

Landscaping

Landscaping - Equipment

On this page

[What are some safety tips for using chippers, shredders and grinders?](#)

[What are some safety tips for using post-hole diggers?](#)

[What are some safety tips for using hedge trimmers?](#)

What are some safety tips for using chippers, shredders and grinders?

Set-up:

- Before operating the equipment, read, understand and follow the manufacturer's operating manual and safety decals on the equipment.
- Set up the machine on level, stable ground that is not slippery.
- Chock wheels to ensure the machine will not move during operation.
- Before start-up, ensure that there is no debris in the feed chute and that the machine is in good operating condition (e.g., check the sharpness of cutting edges, tightness of bolts, condition and tension of belts).
- Ensure all guards and shields are in place and are properly maintained.
- Check the tightness of grinder teeth lock bolts daily.
- Barricade the area around equipment when in use and ensure that bystanders will not be hit with flying chips or debris.
- Wear appropriate safety glasses, goggles or face shield (with safety glasses or goggles), hearing, eye, and head protection.
- Remove rings, bracelets and other jewellery (so they do not fall in or get caught in machine). Tie back long hair. Do not wear loose-fitting clothing or anything that might get caught in rotating or moving parts.

- Make sure the discharge chute is positioned so the material will not hit anyone.
- Ensure there are no materials like wire, stones or glass bottles, etc. in the wood material being shredded or chipped.
- Do not feed material that was raked up from the ground into a shredder or chipper; it could contain stones or other material that could damage the equipment or result in injuries to the worker.

Operation:

- Feed material butt-end (i.e., larger end) first.
- Do not feed short pieces by hand; place shorter pieces on top of longer pieces when feeding the machine or use a push stick.
- Do not force material into the feeder – injuries could occur if a worker slips and falls toward the feeder.
- Shut down equipment and wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop before removing clogged materials or making adjustments. Prevent unintentional start-up or operation by removing the key or locking out controls and disengaging the clutch.
- Recheck the sharpness of the knives and anvil if it becomes more difficult to feed the machine.
- Never reach into any part of an operating machine.
- Never sit, climb or stand on any part of the chipper when it is running.
- Never reach over or work near rotating parts (entanglement happens too quickly to react).

There are many tips in other [Landscaping](#) OSH Answers documents.

What are some safety tips for using hedge trimmers?

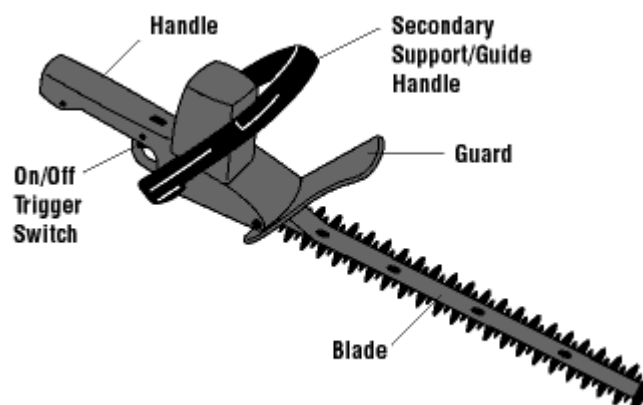
Set-up:

- Select a hedge trimmer appropriate for the work – consider the size and height of shrubs and hedges being trimmed, e.g., 1 metre (about 3 feet) versus 4.5 metres (about 15 feet), cutter bar length, single- or double-sided blades, weight and balance of the equipment, availability of electrical power source, etc.
- Before operating the equipment, read, understand and follow the manufacturer's operating manual and safety decals on the equipment.

- Wear proper [eye and face protection](#).
- Check hedges for any foreign objects (e.g., metal posts, wires) before trimming.
- Do not use electrical tools in the rain, or on wet grass or shrubs.
- When using gasoline-fuelled trimmers, ensure the air filter and muffler screens are clean before use; use the recommended grade of fuel and gasoline/oil mixture. Fuel only in well-ventilated areas.
- Keep the blades sharp and ensure the cutter bar bolts are torqued correctly (not too loose and not too tight).

Operation:

- Keep fingers and hands away from the blades.
- Keep the power cord of an electric hedge trimmer behind you to avoid snipping it or tripping. Leave enough cord slack for normal work motions.
- Use both hands to hold and guide the tool.
- Avoid overreaching during trimming operations.
- Use long-reach or telescoping trimmers for tall hedges and shrubs.
- Do not stand on unstable supports (e.g., chairs or boards on saw horses) or on ladders when using hedge trimmers.
- Do not force tools to cut something they are not designed to cut.
- Turn off the power and wait for the blades to stop before cleaning out twigs or grass. To prevent injuries, use a brush or other device to remove material from between the knives.
- If using a gas-powered unit, only use it in well-ventilated areas.
- Do not refuel when the engine is hot. Fuel may spill and cause a fire.



What are some safety tips for using post-hole diggers?

- Contact the local utility companies for the location of cables and pipes before digging.
- Select equipment that is suitable for the tasks required – consider the type of soil (full of rocks and roots?), the depth and diameter of the holes, accessibility to the site, etc.
- Before operating the equipment, read, understand and follow the manufacturer's operating manual and safety decals on the equipment.
- Check that you are using the correct shear bolt (for hardness and length) that is specified by the equipment manufacturer to ensure that the shear bolt breaks when required and to prevent clothing from getting entangled with a shear bolt that is too long.
- Make sure that the auger point and cutting edges are in good condition and that the equipment is in good working order.
- Make sure all shields and guards are in place and in working order.

Hand-held post-hole diggers

- If you are using a one- or two-person hand-held unit, position yourself so that you do not get hit by the handle if the auger stops abruptly.
- Operate the auger at slow speeds.
- Dig the hole in several steps by clearing the soil frequently. Removing the soil reduces the load on the digger and allows for better control.
- Shut off the drive and stop the power source if the auger jams. Turn the auger backwards until clear.
- Keep loose shirts, coats, boot laces and long hair tied back so they do not get caught in the auger.
- Turn off the power before cleaning out twigs or grass, and wait for the blades to stop rotating.
- Do not lock the drive control in an "on" position.

Tractor-mounted post-hole diggers

- If you are using a post-hole digger mounted on the back of a tractor, operate it while sitting in the tractor seat.
- Ensure that no one is in contact with or near the post hole digger, auger or PTO (power take-off) drive train before operating the equipment.

- Ensure that all machine guarding and shields are in place before digging.
 - Set the tractor brakes or place in park before digging.
 - Operate at a slow speed for better control.
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