

Tablesaw Safety

Jeff Langsner and the TCWT assume no responsibility for your woodworking safety. The rules and guidelines listed on these pages are only introductory informational reminders. This presentation is not a complete treatise on safety. You must read familiarize yourself with applicable safety rules, read and understand any safety manuals and operate machinery in a safe manner.



Danger!

- Annually, there are over 30,000 tablesaw accidents in the US.
- Of these, over 4,000 are amputations.
- Kickback is a common issue and can be dangerous. It is the cause of most amputations.

Safety Rules

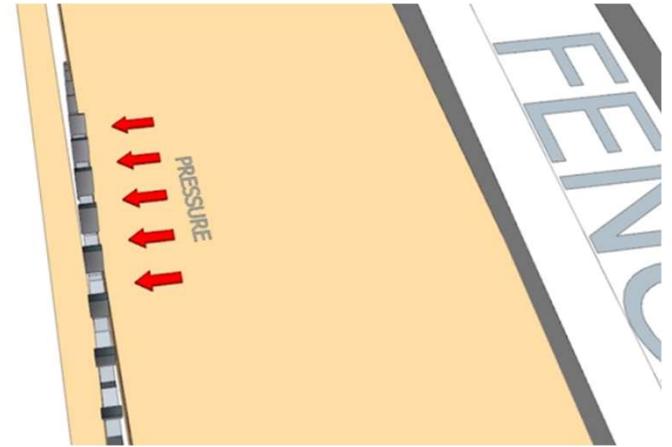
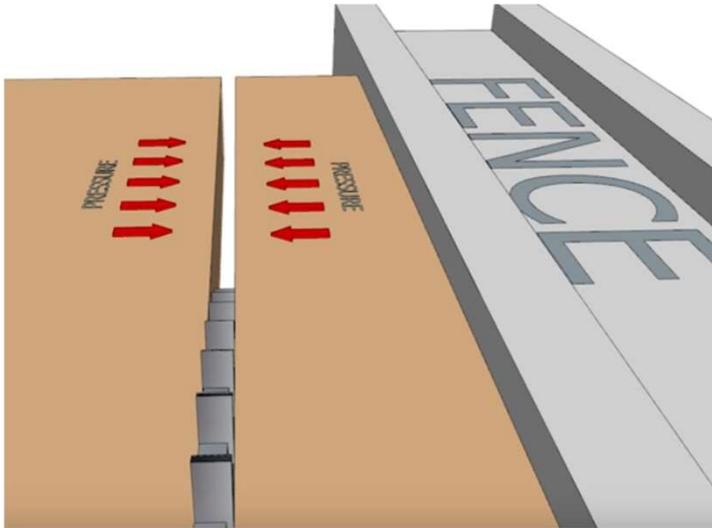
- Make sure your tablesaw is set up properly including aligning the blade with fence. Use a sharp blade.
- Watch for kickback. Always use a blade guard, splitter or riving knife
- Don't use the fence to measure cutting short segments from a long piece
- Wear safety glasses.
- Take your time. Don't force the workpiece.
- Use a pushstick when appropriate
- Don't stand directly in front of the blade
- Set the blade height just a bit higher than the workpiece
- Don't reach over or across the blade
- Don't wear gloves, baggy clothing or "dangles."
- Keep the area around your feet clear of slipping and tripping hazards.

The Blade Guard

- It keeps your hand away from the blade
- It keeps debris from flying up from the saw blade.
- Has a splitter and sometimes anti-kickback pawls to help prevent kickback.



