

Powered Hand Tools – Pneumatic Tools – Basic Safety Fact Sheets



WHAT ARE PNEUMATIC TOOLS?

- Pneumatic tools are powered by compressed air. Common types of these air-powered hand tools that are used in industry include buffers, nailing and stapling guns, grinders, drills, jack hammers, chipping hammers, riveting guns, sanders and wrenches.

How do you use pneumatic tools safely?

- Review the manufacturer's instruction before using a tool.
- Wear safety glasses or goggles, or a face shield (with safety glasses or goggles), and, where necessary, safety shoes or boots and hearing protection.
- Post warning signs where pneumatic tools are used. Set up screens or shields in areas where nearby workers may be exposed to flying fragments, chips, dust, and excessive noise.
- Ensure that the compressed air supplied to the tool is clean and dry. Dust, moisture, and corrosive fumes can damage a tool. An in-line regulator filter and lubricator increases tool life.
- Keep tools clean and lubricated, and maintain them according to the manufacturers' instructions.
- Use only the attachments that the manufacturer recommends for the tools you are using.
- Be careful to prevent hands, feet, or body from injury in case the machine slips or the tool breaks.
- Reduce physical fatigue by supporting heavy tools with a counter-balance wherever possible.



How should you handle air hoses?

- Use the proper hose and fittings of the correct diameter.
- Use hoses specifically designed to resist abrasion, cutting, crushing and failure from continuous flexing.
- Choose air-supply hoses that have a minimum working pressure rating of 1035 kPa (150 psig) or 150% of the maximum pressure produced in the system, whichever is higher.
- Check hoses regularly for cuts, bulges and abrasions. Tag and replace, if defective.
- Blow out the air line before connecting a tool. Hold hose firmly and blow away from yourself and others.

- Make sure that hose connections fit properly and are equipped with a mechanical means of securing the connection (e.g., chain, wire, or positive locking device).
- Install quick disconnects of a pressure-release type rather than a disengagement type. Attach the male end of the connector to the tool, NOT the hose.
- Do not operate the tool at a pressure above the manufacturer's rating.
- Turn off the air pressure to hose when not in use or when changing power tools.
- Do not carry a pneumatic tool by its hose.
- Avoid creating trip hazards caused by hoses laid across walkways or curled underfoot.
- Do not use compressed air to blow debris or to clean dirt from clothes.



What should you avoid with a compressed air?

- Cleaning with compressed air is dangerous.
- Do not use compressed air for cleaning unless no alternate method of cleaning is available. The nozzle pressure MUST remain below 207 kPa (30 psi). Personal protective equipment and effective chip guarding techniques must be used.
- Two acceptable methods of meeting the “below 207 kPa (30 psi)” requirement are illustrated below.



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