i've learned to live with it. i spent a week and a half in the hospital. i have 2 and a half fingers and my full thumb on my left hand. my re attached ring finger has little movement and all the wounds are a little sensitive but not bad. its been one year and im still out of work i may be going back soon though. all in all i've dealt with it and though it will affect the rest of my life i will still be able to be just as good as i was before. just dont lose hope.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

A co-worker, who wasn't very familiar with power tools was shown how to cut some thin panels on a band saw. He had seen others use the table saw, and decided that would be quicker. To make a long story short: cutting on table saw, not using push sticks, keeping fingers "safely away" from the protruding "rotating blade" (not realizing that what he was looking at was the solid disk of the blade, and did not include the ~3/4" teeth of the blade which were spinning and hard to see). Hand got too close, fingers were lost.

Advice

I think most people who have any sort of woodworking experience will find most of the above fairly self-explanatory: don't use tools you're not trained to use, keep hands well away from the blade, use a guard when possible, remember that when saw blades are spinning, the teeth are not necessarily visible (although fingers shouldn't be close enough to worry about a 3/4" difference!), etc. My big piece of advice from this incident is to make sure that you closely supervise beginners, and ensure that they are aware of the dangers of operating something they do not fully understand.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

was ripping edge of 2 x 6's with blade at 45 degrees. friend was bringing them in from outside and passing across the left side of the saw. he quit looking for some reason and bumped into the blade guard. it is a hanging type by biesemyer so a good one. the blade hit the guard and there was an explosion of that guard. it shot 40 or more pieces in every direction. the largest piece went about 12 feet and hit the wall. we were both hit with small pieces and had small cuts. but think if we had been hit with the large piece of that guard. it could easily split you open from side to side and kill you. take it off?? leave it on?? i am not sure on this one.

Advice

I know that the wood should have been passed behind the saw and not across it. Educate your helper as to what can happen and how it should be done.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Beginner

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Second or third time on the tablesaw in my life and I still remember the(false)confidence I felt (6 mos ago) when I turned off the saw and reached for the cutoff. I'd give anything to see the look on my face when my thumb stopped that brand new blade, because I sure felt the shock on my face as all the safety stuff i'd read that stressed, wait fot the blade to STOP before you reach for it,flashed thru my head. Lucky me. I guess subconsciously I did wait some measure of time, because i stopped the blad getting 3 small cuts in my thumb

Advice

In playing back the accident in my head I realized I really didn't see the blade. I learned that a spinning blade is virtually INVISIBLE!!!!!! And human nature usually doesn't consider what it doesn't see. You know, out of sight out of mind and such. Sooo, standing at an angle, looking thru the dusty plastic guard at a spinning blade, the only thing that let me know there was a blade there was (shoulda been common sense)my thumb. Please turn off the saw back away and observe the blade from different angles...make sure you see that blade, cause chances are if you don't see it, it's spinning.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

Cutting off a 2 1/4" square leg end at a 10 degree angle on a 5 hp Powermatic 66. Small wedge shape that got cut off got sucked down between blade and table insert slot. Blade was pushed far enough to the side to cause the teeth to contact the aluminum insert. Wood jumps, stuff flies and I'm holding my breath waiting to see if my heart starts back up again. I check for shrapnel wounds and damage to the walls or ceiling but find nothing anywhere.

I take the blade off and find two teeth missing on opposite sides of the blade. One \$60 blade ruined, my chair leg end damaged but will lose that portion as I make a tenon. All in all very lucky.

Advice

Watch wedge shaped cut offs. Either use a zero clearance insert or be sure they are big enough they can't wedge themselves in the slot.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

Using a jig with clamp to cut pieces of maple (18"x3"x3/4") corner to corner to make two triangular pieces. Off cut hit against blade, spinning it and sending it shooting back, spearing operator straight through pancreas. Nearly fatal.

