

SHOP SAFETY - SAFE-WORK PRACTICES

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Shops are an integral part of research, teaching and facilities operations throughout the UC system. Some research and teaching operations actually incorporate “shop work activities” into their research/teaching operations. While these areas may not be known as “shops”, and be called “Maker Spaces”, “Modeling Labs”, “Dry Labs”, “Engineering Labs”, “Collaborative Research Areas”, etc., the work processes and hazards associated with them fall under shop safety program requirements as determined by CalOSHA. Basically, a “shop” is any location where metal working, carpentry, wood working, surface modification, painting and coating, glass work, electrical/electronic work, plastics work, equipment/model building, or rock/geological sampling may be occurring. If you are doing any of these processes as part of your work, research or study, contact your EH&S department and learn about your local campus’ shop safety program and resources to ensure you are safe and fully compliant with regulations.

Whether working on campus or at home, as a start follow these basic “Top-11” safe-work practices when planning or performing work in a shop:

1. Never work alone in a shop. Always have someone nearby who knows you’re working in a shop and can render assistance or call for help quickly in an emergency.
2. Get trained on and qualified by the shop manager to use shop equipment and do certain hazardous processes in shops before you start actually doing the work.
3. If you don’t feel confident and safe in doing a work process or using a machine, stop and ask for help from more knowledgeable persons.
4. Only use tools and do shop processes that you have received training on, and feel skilled and qualified to use/do safely.
5. Only use tools and equipment for the type of work they were designed to do. For example, don’t use a screw driver as a chisel, don’t use the blunt-end of a chisel as a hammer, and don’t use the claws of a hammer as a screw driver.
6. Use only well sharpened tools and blades to ensure safe equipment operation.
7. Prior to working in a shop, seek out the shop manager to ensure you receive a safety-orientation specific to that shop as well as learning about the equipment hazards and safe-work processes that manager has for the shop.
8. Follow all manufacturer-provided manuals for powered shop equipment, and follow your shop’s “Code of Safe Practices” as may be required by your shop manager.
9. Don’t remove any equipment guard from shop machinery. If equipment guards are already removed exposing a mechanical hazard, do not use the equipment until safety guards are reinstalled on the equipment.
10. Before working in a shop, remove all loose clothing and jewelry including necklaces, dangling earrings and rings from fingers. Tie long-hair back in a bun, tuck under your shirt-collar or wear a hair net. Always wear long pants, enclosed shoes (e.g. athletics shoes, work boots, etc.), a shirt with sleeves (preferably long-sleeved), and eye protection when you enter into and work in a shop’s high-hazard area(s). Wear other personal protective equipment (e.g. ear plugs, gloves, respirator, welding gear, etc. based upon hazard analysis and specific shop-hazard controls as may be determined by the shop manager).
11. If you see someone doing something unsafe in a shop, immediately speak to them and stop the unsafe work until the unsafe condition can be resolved.

[Full Shop Safety Article](#)