Causes of Kickback



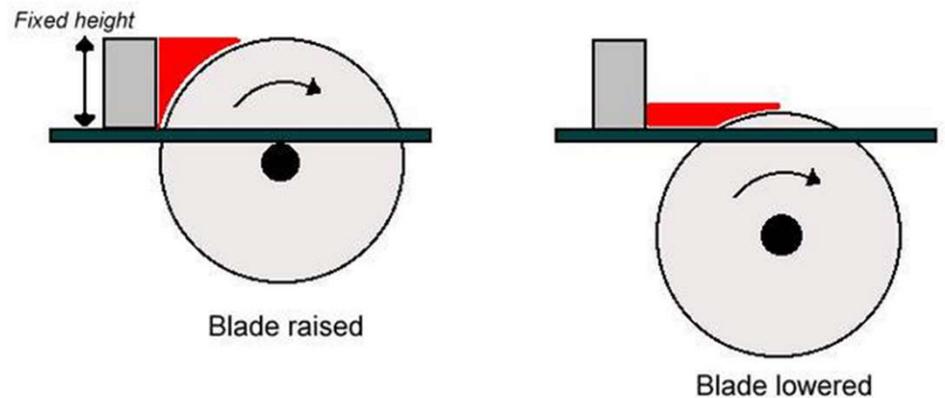
When the workpiece between the blade and fence contacts the body of the blade, it can be hurled towards you at high speed. It can also drag your hand into the blade. This is a major cause of amputations on a table saw.

Kickback Prevention

A splitter does not raise and lower with the blade, so as you lower the blade, the gap between the blade and splitter increases. This allows for a greater chance of kickback because the workpiece can pinch the back of the blade, or a short workpiece or offcut can skew around the back of the blade and make contact.

Danger zone 

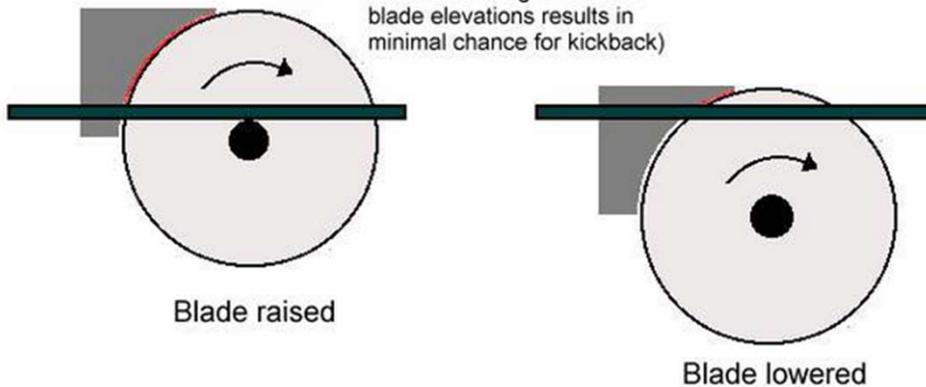
Conventional Tablesaw Splitter



Danger zone 

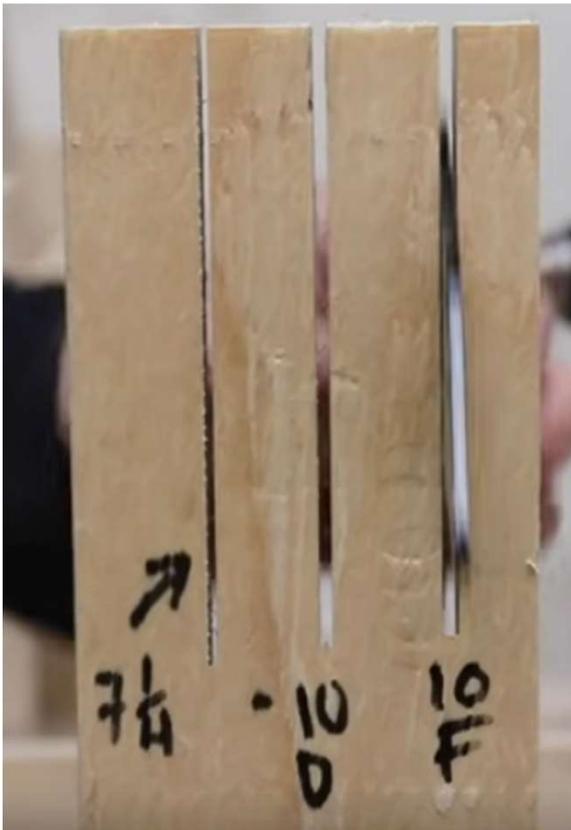
"Euro-Style Riving Knife"

(minimal distance maintained between blade and riving knife at all blade elevations results in minimal chance for kickback)



A riving knife goes up and down with the blade, so it's always the same distance from the back of the blade.

Thin vs Std Kerf Blades



Coordinate the riving knife / splitter with the blade body width and/or blade kerf.