Advice

There was no guard incorporated into the jig which would have been intirely possible. Especially when you consider how many pieces were been cut in this way, there is no doubt there should have been more thought put into this operation . Don't trust what someone else thinks is safe when it comes to your own well being. The operator learned this the hard way. Do everything you can to make something safer. Chances are you'll be wishing you had taking the time.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was ripping short pieces of oak on our cabinet shop's main tablesaw. I picked up each board as I cut it, and stacked them all on a rolling cart to my left side. After about 40 or 50 pieces, my thumb slipped as I picked up the last one and the board skipped, kicking back violently and pulling my left wrist through the exposed blade.

The resulting injury: a partially severed hand. Luckily for me, the owner of the company was standing nearby. We wrapped up my wrist in a stack of shop towels, and hauled a** to the nearby hospital. I came close to passing out once, and I suspect I was going into shock.

At the hospital, they knocked me out with anesthesia for surgery. When I woke up, the surgeon came in to explain he reattached the main artery to get blood flow back into my hand. The blade shattered four of the eight bones in my wrist. He drilled holes in my good arm bone and into my hand, and attached an external fixator device to keep my hand in place while he worked on some of the nerves. The shattered bones had to be removed. The whole wrist had to be cleaned for several hours to remove the sawdust before they could close everything up.

After a week I had my second surgery which lasted for 10 1/2 hours for reconnecting my nerves and tendons. I was released after another week.

About eight months after my accident I am glad to say that I'm doing pretty well. I should be able to return to work soon, and I'll have a good "top-this" story to tell.

Advice

Woodworkers and carpenters:

1. Never, ever, reach over the back of the saw blade to pick up anything.
2. Don't leave the blade guard off the tablesaw! If you do, if it's because the guard is crappy and unsafe to use get a better one. Biesemeyer makes a great T-Square style guard that lifts easily out of the way when you can't use a guard. It lowers right back down again when you're ready to use it.
3. Make sure that a splitter with anti-kickback pawls is in use all the time as appropriate.
4. Consider buying a Saw-Stop tablesaw (see the demo at www.sawstop.com). This saw stops nearly instantly the moment it comes in contact with flesh.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was performing an "inside" cut on a board that was about 3" wide and 17" long. I was attempting to rip about 1" from the board, but leaving about 2" on each end that I would then trim with the band saw. I held the board down on each end on the table saw as I slid it forward..... bad move. The board bound in the blade and was shot out, leaving my back hand there for the blade. I ran my thumb accross the blade, cutting half-way through and down into my palm. 50 stitches, surgery to reattach my tendon, fuse the joint, loss of my nerve, and 16 weeks of therapy to get movment and pinch strength back. But, I still have the thumb!

Advice

Next time, I'll use a table saw sled, with some hold-down clamps.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

i was ripping a peace of T&G into a long tapered shim aboyt 2 inches wide 0 to 3/8 th's thicl about 35 inches long i was in a hurry but thankfully i did adjust the blade before ripping the peace. i reched over to pull the peace the rest of the way through i grabed both peaces as they exited the saw and they pinched the blade the kickback hit me in the gut and my right index finger got split from tip to base of my nail. it looks fine now but one side is numb

Advice

don't reach across the saw and never pinch the two pieces together

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I sometimes use a sanding disk on the table saw to put nice edges on medium and small pieces of wood. My technique was to lightly skim the board edge against the forward part of the disk where the sandpaper plunges into the insert. This technique was aborted 13 years ago.

The accident happened when I pressed a straight/narrow board (approximately 18" long) a little too hard into the spinning disk. The back part of the board caught the (upthrusting) back part of the spinning disk, flipping the board into the air so quickly that my middle finger kept moving toward the sanding disk as if the board was still there. I only lightly touched the medium grit sandpaper with one finger. Only about one eighth of an inch of finger was ground off.

For about four seconds as I looked at it, I briefly thought the injury was trivial. By the 5th second it felt like the end of my finger had been shot off and it looked like a spigot for blood had been opened. I spent the rest of the day at the emergency room and got some type of small skin graft. The finger initially healed with a flat end, but eventually it rounded out again. The treatment worked well and the finger and is fully functional. The only lasting medical effect is that the injury site sometimes splits in cold/dry weather.

