

Handheld Grinder Safety

Angle grinders, also called side or disc grinders, are handheld power tools used for cutting, grinding, and polishing. They can be electric, gas powered, or pneumatic, and vary in size.

Hazards Associated with Angle Grinders?

High speed flying particles, inhaling dust or fumes, kickback, fires & explosions, electrical shock, cuts & abrasions, noise, Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) -repetitive motion & awkward work positions. According to OSHA standard 1926.300(b)(1), power operated tools designed to accommodate guards shall be equipped with such guards when in use.

Before Using an Angle Grinder:

- Consider disc size, arbor size, motor power, power source and rpm in choosing the correct grinder for the job.
- A cutting disc must not be used for grinding.
- The RPM rating of the disc/blade must be higher than that of the angle grinder.
- Be sure that all manufacturer guards are in place, in use, and in good working condition.
- Adjust guards to deflect flying particles away from operator.
- Inspect wheels for cracks, defects, and wear. Perform a “ring test”. Replace worn discs.

When Using an Angle Grinder:

- Do not carry grinder with your finger on the switch.
- Use a 180° guard between operator & wheel.
- Allow grinder to come to full speed and warm up before use. Bring the grinder to a complete stop after use.
- Do not grind on the side of the wheel.
- Do not use liquid coolants.
- Always use two hands and avoid continuous vibration. Keep hands away from the rotating wheel.
- Wear proper PPE including eye/face & hearing protection, leather gloves, natural fiber clothing, and respiratory protection as needed.
- DO NOT wear loose fitting clothing or have hanging strings.
- Maintain good footing, balance & work position.

