

HIAP Wood Workshop

User Guidelines

This is an unsupervised, shared workshop intended primarily for art-related projects. Please read these guidelines before your induction and follow them every time you use the workshop. They help keep the space safe, functional and welcoming for everyone.

Questions? Contact the HIAP Art Technician: sampo@hiap.fi

The essentials at a glance

1. Complete a HIAP workshop induction before using the workshop.
2. Never use the larger machines, including the table saw, when you are alone in the building.
3. Check all recycled or reclaimed wood with the metal detector before cutting it on the table saw or mitre saw.
4. Wear the right safety gear. No loose clothing, dangling jewellery or unsecured long hair near machines.
5. Write your name and the date in the logbook every visit, and record every tool you borrow.
6. Replace or pay for the consumables and materials you use.
7. Report broken tools, accidents and near misses.
8. Leave the workshop cleaner than you found it.

1. Before you start

- **Complete an induction.** A HIAP workshop induction is required before any extensive use of the workshop.
- **Only use what you are confident with.** Operate tools and equipment only when you are competent and confident to do so safely. If in doubt, ask for guidance before you start.
- **Sign the waiver** and give HIAP your contact information.
- **Arrange your own insurance.** HIAP does not provide insurance for workshop users.
- **Read the notices in the workshop.** Familiarise yourself with all guidelines and instructions posted there.

2. Every time you use the workshop

- **Log your visit.** Write the date and your name in the workshop logbook, found beneath the guidelines notice in the workshop.
- **Record any tool you borrow.** Tools may be taken to studios or other areas of the building for a few hours. Write your name, what you borrowed and where it will be used on the tool loan list in the workshop. Need a tool for longer? Contact the Art Technician and we will try to arrange something.
- **Be considerate of noise.** Other people work in the building, and meetings and events nearby may limit how much noise you can make.
- **Clean up.** Leave the workshop cleaner than you found it (see section 7).

3. What is and isn't allowed

- **Spray painting or gluing with strong solvents** is only permitted for small items, inside the ventilated cabinet.
- **Welding, metal grinding and any other spark-producing work** is not permitted.
- **Work that creates harmful dust** should be avoided, for example sanding stone, fibreglass, concrete or certain exotic woods.
- **The larger machines must not be used** when you are alone in the building.

4. Safety

Protect yourself

- Always wear appropriate safety gear when required, such as safety glasses, hearing protection and a dust mask.
- Do not wear loose clothing or dangling jewellery, and tie back long hair when operating machines.
- Gloves can get caught in rotating parts and cause severe injuries. Do not wear them near rotating machinery.

Know the emergency equipment

- Learn where to find the first aid kits, emergency phone numbers, fire extinguisher, fire blanket, fire hose and emergency exits.
- Keep fire doors closed.
- Keep exits and access to safety equipment clear.

Using tools and machines

- Do not operate machines or power tools unless you understand how to use them safely. Read the manual when necessary.
- Inspect tools before use. Do not use damaged or faulty tools, and report any damage or malfunction immediately.
- Unplug the tool, remove the battery or press the emergency stop before adjusting blades, changing bits or cleaning moving parts.
- Never cut recycled or reclaimed wood on the table saw or mitre saw without first checking it with the metal detector.
- Secure workpieces with clamps whenever practical when using hand tools.
- Use the dust collector whenever possible.

Working around others

- Do not distract anyone who is operating machinery, and keep a safe distance from machines in use.
- Keep floors and work surfaces free of clutter.
- Do not leave large, heavy or sharp objects where they could fall or cause injury.

If something goes wrong

- Report all accidents and near misses using the Incident Form.

5. Materials and consumables

The workshop runs on a limited budget, so please give back what you use.

- **Unmarked materials can be used**, but please replace them or compensate for their value. This includes consumables such as lumber, paint, sandpaper, drill bits, knife blades, fasteners, glues, tapes, solvents, single-use gloves and dust masks.

- **The best way to contribute** is to bring useful materials or items of similar value to the workshop. The Art Technician can suggest what is needed.
- **Small scraps are free to use.** The Art Technician can tell you if any other materials are free.
- **Cut economically.** Use offcuts and smaller pieces first. Two half sheets of plywood are less valuable than one full sheet.
- **Check recycled materials** with the metal detector for hidden screws, nails and other fasteners, and look for embedded stones and other debris.
- **Dismantle projects** when they are no longer needed. Remove nails, screws and staples before returning reusable materials to storage, and dispose of anything that cannot be cleaned for reuse.
- **Dispose of hazardous materials correctly.** Never leave behind unidentified chemicals, solvents or other potentially hazardous substances.

6. Storage

- Label your materials, personal tools and projects and store them on the designated blue metal shelf in the workshop.
- Storage for larger projects, or anything beyond the shelf, must be agreed with the Art Technician in advance.
- HIAP may discard stored items 30 days after your last logbook entry. Recycling or disposal fees may be charged where applicable.

7. Leave the workshop better than you found it

Before you leave, clean up after yourself and, if you have a few minutes, help with one of these tasks:

- Wipe dust from surfaces, including shelves, workbenches and tool storage areas.
- Empty the rubbish bin and replace the liner. Don't overfill bags or put long, sharp or heavy objects in them.
- Mop corners and other areas where dust collects.
- Tidy scrap materials. If storage is full, discard the lowest-quality pieces. Don't overfill shelves or bins.
- Empty the dust collector when it is full (wear a dust mask).
- Return clamps, hand tools and other shared equipment to their designated places.
- Clean the floor outside the workshop too. Dust travels surprisingly far.

