

BenchReady Workshop Safety Checklist

Walk down this list before every session. Tape it to the wall next to the bench.

PPE

- ☐ **Safety glasses on, Z87+ rated.**
Check the stamp on the frame. Prescription glasses do not count as safety glasses.
- ☐ **Hearing protection on.**
Plugs, muffs, or both for any session over 15 minutes. Above 85 dB sustained, hearing damage is permanent and cumulative.
- ☐ **Dust protection dialed in.**
N95 for occasional dust; P100 half-mask for regular MDF or oak work. MERV 11 air filter running. Vapor cartridges for solvent work.
- ☐ **Gloves on for handling, off for machining.**
Never wear gloves near rotating cutters. Cut-resistant for sheet goods and rough lumber only.
- ☐ **Loose clothing, jewelry, hair tied back.**
No hoodie drawstrings, no rings or watches, no loose sleeves if you are machining.

ELECTRICAL

- ☐ **GFCI test on every outlet you plan to use.**
Press TEST - it should trip. Press RESET - it should restore. Test monthly; GFCI devices wear out.
- ☐ **Dedicated 20A circuit for the table saw.**
Plus a separate one for the dust collector. A shared 15A circuit pops the breaker on first rip after start.
- ☐ **Cord gauge matches the tool.**
12 AWG minimum for table saw and dust collector (10 AWG for 50-ft runs). Never daisy-chain power strips. Unplug before blade or bit changes.

FIRE

- ☐ **Class ABC extinguisher visible and accessible.**
Mounted at the door, 3.5 to 5 feet off the floor. Pressure gauge in the green zone. Inspected within the last 12 months.
- ☐ **Oily rags either spread outside or in a metal lidded can.**
Never in a regular trash can inside the shop. Linseed-oil-soaked rags can reach ignition temperature in hours.
- ☐ **Smoke detector tested.**
Photoelectric type, battery-backed, in the shop or the adjacent room. Test monthly.
- ☐ **PASS technique drilled.**
Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep. Practice on a spent extinguisher so the motion is automatic.

DUST

- ☐ **Dust collector drum less than half full.**
Empty outside. Inspect ducting for sparks and wear. Drum overfilled traps heat and is the leading cause of collector fires.
- ☐ **MERV 11 air filter running.**
Source capture at the tool plus an ambient filter is the only combination that catches fines below 10 microns.
- ☐ **Active exhaust for finishing.**
Window fan, outdoor spraying, or organic-vapor cartridges. N95 does not filter VOCs.

PER-MACHINE RULES

- ☐ **Table saw guard and riving knife installed.**
Guard returns to position after each cut. Pawls move freely. No freehand rips. Push stick for pieces narrower than 6 inches. Stand to the side, not behind.
- ☐ **Miter saw: clamp short pieces, wait for blade stop.**
Holding a 4-inch offcut by hand is the most common miter-saw injury.
- ☐ **Drill press: chuck key back in its hook before turning on.**
Keys left in the chuck spin into your face at full speed. Never blow off chips with your mouth or hands.
- ☐ **Bench grinder: work rest gap 1/8 inch or less.**
Wide gap and the workpiece jams. Side guard in place. Wheel RPM matches grinder RPM.
- ☐ **Router bit depth max 1/8 inch above stock.**
More protrusion increases kickback risk. Feed against rotation.