CrewSigned

Hand Safety Toolbox Talk

5-minute read-aloud · Last reviewed November 24, 2026

Think about how many things you did with your hands this morning before you got here. Now think about doing all of it with a missing finger or a hand that will not close. Hand injuries are among the most common injuries on the job, and many of them leave damage that lasts for life.

Hands get hurt in a few main ways. They get cut by knives, blades, sheet metal and glass. They get crushed or pinched between materials, in doors and tailgates, and under loads. They get caught in moving parts like belts, gears, chucks and rollers. They get burned by hot surfaces and chemicals. And they get hurt by impact, like a hammer that misses.

The biggest rule is to keep your hands out of the line of fire. Before you put your hand somewhere, ask what could move, close, fall or cut. If you cannot see your hand while you are working, stop and rethink the job. Use push sticks, tongs, magnets and other tools to keep your hands away from blades and pinch points.

Never reach into a machine that is running or could start. Guards are there for a reason; do not remove or bypass them. If you need to clear a jam or work on equipment, shut it down and lock it out first.

Use the right glove for the job. Leather or heavy cotton for rough material, cut-resistant gloves for blades and sharp metal, chemical gloves matched to the product you are using, and insulated gloves only if you are qualified for electrical work. But do not wear gloves near rotating parts like drill bits, lathes or saws where the glove could be grabbed and pull your hand in. Rings and loose sleeves get caught the same way.

When you use a knife, cut away from your body and your other hand, keep blades sharp, and retract or sheath them when you are done. Do not leave loose blades lying around.

Watch out for each other too. If you see someone with their hand in a bad spot, say something. Report cuts and pinches, even small ones, so they get cleaned and treated before they turn into infections.

Discussion questions

1. What task on this job puts your hands closest to a blade, a pinch point or moving parts?
2. Which gloves do we have here, and which jobs is each type right for?
3. Have you ever had a close call with your hands? What would have prevented it?

OSHA standard

29 CFR 1910.138, Hand protection
https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.138

SOURCES

Amputations: Safeguarding Equipment and Protecting Employees from Amputations (OSHA 3170): https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3170.pdf
Amputations QuickCard (OSHA 3204): https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA-AMPUTATIONS.pdf
Personal Protective Equipment (OSHA 3151): https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3151.pdf

This talk does not replace training that an OSHA standard requires. Scripts are based on OSHA and NIOSH publications and rewritten in plain language.

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

TOPIC

Hand Safety Toolbox Talk

COMPANY

JOB / SITE

DATE

TIME

PRESENTER

#	Printed name	Signature	Company / trade
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			

Skip the paper: run this talk and collect signatures on phones at crewsigned.com