

Grinder Safety Toolbox Talk

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1 What is a grinder

A grinder, also known as an angle, side or disc grinder, is a power tool used for cutting, grinding and polishing. They can be handheld or bench operated, are powered in a variety of ways and come in different sizes.

A grinder has an abrasive or cutting disc that operates at high speeds and can present health and safety hazards.

2 Managing the risks with grinders

Grinders can be a dangerous power tool. Kickbacks can result in severe cuts. Discs can shatter or disintegrate producing fragments which may become lodged in the operator's eyes or other parts of the body causing serious injury.

Hazards	Risk controls
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A grinding (abrasive) wheel can shatter, causing serious injury▪ Grinding can produce excessive noise, sparks and metal fragments▪ Contact with a wheel can cause cuts and scrapes▪ Dropping a portable grinder can injure legs and feet▪ Dusts can cause respiratory problems▪ Contact with lubricating oils and metallic dusts can irritate skin▪ Vibration can cause 'white finger' injury▪ Electric shock, which can be fatal▪ Fire due to heat and sparks being generated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Never modify a grinder▪ Never remove the guard or handles (if you can't perform the assigned task with provided equipment, then request an exemption from the site HSE representative)▪ Always inspect the grinder before use▪ Ensure a current test and tag is in place▪ Ensure that the guard is positioned between you and the disc▪ Ensure discs have the proper rating, if a disc is rated at a lower RPM than the grinder, the disc could explode▪ Check the disc for cracks, bends or chips. If there are any, remove the disc and get a new one▪ Check to ensure that the switch will release when you are not pressing on it▪ Wear all the required personal protective equipment being; face shield (mandatory unless risk assessment determines otherwise), hearing protection, safety boots, fitted clothing (long sleeve shirt and long pants) and well fitted gloves that allow a good grip on the tool▪ Don't use banned items - 9 inch grinders and 1mm discs


Banned items

- **9-inch grinders** - due to increased kickback and difficulty to manoeuvre
- **1mm grinding discs** - due to being more prone to failure

An EXEMPTION to use the above items can be applied, for if the risk assessment deems it a safer system of work. Approval from the Site HSE representative is required.

3 Using a grinder

Before use	During use
<p>Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> The guard and handles are secure<input type="checkbox"/> There are no defects or damage to the disc<input type="checkbox"/> The correct flange and locking nut are in place for the type of disc being used<input type="checkbox"/> The tightening tool supplied by the grinder manufacturer is used to tighten the disc as other methods can damage the disc and grinder<input type="checkbox"/> The correct disc diameter and centre disc hole size for the spindle is used	<p>Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> You have a firm grip and keep both hands on the grinder at all times<input type="checkbox"/> You allow the grinder to 'run up' to operating speed before applying it to the job<input type="checkbox"/> You hold the grinder against the work piece with minimal pressure, so the disc does not 'grab' and cause it to kickback<input type="checkbox"/> You never bump the grinder onto the object, or let the disc hit any other object while grinding

Before use	During use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The correct type of disc is used e.g., grinding discs for grinding, cutting discs for cutting <input type="checkbox"/> The correct type of disc is used for the material being cut or ground <input type="checkbox"/> A Hot Work Permit is obtained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> You keep the grinding disc at a 15-30 degree angle to the object <input type="checkbox"/> You have a firm hold on the work piece <input type="checkbox"/> You keep the work at waist height during grinding, where possible <input type="checkbox"/> You adopt a comfortable stance with feet apart so you feel well-balanced, and ensure you have a clear view of the job <input type="checkbox"/> You never use a grinder between your legs while sitting on the floor <input type="checkbox"/> You keep loose clothing, gloves, jewellery or long hair away <input type="checkbox"/> You have controls in place to manage the sparks that are produced so that they don't become a fire hazard <input type="checkbox"/> You stop at regular intervals for a short break to rest your hands and arms <input type="checkbox"/> You never put a grinder down until the disc stops rotating <input type="checkbox"/> You turn off the switch at the power point and then remove plug from the power point before changing discs <input type="checkbox"/> You disconnect the power and place the grinder on a bench with the disc facing upwards, when not in use <input type="checkbox"/> You stay alert and watch what you are doing

4 Training

If you require further information, please speak with your supervisor or contract manager.

5 Safety breaches

Safety breaches may result in disciplinary action and depending on the situation, may lead to removal off site.

Always inspect your grinder before use AND have two hands on the grinder at all times whilst in use.

6 Group discussion

How do you ensure that you safely use a grinder?

7 Sign off

Toolbox talk delivered by: _____

ID#	Name	Signature	Date