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# Reciprocating Saw Safety

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Adapted from material from Yale Environmental Health & Safety

(<https://ehs.yale.edu/shop-tool-safety>) and

<https://www.eng.uwo.ca/files/departments-units/student-shop/2018/sop-saw-reciprocating.pdf>

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## Overview

A **reciprocating saw** is a type of saw with a horizontal blade that is repeatedly pushed forward and back with the use of a motor. It is widely used in demolition and remodeling tasks. A reciprocating saw is mainly used to cut through hard construction materials. Reciprocating saws can cut through metal and wood very quickly and are most useful for making quick, crude cuts through surfaces.

<https://www.doityourself.com/stry/10-safety-precautions-when-using-a-reciprocating-saw>



<https://bestsawreviews.com/how-to-use-a-reciprocating-saw/>

**How to use a Reciprocating Saw** (woodworkweb.com video; 8:33min):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gWajERepEdE>

### Prior to Use:

- Always begin by setting-up your work area safely
- Ensure the appropriate blade is correctly in place
- Work piece - Ensure work piece is securely clamped and is free of any loose portions that could damage blade or become entangled
- Plan your cut to ensure that your blade will not cut anything unintentionally.
- Identify ON/OFF switch
- Inspect electrical cord

### Operation:

- Ensure all other students are clear of immediate work area
- Keep fingers, hands and cables free of blade and surrounding area
- Check that the blade runs 'true' and does not wobble. Excess vibration must be identified and addressed immediately
- Do not make adjustments while machine is plugged in – un-plug to make adjustments
- Un-plug saw from wall/socket before changing the blade or making adjustments.
- Allow blade to reach working speed before applying to work piece.

- Increase working loads gradually. Never abruptly. Use smooth fluid motions
- Un-plug when not in use

**Completion:**

- Ensure blade is and saw are still in good condition before putting away
- Store cord in such a way that it is not in contact with the blade
- Never carry any power tool by its cord

From: <https://www.eng.uwo.ca/files/departments-units/student-shop/2018/sop-saw-reciprocating.pdf>

**Safety Guidelines** (adapted from M-Shop guidelines develop by Lee Schuette)

1. Wear eye protection, hearing protection, and proper clothing.
2. Do not wear loose fitting clothes, puffy or loose knit sleeved clothing.
3. Long hair must be tied back or managed in a net or hat.
4. Obtain permission from instructor to operate miter saw.
5. Use only sharp blades of the proper type for the job.
6. Be sure blade is correctly installed in the saw. Make certain power is off and properly disconnected before removing blade. To loosen arbor nut, turn wrench toward normal direction of travel holding blade with waste piece of wood.
7. Keep all cords clear of cutting area.
8. Stand to the side when cutting to avoid potential kickbacks. Don't overextend—move your feet so that you are always balanced and in full control. Stay balanced.
9. Use both hands to operate the saw. Keep both hands on the saw (don't reach near the blade).
10. If you are apprehensive about using this machine, have the instructor assist you.

**Competencies** (<https://ehs.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/wood-miter-saws.pdf>)

	Demonstrated Independently	Demonstrated with Assistance	Did Not Demonstrate
<b>Performance Competency - Did the student...</b>			
Dress appropriately and wear appropriate personal protective equipment for the cutting operation (eye and hearing protection, hair pulled back or in a hat).			
Identify and describe all controls, adjustments, and functions of the reciprocating saw.			
Correctly setup and adjust the reciprocating saw.			
Cut several pieces of wood (of different sizes) appropriately.			
Use both hands on the saw and stay balanced.			