

PAPER CUTTERS AND DISTRICT RISK

We all understand and appreciate the convenience of paper cutters. While paper cutters are certainly useful, they can and have caused serious injury, including chopping off the tip of a finger. When choosing, and using paper cutters, it is important to consider quality and safety. This safety spotlight shines a light on some essential safety features of paper cutters and provides best practices for use.

Blade Guards

The blade guard is the most important safety feature. While guards may be obtrusive, blade guards prevent users from getting their fingers near the blade on either side of the machine. These guards should never be removed.



Sliding paper cutter

Blade Latches

The blade latch locks the blade when it is not in use. The purpose of the blade latch is to keep the blade secured so that no one accidentally or impulsively grabs, strokes, slides, or touches the blade. Guards and latches are features of both sliding and guillotine paper cutters.

Tension Springs

Guillotine type units should be equipped with tension springs. The tension spring is attached to the back of the blade and is engineered to prevent the blade from dropping when the handle is released. Guillotine cutters should never be used without this spring. If a guillotine cutter has no tension spring, remove it from use until the tension spring can be replaced, or replace the paper cutter.



Guillotine paper cutter

Best Practices for Preventing Injuries

- ✓ Allow use only by adults or supervised minor students.
- ✓ Work slowly and carefully only while the paper cutter is on a flat, stable surface.
- ✓ Ensure the finger guard is in place before use, and keep your fingers behind the guard.
- ✓ Maintain a firm grip on the blade handle.
- ✓ Cut only a few sheets of papers at a time, always following the capacity rating.
- ✓ Keep the blade in the closed and locked position when not in use.
- ✓ Tighten the fittings of the blade and safety guard as needed.
- ✓ Replace the cutter if the blade does not have a mechanism to prevent it from dropping automatically when it is unlocked and in the up position for use.
- ✓ Do not carry the cutter by holding onto the blade or cutting arm.
- ✓ Clean around the blade carefully. Cut resistant gloves may be needed.