

CHEAM WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION



Health & Safety Policy

Note: all references to 'Club' in this policy document means the 'Cheam Woodturners Association'

Club's and Members' Responsibilities

The Club is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment as part of its responsibilities to its members and others.

The Club will ensure that all reasonably practicable steps are taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its members and the protection of visitors and the public.

We all have a duty to take proper precautions and care in the activities we participate in not only to safeguard ourselves but also to visitors that come to any of the events that are organised.

It is considered essential in the interest of all members that they should observe and maintain the safety standards as laid down in this Policy. If you identify a problem at a Club meeting or event you should address the issue immediately. If you are unable to do so you must inform a committee member or the event organiser.

General Safety Considerations

Injuries caused by woodturning can mostly be put down to four things

- Not checking the wood can rotate freely before switching on the lathe.
- Ignorance of the correct procedure and safety measures.
- Taking unnecessary risks even when experienced.
- Lack of concentration or tiredness.

Please take note of the recommendations detailed in the General Safety Guidance below.

Identification of specific hazards

The identification of potential hazards and the controls put into force to minimise the risk are covered by carrying out a risk assessment.

Once a risk assessment has been carried out all members must be informed of their responsibilities to ensure the safety of everybody. Risk assessments have to be reviewed on a regular basis as circumstances change.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is a written record of a careful examination of activities carried out during club meetings and activities that could harm people. The following five steps need to be considered when assessing each risk.

- Identify a hazard
- Decide who could be harmed (for each hazard) and how this could occur



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- Evaluate the risk and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
- Record your findings
- Implement your recommendations and inform those affected
- Periodically review your assessment and revise if necessary

Once completed the risk assessment should be kept in the Club's records and reviewed at least annually, or when working practices change.

Fire Safety

The owners of the premises where the Club meets have the responsibility to comply with local fire regulations. However, the Club is responsible for making sure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that a fire isn't started and in the event of a fire that all persons present are able to exit the premises.

Club members should make sure they are familiar with:

- The location of all fire exits, that routes to them remain clear (if there are 2 then make sure that you can reach each exit by a separate route i.e. you don't have to go past one to get to another)
- The location of any fire detection system and break glass call points
- The location of fire extinguishers and their use

Manual handling

Ensure that those who move and manhandle lathes and heavy equipment are strong enough to do so. Do not let anyone strain themselves when handling heavy equipment. Provide lifting equipment and trolleys if there are potential hazards.

Electrical Safety - Portable Appliance Testing (PAT testing)

All the Club's electrical equipment fitted with a plug should be checked / tested on a regular basis.

All electrical equipment, whether owned by the Club, members or demonstrators must be checked visually before each period of use. As a minimum:

- Check that the flex is in good condition with no cuts or fraying.
- Check that cable clamp in the plug is clamping the outer sheathing of the flex.
- Check there is no sign of burning on the plug or cable.
- Check that the right fuse is fitted.
- Ensure that the switch on the appliance is functioning properly.

If any of the above is not right do not use the equipment.



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General Safety Guidance

A woodturning lathe can be a dangerous piece of workshop equipment in unskilled hands. With attention to the following basic guidelines and careful, methodical, and tidy workshop practice, the incidence of accidents can be drastically reduced. If in doubt about the safety of any procedure, please seek experienced, or better yet, qualified advice.

1. Safe, effective use of a wood lathe requires study and knowledge of procedures for using this tool. Read and thoroughly understand the label warnings on the lathe and in the owner's/operator's manual.
2. Always wear safety goggles or safety glasses that include side protectors and a full-face shield when needed. Wood dust can be harmful to your respiratory system. Use a dust mask or helmet and proper ventilation (dust collection system) in dusty work conditions. Wear hearing protection during extended periods of operation.
3. Tie back long hair, do not wear gloves, loose clothing, jewellery or any dangling objects that may catch in rotating parts or accessories.
4. Check the owner/operator's manual for proper speed recommendations. Use slower speeds for larger diameter or rough pieces and increased speed for smaller diameters and pieces that are balanced. If the lathe is shaking or vibrating, lower the speed. If the workpiece vibrates, always stop the machine to check the reason.
5. Make certain that the belt guard or cover is in place. Check that all clamping devices (locks), such as on the tailstock and toolrest are tight.
6. Rotate your workpiece by hand to make sure it clears the toolrest and bed before turning the lathe "on". Be sure that the workpiece turns freely and is firmly mounted. It is always safest to turn the lathe "off" before adjusting the tool rest.
7. Exercise caution when using stock with cracks, splits, checks, bark, knots, irregular shapes or protuberances.
8. Hold turning tools securely on the toolrest and hold the tool in a controlled but comfortable manner. Always use a slower speed when starting until the workpiece is balanced. This helps avoid the possibility of an unbalanced piece jumping out of the lathe and striking the operator.
9. When running a lathe in reverse, it is possible for a chuck or faceplate to unscrew unless it is securely tightened on the lathe spindle with a locking machine screw.
10. Know your capabilities and limits. An experienced woodturner may be capable of techniques and procedures not recommended for beginning turners.
11. When using a faceplate, be certain the workpiece is solidly mounted. When turning between centres, be certain the workpiece is secure.
12. Always remove the toolrest before sanding or polishing operations.



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13. Don't overreach, keep proper footing and balance at all times.
14. Keep lathe in good repair. Check for damaged parts, alignment, binding of moving parts and other conditions that may affect its operation.
15. Keep tools sharp and clean for better and safer performance. Wear eye protection when sharpening. Don't force a blunt tool. Don't use a tool for a purpose not intended. Keep tools out of reach of children. Do not be tempted to use modified tools, such as converted files.
16. Consider your work environment. Don't use lathe in damp or wet locations. Do not use in presence of flammable liquids or gases. Keep work area well lit.
17. Stay alert. Watch what you are doing, use common sense. Don't operate tool when you are tired or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
18. Guard against electric shock. Inspect electric cables regularly for damage. Avoid the use of extension cables. The power outlet supplying the lathe should, for safety, be fitted with RCD protection.
19. Remove chuck keys and adjusting spanners. Form a habit of checking for these before switching on the lathe.
20. Never leave the lathe running unattended. Turn power off. Don't leave the lathe until it comes to a complete stop.

Harmful Effects of some Timber Species

Members' attention is drawn to the Health and Safety Executive's Woodworking Sheet No 30 (Revision 1) on Toxic Woods which details the harmful effects that certain species of timbers may have on their users and the precautions that users should take to minimise harm. The precautions and timber species can be viewed by following the link <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wis30.pdf>.