Advice

Analyze your techniques, consider the forces and vectors involved, identify potential flaws in your movements which could bring your hands close to moving parts, even parts which don't have teeth.

This was my only serious accident during my 23 years of woodworking. I considered myself exceptionally careful. For about a year after the accident I experienced a type of post-traumatic stress which rendered me incapable of bringing my hands within about 10 inches of a running tablesaw blade. I believe this type of mental condition prompts (or frightens) you to avoid the circumstances which allowed you to get hurt. In my case it was as if an invisible glass dome or a force field would not let my hand get closer than 10 to the spinning saw blade.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

No splitter on the table saw - the cut-off, a 2' x 3' piece of 1/4" plywood caught the back of the blade and spun into my arm.

The hole created by the plywood exposed the muscle, tendons, fat, and plenty of blood.

One emergency room visit later and I could install all the safety equipment available!

Advice

Use the recommended safety equipment and pay attention to everything!

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

I was trimming a small piece (1"x 3/8" x 10" long) I used a push stick that actually covered the entire piece so I felt very confident and safe about the cut. I sincerely thought I did everything right. In hindsight I realize that I was standing directly behind the sawblade and that the push stick had seen better days and needed to be rebuilt. As I pushed the cut through the blade I must have lost concentration at the very last second because the saw kicked back the piece, not the off cut and hit me square on the inside of the thigh. Two inches to the left and I'm sure it would have done much worse damage.

Advice

Make sure your push stick is in very servicable condition and do not lose focus on your cut until the saw is off and the work piece clear of the blade. I feel lucky to be sporting only a very bruised and sore thigh.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was sawing some seven foot long western cedar to glue and make a door casing. I had no in feed or out feed support to hold boards. One moved and kicked back cutting four fingers open on my right hand. They did surgery on two of them so they would be OK.

Advice

Use in feed and out feed support and other safety stuff when you are working in your shop.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Close Call

Description

I was using a taper jig (one very like the current Rockler jig) to cut a 3/4" plywood board about 2 feet by 10 inches. I was not using the blade cover - it was up and out of the way. I also did not use the splitter.

At the end of the cut, I let go of the board, which I was holding with my left hand, to turn off the saw. It went slightly out of kilter. The blade grabbed the works - both pieces of the cut wood, and the jig, and threw them at me. The largest piece of wood caught me in the chest - fortunately, broadsided. The aluminum taper jig went across the room and damaged the plaster wall, and got a couple of dings to remind me in the future.

Advice

This taper jig has no hold-down clamp, so it requires a hand to hold the wood against the jig. It also requires holding the jig against the fence. If either the jig or the work is not held, kickback is almost inevitable.

Using the blade cover would have made the operation more tricky. I don't think it would have prevented the kickback. It might have prevented the work from being thrown at me, at the expense of sacrificing itself.

The splitter probably would have prevented the kickback. I was not using it because it is slightly out of alignment, and boards hang up on it.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

Kickback from table saw: while blade was running I set a piece of oak onto the blade to bake a dado inset from the end 2in. the saw blade grabbed the piece and threw it! Dumb or what.

Advice

Place the piece against the fence and raise the blade into the the wood. The saw blade cuts as it is raised and guess what no kick back.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Intermediate

Injury Severity

Hurt but OK

Description

The back of the fence was aligned with the slot for the miter fence. I placed my hand on the fence (thumb on the side closest to me, four fingers on the backside) to move it and the tip of my little finger went into the groove. When I moved the fence away from me, I nearly cut off the end of my finger.

Advice

Be conscious of your grip/ hand placement while moving the fence.

Tool Type

Tablesaw

Experience

Advanced

Injury Severity

Needed Medical Attention

Description

I was cutting some 1/4" plywood for drawer bottoms on the table saw. When the piece hit the back of the saw blade, the panel pinched and kicked back. It drug my right hands ring finger tip across the top of the saw (it was up about 3/8" of an inch at the time; no guard or splitter was being used).

I needed four stitches to close the wound. I then put all of my safety devices back on. I make it a point to always use push blocks and sticks, even on stock that is 10-12" inches wide.

Advice

Don't think for a second that it can't happen to you!