

## **BAND SAW SAFETY GUIDELINES**

1. Do Not use the band saw if you are too tired, hungry, sad, mad, or dehydrated. Never work while under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or any medication that creates drowsiness or impaired thinking.
2. Always follow the manufacturer's safety guidelines for the band saw. The guidelines are posted on or near the band saw.
3. Never use the band saw until you have been trained on and understand the safety issues and procedures specific to use of the band saw. Obtain advice from your instructor or woodshop manager if you are not thoroughly familiar with the operation of the band saw.
4. Plan ahead; think of the sequence of cuts that need to be made. Think about where your hands are going to be before, during, and after the operation.
5. Pay attention to your "gut feeling" or that "little voice in the back of your head," if something doesn't feel right or if an operation feels dangerous then it probably is, so STOP and think it through and/or talk with your instructor or woodshop manager. There is probably a safer Way to do the operation.
6. Always wear eye and ear protection when using-the band saw. Wearing a dust mask is always a good idea.
7. Do not wear loose clothing or gloves. Remove watch, all jewelry and tie back long hair or beards.
8. Like all machines, you must give the band saw your undivided attention during use. Once-you have begun making a cut you must keep your complete focus on that operation until the cut is complete. Do not look up at activity that may be happening around you or engage in conversation while making a cut.

9. Check that the band saw is in working condition. Get into the habit of doing a "pre-flight" checking procedure. Keep in mind that you do not know who or for what the saw was used prior to your arrival at the saw. The following should be checked before use.
  - a. Make sure the band saw table surface and area around the band saw is clear of tools, scraps, etc.
  - b. Adjust the upper blade guide so that it is about 1/8th inch above the work. Make sure there is enough clearance behind the blade to push the stock through.
  - c. Make sure the blade guard is in place and that the blade is tensioned and tracking correctly. If in doubt consult with your instructor, woodshop manager or monitor. DO NOT make adjustments to the tracking and tensioning yourself.
10. Hold the workpiece firmly against the table. Do Not attempt to saw a workpiece that does not have a flat surface against the table. The band saw exerts a downward thrust on the workpiece.
11. Do Not cut odd shaped pieces or cylindrical\_ stock without first obtaining instruction from your instructor, woodshop manager or monitor.
12. The workpiece MUST stay in contact with the table at the point where the blade exits.
13. Keep your head, arms, hands and fingers away from the path of the blade.
14. Avoid awkward operations and hand positions where a sudden slip could cause a hand to move into the blade.
15. Use a push stick if you are cutting narrow stock. Do Not place your thumb at the end of a piece of stock while pushing it through the blade. Wood density varies and while you think you may have control of the speed and expect to be able to move your thumb out of the way, the stock could suddenly surge forward and you may inadvertently push your thumb into the blade. Use a moderate feed rate and decrease the feed pressure as you approach the end of the

cut.

16. Do not force an arc smaller than the blade is equipped to make.
17. Make ample relief cuts. Plan the cuts to avoid backing out of the saw kerf. If it is necessary to back out, turn off the machine and let the blade come to a complete stop first, then back out.
18. Turn the band saw off and wait for the blade to stop prior to:
  - a. making adjustments to the blade guard height
  - b. cleaning the blade area
  - c. removing debris caught in the throat of the table insert  
removing or securing a workpiece
  - d. changing the angle of the table

A coasting blade can be very dangerous - it takes a minute for the blade to come to a stop.

19. Never perform layout, assembly, or set up work on the table work area when the saw is running.
20. The area to the right of the band saw is a danger zone. If a blade breaks the end of the blade may hit the table and shoot out to the right. No one should stand in this zone while the machine is running.
21. If a blade breaks, or comes off the wheel, turn the machine off. Stand back until everything stops and then notify the shop manager immediately.
22. Never touch the blade without first turning off the machine and sticking a piece of wood against the blade to make sure that the blade has in fact stopped. Do not trust your eyes because the blade rotates so fast that it can look like it isn't moving.
23. When the work is complete, turn off the machine, clean the work area (table top and floor area) and remove all your stock and scraps.
24. Please realize there are no shortcuts in woodworking, When beginning work on the band saw, mentally prepare yourself for a pace of work that is slower, more deliberate, and safety conscious.

Accept the fact that everything will take longer than you think.  
Always err on the side of caution.

Familiarity with the band saw breeds confidence and competence so  
practice often and ask questions and get help as you need it.