



STRING & BLADE TRIMMERS SAFE WORK PRACTICES

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Because string trimmers are common, their hazards are often overlooked or minimized. The whip itself can cause significant cuts. String & Blade trimmers can also produce small, high-velocity projectiles that can cause cuts, bruises, and eye injuries to the operator, co-workers, or bystanders. The equipment can also cause overexertion injuries and hearing damage.

COMMON HAZARDS

- Cuts from string
- Projectiles
- Prolonged noise exposure
- Muscle strain from holding equipment in an awkward position for long periods of time
- Fire and spills when refuelling

INCIDENT EXAMPLES

- A worker suffered a severe laceration to his leg when he was struck by a piece of glass thrown by his string trimmer.
- A young worker got her hair sucked into the fan of a string trimmer while bending under a tree branch. The whip repeatedly banged into her head, causing serious injury.

SAFETY TIPS

Before you start

- o Make sure you are familiar with the string & Blade trimmer and its safe use. Don't be afraid to ask.
- o Make sure you are alert—not fatigued or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- o Use personal protective equipment (PPE), including:
 - Steel-toe, non-slip footwear
 - Hearing protection
 - Safety eyewear or a face shield
- o Wear full-length, close-fitting clothing and a hat.
- o Check the worksite. Remove debris, look for holes, and check slopes and ground quality.



Look to see if anyone else is in or around the work area. Never assume people will stay where you last saw them. Use extreme care when approaching blind corners, trees, or other visual obstacles.

While working

- o Only work in daylight.
- o Ensure good footing and balance while operating the string trimmer.
- o Keep the cutter (string) guard in place.
- o Adjust the harness and hand grips to suit your build and work positions.
- o Use equipment at ground level only.
- o Stop the motor before putting down the string trimmer, or if anyone enters the area.

Refuelling

- o Refuel outdoors on the ground.
- o Allow the engine to cool before refuelling.
- o Extinguish all ignition sources (for example, cigarettes).
- o Use only an approved gasoline container in good condition.
- o Keep the nozzle in contact with the fuel tank.
- o If you spill fuel on your clothing, change immediately.
- o Never overfill the tank.
- o Replace cap and tighten securely

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employers

- Maintain and repair string & blade trimmers and edgers.
- Train workers on the safe use of string trimmers and edgers before they start work.
- Demonstrate how to hold, use, adjust, and store the tools.



- Demonstrate how the safety features work (for example, guards, shields, and automatic releases), and instruct workers not to remove any of these features.
- Remind workers about the PPE they are required to wear.
- Provide adequate supervision after training.

Workers

- Follow safe work procedures.
- Wear appropriate PPE.
- Inspect string trimmers and edgers before use, and report any defects or necessary repairs