



Safe Borrowing Checklist

Make sure you can answer **yes** to all three questions every time you borrow items for a safe lending experience.

Can I use this item safely?

Making a fair assessment of your own ability to use an item is very important. Some items require a certain set of skills to use them safely, and many items require you to read the instruction manual carefully and follow all safety guidelines before use. Please be honest with yourself about your abilities and if in doubt, ask a volunteer for more information.

Is this item in good repair?

While our volunteer librarians and fixers do their utmost to ensure our catalogue is well maintained, it is ultimately up to the member to decide if the item is safe to use. Take the time to check over what you are borrowing before it leaves the shed, and before and after you use it. Please let us know if you find any faults so we can assess the item more closely.

Do I have the correct safety equipment?

Many tools and some sports gear require the user to wear protection or safety equipment. While Gold Coast Tool Library does have a limited range of complimentary safety equipment, we do not have the capacity to provide the safety equipment needed for every item in the shed. Please read the instructions relevant to each item to ascertain what safety equipment is needed before borrowing, and whether you will need to source it from somewhere else.

Safe Use of Electrical Items

What are electrical risks?

Electrical risks are risks of death, shock or other injury caused directly or indirectly by electricity. The most common electrical risks and causes of injury are:

- electric shock causing injury or death. The electric shock may be received by direct or indirect contact, tracking through or across a medium, or by arcing. For example, electric shock may result from indirect contact where a conductive part that is not normally energised (such as a metal toaster body or a fence) becomes energised due to a fault
- fire (such as fire resulting from an electrical fault), arcing or explosion causing burns. These injuries are often suffered because arcing or explosion or both occur when high fault currents are present
- electric shock from 'step-and-touch' potentials, and
- toxic gases causing illness or death. Burning and arcing associated with electrical equipment may release various gases and contaminants.

Even the briefest contact with electricity at 50 volts for alternating current AC or 120 volts for direct current DC can have serious consequences for a person's health and safety. High voltage shocks (involving more than 1000 V AC or 1500 V DC) can cause contact burns and damage to internal organs.

Electric shocks may also lead to other injuries, including falls from ladders, scaffolds, or other elevated work platforms. Other injuries or illnesses may include muscle spasms, palpitations, nausea, vomiting, collapse, and unconsciousness.

Workers using electricity may not be the only ones at risk—faulty electrical equipment and poor electrical installations can lead to fires that may also cause death or injury to others.

Usage

- Always visually inspect the item before use, checking for any faults or breakages, especially along the plug head and cord and where the cord attaches to the appliance. Do not use the item if you see:
 - Obvious damage, defects or modifications to the equipment or its accessories, connectors, plugs or cords, including exposed inner cores including coloured wires, or the use of banding insulation tape.
 - Broken or damaged operating controls
 - Discoloration that may indicate exposure to excessive heat, chemicals, or moisture
- Turn off the power at the wall before plugging and unplugging appliances.
- Never put metal utensils inside appliances with exposed metal, e.g., toasters.
- Be extra careful when using electrical appliances attached to power outlets near kitchen or bathroom sinks, tubs, swimming pools, and other wet areas.
- Do not use any appliance that has been immersed in water.

- Keep the cord out of your path or work area so it is not damaged. We understand that accidental damage to cords can happen, so if it does, please notify us so we can remove the item from the inventory for repair.
- Keep cords and electrical equipment away from any sharp edges that can catch or cut it. For example, metal ladders, garage workbenches, metal roofs or garden fences.
- Limit the number of appliances plugged into one outlet to avoid overloading a circuit.
- If an appliance blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker, or has given you a shock, turn off the power at the wall and disconnect it immediately.

Storage

- Avoid wrapping electrical cords tightly around appliances.
- Always ensure electrical cords do not lie on top of a stove.
- Keep cords away from the edge of counters where children or pets can reach them.
- Keep cords away from areas prone to falls, especially near baths or sinks.
- Do not place appliances near combustible materials.

Maintenance

- Clean the electrical appliance immediately after use to avoid build-up of dust and spilled or burnt foods
- Do not use detergents or spray insecticides on appliances as these might cause cracking and result in an electrical hazard.
- Never attempt to fix an appliance by yourself.

Appliances and tools used in outdoor or other damp situations

Take special precautions when you use electrical appliances outdoors or in a damp environment. Electrical equipment and appliances used outside include electric lawn mowers, line trimmers (weed eaters), pressure washers, hedgers, and power tools.

- NEVER use any damaged appliances or equipment with damaged leads.
- NEVER use them in rainy or wet conditions.
- ALWAYS use a residual current device (RCD) or an isolating transformer. These protect you from a fatal electric shock by cutting the current if there is an electrical problem.
- Keep children and pets a safe distance away when you operate electrical equipment.
- Wear strong protective footwear and the correct PPE when working with electrical appliances or tools.

Ladders and Overhead Power Lines

- **Always** check where overhead power lines are located before using a metal ladder and avoid contact. Anyone touching a ladder when it is touching a power line could receive a fatal shock.
- Wind, uneven ground, or reaching to the side while on a ladder could cause it to shift position and come into contact with an overhead power line – **keep ladders away from power lines.**