

### INTRODUCTION

In Australia, lacerations are far the most common workplace injury - resulting in 28% of all reported events. Wherever cutting takes place, injuries can occur - even if you are an experienced knife user - and quite often, using knives is an unavoidable part of the workplace. However, you can still prevent knife-related injuries by using cutting tools with the proper safety features, training, following safe cutting practices, and maintaining your knives.



### WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REDUCE THE RISK OF CUTTING ACCIDENTS IN OUR WORKPLACE?

During this talk think about what can be done to reduce the risk of cutting accidents in our workplace.

### FIVE STEPS TO SAFE CUTTING

#### 1. IDENTIFY AND REMOVE UNSAFE KNIVES.

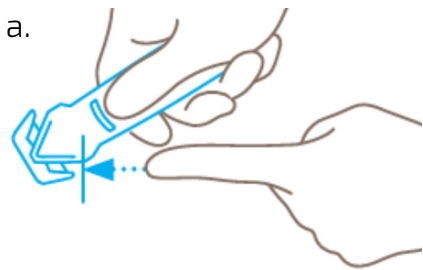
- Manual retraction knives - the blade does not retract and can be left exposed when not in use
- Exposed blades - these knives can be dangerous when not in use, for example when dropped
- Dull or blunt blades - are dangerous blades. The material can collect in a knife, or knife can slip
- Snap off blades - are unsafe as the sections can snap off, get lost, and are unsafe to change
- Other unsafe knives - boot knives, kitchen knives, pocket knives, and folding knives.

#### 2. WHAT IS A 'SAFE' KNIFE?

A knife is classified as a safe knife when it features either:

- (a) concealed blade
- (b) fully automatic blade retraction, or
- (c) automatic blade retraction.

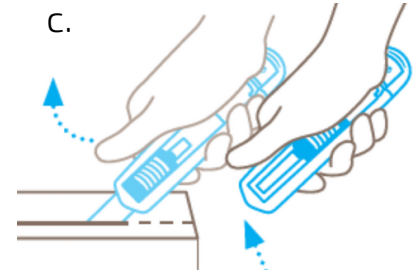
These types of 'safe' knives can also feature a safe blade change system, blade locking function, and an ergonomic lightweight handle to reduce fatigue.



The blade is not open but concealed. Therefore, the cutting edge is shielded from you and the packaged goods, giving you a maximum degree of safety from cut injuries while cleverly protecting your products.



The intelligent cutting tool: as soon as the blade leaves the material you are cutting, it withdraws automatically into the handle even when you keep on pressing the slider or the handle. That's what we call "a very high degree of safety."



Thumbs up for a high degree of safety! As soon as you start cutting, remove your thumb from the slider, and the blade will disappear into the handle the moment it loses contact with the material you are cutting.

### 3. SAFE CUTTING PRACTICES.

- For safe cutting in the workplace, selecting the right knife for the job is essential.
- This should be followed up by educating yourself on how the knife functions by reading or watching any training materials provided with the knife.
- Once you are confident with safely using the knife, it is vital to use it for its intended purpose only
- Maintain and clean it regularly. Maintenance includes ensuring the blade is sharp and not broken, debris removed, and any dust or dirt that will impair the knife's function gets blown out.
- Other safe cutting practices should include using PPE (i.e., gloves) when using knives and storing your tools safely when they are not in use.

### 4. SAFE KNIFE STORAGE.

- Knife safety doesn't end when the knife is not in use.
- To store your knives, use a knife holster to keep both the knife and spare blades safe when not in use
- Do not store knives in your pocket, leave them out on benches or shelves where they may be knocked off or accessed by the public.

### 5. SAFE BLADE DISPOSAL.

- When changing blades, it is essential to dispose of the used blades safely.
- If possible, use a knife with a safe blade system to limit your contact with the blade edge.
- Once removed, never dispose of the blade directly into the bin, use a secure used blade container
- Make sure never to leave used blades on a bench or unattended.
- Dispose of the used blade container responsibly once it is full (speak with your supervisor!)

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The safest knives for the workplace feature either a concealed blade, fully automatic and automatic retraction.
- Increase your safety when using knives by using appropriate PPE.
- A dull blade is an unsafe blade. Regularly check your blades for sharpness.
- Regular maintenance of knives is required. Clean and inspect the knife daily for dust and dirt.
- Utilise training materials provided to ensure the knife is being used and maintained correctly.
- Safely dispose of blades in an approved used blade container.
- Practice safe cutting techniques offered in training materials.
- Store knives safely in a holster or a locked cabinet when not in use.
- Be aware, focused, and alert when using knives in the workplace and around others.



### HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE KNIFE SAFETY IN OUR WORKPLACE?

- What was the most important thing you learned today?
- What is one thing that we can improve in the area of knife safety?