

# Safety Facts: Drill Press\*

A drill press is a machine tool for drilling holes, set on a fixed stand.

## Key characteristics of a drill press

The fixed stand for the drill press may come in various lengths. Therefore, some drill presses are mounted on the floor and stand 5 to 6 feet tall, while others are mounted on a work bench and are 2 to 3 feet tall.



Drill presses are generally electrically powered and can be either hardwired into the electrical circuit or plugged into an electrical outlet. The switch to turn on/off the drill press are generally located for easy access by the operator.

The item to be drilled is placed on the drill press's table. Some drill press tables are adjustable for different angles. Depending on the item being drilled it may be held by the operator or placed inside a vice that is secured to the table.

The drill press has a set of pulleys which allows the operator to change the speed of the drill bit. A feed handle is rotated to raise and lower the drill bit into the object being drilled.

## Why is it important?

A drill press is a useful tool for drilling holes in objects that can be easily handled and placed on the drill press's table. The depth of the drill hole can be set by adjusting the feed stop rod.

Like any tool, if improperly used, it can lead to injuries, damage to material, etc. From 2017 to 2021 there were 1,398 WorkSafeBC claims from drills.

## Associated risks/hazards

These are a few associated hazards with using a drill press:

- Flying particles from the drilling process
- Entanglement of gloves, clothing, hair, etc. in the rotating chuck and drill bit
- High pitch noise caused by drilling action
- If the drill bit binds into the object being drilled, this may cause the object to move resulting in muscle strain, laceration, etc.

- Contact with electrical energy due to frayed electrical cords, potentially causing electrical shock
- Drill press can fall over if not mounted correctly

## Preventive next steps

- Be trained and authorized before using a drill press as per Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) Section 4.10
- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions before using a drill press
- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) depending on the hazards of the drill press, e.g., flying particles, noise, etc.
- Always store a face shield next to the drill press for easy access
- Never have loose clothing, hair, jewelry, etc. that can become entangled in the drill press
- Shut down the drill press and ensure the chuck has stopped rotating before trying to change the drill bit or adjust the belts
- De-energize and lock out any defective drill press or to prevent unauthorized use.



## For additional resources visit:

[Authorization](#) OHSR section 4.10

[When lockout required](#) OHSR section 10.3

[Using drill presses safely](#) WorkSafeBC

[Metalworking Machines – Drill Presses](#) CCOHS website

# Drill Press Toolbox Talk

Name of Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Employee feedback/questions/recommendations

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## Key Talking Points (Facilitator Notes)

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