8. Using the dust collector

- Use the dust collector with the table saw, mitre saw and band saw, as a dust extractor for power tools, or as a vacuum cleaner.
- The hoses connect magnetically, so you can swap them without tools.
- **Before and after each use:** disconnect the hose from the main unit to check for blockages, then turn the handle on top of the unit several full rotations to clear dust from the filter.
- Two hoses can be connected at once, but this reduces suction. The second connector has a valve: keep it **closed** when no hose is attached and **open** it when one is.
- The dust bag is held by a flexible hoop and can be changed without tools. Do this outdoors and wear a dust mask, as the unit contains very fine dust.

9. Table saw safety

General safety

- Always use the riving knife and blade guard when possible.
- Wear eye and hearing protection and a dust mask. No loose clothing, loose hair or jewellery.
- Keep your hands away from the blade and never reach over it while it is running.
- Use push sticks for rip cuts and narrow cuts.
- Set the blade height just above the workpiece for a safer, cleaner cut.
- Do not adjust the blade or fences while the blade is turning.
- Press the emergency stop or unplug the machine before removing the blade, blade guard or throat plate, or adjusting the riving knife.
- Use the dust collector.
- For large pieces such as plywood sheets, use a circular saw instead or ask for help handling the workpiece.
- Do not cut any material unless you are confident it can be cut safely on this machine.
- **Do not use the table saw when you are alone in the building.**
- **Check reclaimed wood with a properly calibrated metal detector.** Hitting embedded metal can start a fire inside the saw and the dust collector.

Preventing kickback

Kickback happens when the workpiece is thrown forcefully back towards you. It can also pull your hand towards the blade, especially if you reach past or over the blade in the gap between the blade and the parallel (rip) fence.

- Only cut workpieces that are flat, straight and free of defects such as twists, warps or knots.
- Never cut freehand. Always guide the work with the parallel fence, mitre fence or mitre gauge.
- Don't cut wide workpieces against the parallel fence alone. Use the sliding table or a sled instead.
- Never use the parallel (rip) fence and the mitre (crosscut) fence together, unless the rip fence is pulled back so offcuts cannot get trapped between it and the blade.
- Keep the workpiece firmly against the fence or sled. Do not twist or rotate it during the cut.
- Avoid trapping narrow offcuts under a steeply tilted blade.
- Feed the workpiece steadily without forcing it. Sudden movements can cause binding and kickback.
- The riving knife is essential for preventing kickback. It may be lowered for some non-through cuts, but must never be removed.
- Use a push stick to move offcuts away from a running blade, especially thin strips between the blade and the parallel fence.
- Stay out of the kickback zone: never stand directly in line with the blade.

Before cutting

- Check the material with a correctly set metal detector. Hitting a screw or nail creates sparks that can instantly ignite the sawdust inside the machine.
- Check the blade is sharp and the blade guard is correctly fitted.
- Check your settings: fences locked in place and blade height correct.
- Clear loose materials and obstructions from around the saw.
- Make sure the workpiece can travel all the way through the cut, with nothing in its path and enough support behind the table.
- Keep a push stick within reach.
- Be aware of people nearby, and ask them to move out of the kickback zone if necessary.

While cutting

- Hold the workpiece firmly and feed it smoothly through the blade.
- Use a push stick or push block for narrow pieces and to move offcuts.
- Stay out of the kickback zone.

After use

- Wait until the blade has completely stopped before reaching near it.
- Clean up dust and offcuts.
- If you lowered the riving knife or removed the blade guard, put them back for the next user.

10. What we noticed in 2025–2026

These are the most common problems from the past year. You can help make next year's list shorter!

- **Damaged sander pads.** The hook-and-loop (Velcro) pads were ruined by worn-out sandpaper or by pressing the sander against sharp corners and edges.
- **Chipped chisels and plane irons,** from use on materials other than wood, on timber not checked for hidden metal, or for prying.
- **Damaged workbench surfaces** from careless tool use and dried glue and paint. A flat, clean bench is essential for accurate work.
- **Missing nuts, bolts and machine parts** that were not refitted after removal or worked loose through vibration. Check everything is tightened when using power tools and machines.
- **Ruined brushes, rollers and paint.** Wash brushes and rollers, and close paint tins properly. A brush or roller can be kept overnight in a sealed plastic bag, but not for weeks.
- **Tools not returned to their places.** The hardest to find are tools taken to studios without being recorded, or left at the bottom of a crate full of wires.
- **Unknown chemicals and hazardous waste** left behind by unidentified users.
- **Heavy dust on every surface,** especially after long sanding sessions.
- **Broken tools not reported.** Unless damage is caused by deliberate misuse or negligence, HIAP normally covers repairs or replacement, so please tell us.
- **Unlabelled projects** stored in the wrong places.
- **Old projects not dismantled or recycled,** and lumber returned to storage with nails, screws or staples still in it.
- **Overfilled rubbish bags** and bags containing long, sharp or heavy objects, which are difficult and unsafe to handle.

11. Contact

Get in touch with the HIAP Art Technician if you need to:

- report broken tools or other problems
- discuss a large or long-term project
- arrange storage beyond the designated shelf
- borrow a tool for longer than a few hours
- ask any other workshop-related question.

HIAP Art Technician: sampo@hiap.fi