

Hand and Power Tools

PUWER duties, inspection, guarding and safe use · covers everything from a chisel to a disc cutter

Scope and limitations — read before use

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1. What PUWER requires for every tool on site

Regulation	Requirement	In practice
Reg 4	Suitable for the purpose and the conditions	Right tool for the job. No improvising, no using a grinder as a cutter without the correct guard and disc.
Reg 5	Maintained in efficient working order and good repair	A maintenance regime, and a log for anything significant.
Reg 6	Inspected where safety depends on installation or conditions	Pre-use checks by the user, plus formal periodic inspection recorded.
Reg 8 & 9	Information, instruction and adequate TRAINING	Anyone using a tool must be trained on it. This is the same duty that applies to machine operators.
Reg 11	Guarding of dangerous parts	Guards fitted, adjusted and never removed or defeated.
Reg 12	Protection against specified hazards	Ejected particles, hot surfaces, disintegration of rotating parts.
Reg 14–18	Controls and control systems	Start, stop and emergency stop working correctly. No taped-on triggers.

2. Pre-use check — any powered hand tool

Check	OK	Defect
Casing not cracked or damaged		
Cable and plug sound, no tape repairs, no exposed conductors		
Correct voltage for site (110V CTE on construction sites)		
Guard fitted, correct type, adjusted and secure		

Disc, blade or bit correct type, undamaged, within date where marked		
Disc speed rating equal to or greater than the tool speed		
Trigger and dead-man switch work correctly and return		
No taped, tied or jammed controls		
Extraction or water suppression fitted where required		
Handles secure, anti-vibration mounts intact		
PAT or inspection label in date		

3. Abrasive wheels and cutting discs

Abrasive wheels have their own competence requirement — see the PHW Abrasive Wheels VQ pack. The essentials:

- Only trained and appointed people mount abrasive wheels.
- Check the wheel is the correct type and its maximum speed is at least the spindle speed of the machine.
- Inspect for damage before fitting; ring test vitrified wheels.
- Use the correct flanges and blotters, do not overtighten.
- Never use a cutting disc for grinding, or a grinding disc for cutting.
- Guard in place and positioned between the wheel and the operator.
- Allow a new wheel to run up to speed with nobody in the plane of the wheel.
- Eye protection to the correct impact rating, plus dust control (CON-02).

4. Tool register and inspection record

Tool and ID	Type	Voltage	Issued to	Last inspection	Next due	PAT date	Condition

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5. Defect and quarantine record

Date	Tool ID	Defect found	Reported by	Taken out of use? Y/N	Repaired / scrapped	Back in service (date)

Assessed by	Signature	Date	Review date