



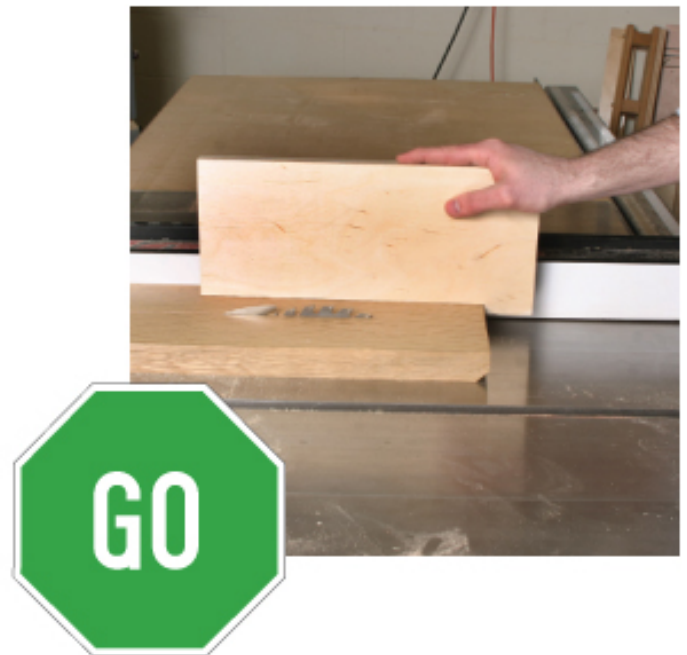
WOODWORKING TOOL SAFETY MANUALS (/BLOG/WOODWORKING-TOOL-SAFETY-MANUALS)

## Safety Manual: Tablesaw



By Fine Woodworking Editors (<http://www.finewoodworking.com/author/fine-woodworking-editors-2>) | Apr 01, 2009

([http](#)) ([http](#)) ([http](#)) ([http](#)) ([mai](#)



**Wrong Way, Right Way:** Use a push stick to keep your hands away from the blade, and a splitter or riving knife (visible just behind blade) to help prevent kickback.

The tablesaw is the center of most woodworking shops. If set up correctly, this powerful machine can make a wide variety of clean and accurate cuts.

On its own the tablesaw rips boards to width, cuts them to precise length, and makes a variety of angled cuts. With a bit of help, it can also cut joinery. Add a dado set (an adjustable stack of blades) and you can cut dadoes, rabbets, and box joints. Make or buy a tenoning jig for precise tenons of any size. Another popular jig is a crosscut sled, used for pieces that are too large for the tablesaw's miter gauge.

If not used properly, the tablesaw can be very dangerous. We recommend using a splitter or riving knife whenever possible, to prevent violent kickback, and push sticks to keep hands away from the exposed blade. The following is a list of all the safety precautions for using a tablesaw.

See how *Fine Woodworking's* editors rated Tablesaws in the Tool Guide

(<http://www.taunton.com/finewoodworking/ToolGuide/ToolguideDirectory.aspx?dir=Tablesaws>). Compare models and post your own ratings too.

### Before you begin

1. Avoid loose fitting clothing

2. Roll long sleeves up above elbows
3. Wear non-skid shoes
4. Keep shirt pockets free of items
5. Wear ear and eye protection.
6. Don't operate while tired or under the influence
7. Do a visual check with the machine unplugged before using
8. Make sure portable tablesaws are securely fastened to a stand
9. Be sure the power switch is off before saw is plugged in
10. Check blade guard and anti-kickback pawls for proper operation, and check the alignment of the splitter.
11. Check blade for tightness

#### **General rules for use**

1. Keep a splitter or riving knife in place whenever possible, to prevent dangerous kickback.
2. The tablesaw blade height should be set so that the top of the teeth extend no more than 3/8 in. above the surface of the workpiece.
3. Use a tablesaw blade guard whenever possible.
4. Always have additional outfeed support in place at the back of the saw table.
5. Don't stack workpieces when cutting.
6. Never position your hands or fingers in the path of the tablesaw blade.
7. Don't reach behind the tablesaw blade and pull the stock.
8. Don't release the workpiece until it is all the way past the back of the tablesaw blade.
9. Turn the tablesaw off and allow the blade to stop spinning before you pick up stock or scrap.
10. Unplug the saw when you are changing the blade.
11. Keep the tablesaw blade clean and sharp and the tablesaw well tuned. This includes aligning the miter slots and the rip fence with the blade.
12. If the tablesaw motor slows down when cutting, slow the feed rate.
13. Never back a board out of a cut.

#### **Crosscutting and Ripping**

1. Don't use the miter gauge and the rip fence together.
2. Use the miter gauge or a sled for all crosscutting and the rip fence for ripping.
3. Don't saw a piece freehand.
4. If crosscutting a long workpiece, use a long miter gauge fence or a sled and support the far end of the board hanging off the table.
5. Don't use the miter gauge for wide workpieces that force the miter gauge off the front of the table. Use a sled instead.
6. Never rip wood that is twisted, warped or doesn't have a straight edge. Joint at least one face and one edge. Run the flat face on the table and the straight edge against the rip fence.
7. When making ripcuts, stand to the left of the blade. UPDATE: This rule depends on the location of the blade. The key is to stand out of the way of the path of the blade and workpiece.
8. Use a push stick when making rip cuts narrower than 6 in.
9. When ripping, apply feed force to the workpiece between blade and fence.

9. when ripping, apply feed force to the workpiece between blade and fence.
10. When cutting a bevel, place the rip fence on the side opposite of the bevel cut.

Specialty Cuts

1. Use a sled or jig to control the workpieces when the miter gauge or rip fence do not offer enough support, such as when cutting tenons or very small pieces.
2. To make a plunge cut, clamp down the workpiece and raise the blade. Don't place the workpiece on top of a moving blade.

Do you have more tablesaw safety advice to share or a scary tablesaw story? Post a comment below and help your fellow woodworkers stay safe.

Launch Gallery

VCF

VALUE CITY  
FURNITURE

find your perfect piece

SHOP NOW >



▶ | 🔊

CLOSE

BY **GIANTMEDIA** (<http://giantmedia.com/?>

([http](#)) ([http](#)) ([http](#)) ([http](#)) ([mai](#)

View 23 comments

Become a member today

Get instant access to all FineWoodworking.com content.

Start Your Free Trial (<https://subscribe.finewoodworking.com/membership?ref=fww-article-sidebar>)

