

Safety Fact Sheet



The Utah Safety Council cares about your safety outside of the work setting. We offer resources that keep you and your loved ones safe at home, at play and on the go.

LOOK SHARP WHEN WORKING WITH KNIVES

Knives cause more disabling injuries than any other hand tool. The principal hazard in using knives is that the hand may slip from the handle onto the blade, or the knife may strike the body or the free hand.

To work safely with knives, follow these tips:

- Ensure the cutting stroke is away from your body. If this is not possible, keep the hands and body clear and wear protective clothing.
- Keep knives sharp. Most incidents occur due to a dull blade.
- If you must carry knives while on the job, keep them in sheaths or holders placed over the right or left hip, toward the back.
- Do not leave knives lying on benches or in other place where they could cause hand injuries. When not in use, place knives in racks with the edges guarded.
- Use carton cutters when opening boxes rather than a pocketknife. Such cutters not only protect you, but also limit the depth of cuts made. Frequently, damage to contents of soft, plastic bottles may not be detected immediately; subsequent leakage may cause chemical burns, damage other products or start fires.
- Make sure you have ample room so you are not jostled by moving machinery or coworkers.
- Do not leave knives hidden under product, scrap paper or wiping rags, or among other tools in workboxes or drawers. Always keep knives separate from other tools.
- Do not wipe dirty or oily knives on aprons or your clothing. Use a towel or cloth to wipe the blade, taking care to face the sharp edge away from the wiping hand. Wash sharp knives separately.
- Do not engage in horseplay with knives. Throwing, “fencing,” trying to cut objects into smaller and smaller pieces, and similar practices are dangerous.
- Do not attempt to cut anything with a knife that requires excessive force. Do not use knives as substitutes for openers, screwdrivers or ice picks.