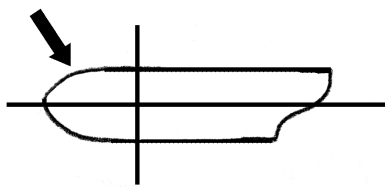


screws, and lubrication to make sure everything is set according to the manufacturer's instructions.

- Use a saw equipped with a chain brake, anti-kickback chain, or other anti-kickback devices.
- Before starting the engine, make sure the saw is not in contact with anything.
- Do not drop start a chain saw.
- Make sure to have a secure footing before making any cut.
- Be sure that your body is clear from the natural path the saw will follow when the cut goes through the wood.
- Do not cut above mid chest height.
- Use both hands to operate the chain saw.
- Cut with the lower part of the saw blade, not the tip or nose (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Cut with the lower part of the chainsaw blade, not the tip or nose.

Never use the upper quadrant of the bar



Chipper/Shredders

- Do not stand in front of the discharge shoot while loading or operating a chipper/shredder.
- If the machine becomes jammed, turn it off and wait for all moving parts to stop before attempting to fix it.
- Keep a pair of loppers close at hand if necessary to trim branches that refuse to slide down the chute – however, be sure to keep them away from the intakes and do not allow them to take your attention away from a running machine.

Leaf Blowers

- Do not direct the blower nozzle toward anyone because of the risk of eye injury.
- Wear a face mask to cut down on susceptibility to respiratory problems.

Weed Trimmers

- When using a string or blade trimmer, wear long pants to protect legs from rocks or sticks and closed-toed shoes or boots to protect feet.
- Do not use a string or blade trimmer on poison ivy as it will spread foliage and stems over your body, causing a massive allergic reaction.

Other Hand Power Tools

- When using electric hedge clippers, always keep both hands on the handle.
- Keep arms within a comfortable distance to prevent strain or loss of control.
- Take breaks when hands or arms get tired.

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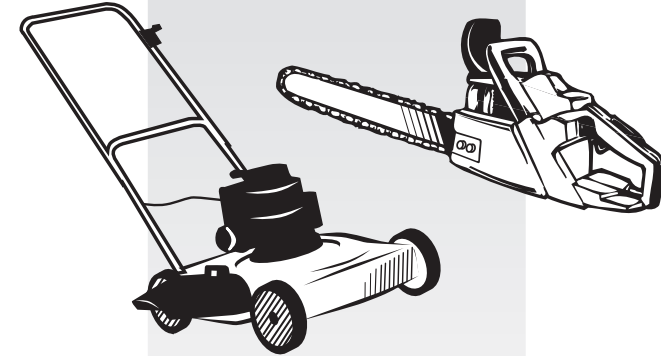
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Virginia
Gardener

Gardening and Your Health:



Power Tool Safety

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Many homeowners use power tools to shape and maintain their landscape, including lawn mowers, chain saws, string trimmers, leaf blowers, and chipper/shredders. Accidents and injuries that occur while gardening with power tools can easily be prevented with a few safety precautions and careful attention while operating these machines.

General

- Before using any tool, read and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Always wear safety glasses to prevent eye injuries.
- Wear snug-fitting clothes that allow you to move freely. Be aware that loose sleeve cuffs, pants cuffs, scarves, loose long hair, skirts, or jewelry can get caught in cutting blades or other moving parts.
- Never alter a tool or remove safety features such as grounding pins or blade guards.
- Store tools out of the reach of small children.
- Wear hearing protection devices while operating gasoline powered tools, such as lawn mowers, leaf blowers, snow blowers, or chain saws.
- Keep blades on cutting tools sharpened. Keep handles clean of water, dirt and oil.
- Never work alone – always be able to contact someone quickly for help in case it is needed.
- Never use power tools while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any medicines that can impair your vision, alertness, dexterity, or judgment.

Electric Tools

- Check for frayed or damaged power cords before every use. Make sure the cords are in good condition.

- Do not allow tools to get wet unless they are marked “immersion.” Never use electrical equipment while it is raining.
- Before plugging in any appliance or tool, check to make sure that the power switch is in the “OFF” position.
- Never carry a tool by the cord or yank on the cord to unplug it. Always pull on the plug and not the wire when disconnecting the cord.
- Unplug all tools when not in use. Coil up extension cords and store them for safety.
- Make sure that all outdoor electrical outlets are protected with ground fault circuit interrupters.

Lawn Mowers

- Always wear heavy shoes while mowing. Do not wear loose clothing that can catch in moving blades.
- Do a thorough lawn inspection to remove sticks, trash, rocks, toys, etc., before mowing.
- Turn off mowers or disengage the blade before crossing drives or walkways.
- Mow across a slope with a push mower, and up/down the slope with a riding mower. While riding uphill lean forward to prevent the front wheels from lifting off the ground (Figure 1).
- Always point the discharge shoot away from traffic or walkways. Turn off the mower when pedestrians are passing.
- If available, use a mulching mower that returns grass clippings to the lawn.
- Keep mowers well-maintained. Replace any worn wheels, handles, or guards.
- Never try to remove something that is stuck in the mower blades while the mower is still running!
- Pets, children, and others should be out of sight of the mower to prevent injuries due to flying objects or debris.

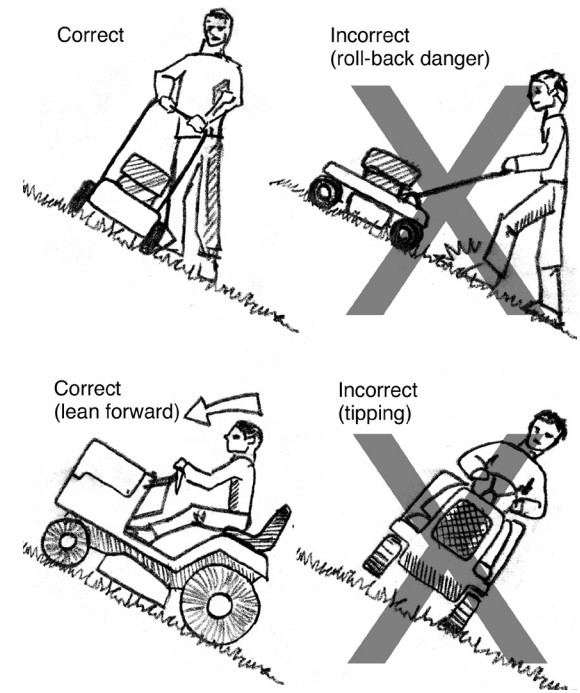


Figure 1. Mowing on slopes.

- Before they can use a push-type mower, teenagers must be at least as heavy as the mower and tall enough to see clearly over the mower handles. Make sure they have been properly trained in safe mower operation.
- When using an electrical mower, keep the cord behind you. Trail it over your shoulder or keep a loop of it in your hand to keep track of it. Always cut away from, and not toward, the cord.
- Refuel gasoline powered mowers outdoors. Never refuel when the motor is still hot, and wipe off any excess fuel that spills on the mower casing.

Chain Saws

- Make sure there are no nails in the wood or loose objects in the area where you are cutting.
- Before using a chainsaw, check the blade sharpness, chain tension, idlespeed, nuts and