

Factories (Woodworking Machinery) Regulations, 1949¹

In exercise of the powers vested in him by section 3 of the Factories Ordinance (Chapter 169), His Excellency the Governor-in-Council has been pleased to make the following Regulations.

1. These regulations may be cited as the Factories (Woodworking Machinery) Regulations, 1949.

2. In these Regulations -

"woodworking machine" means a circular saw, plain hand saw, planing machine, vertical spindle moulding machine or chain mortising machine operating on wood;

"circular saw" means a circular saw working in a bench (including a rack bench) for the purpose of ripping, deep-cutting or cross-cutting, and includes a circular knife for cutting cork but does not include a swing saw or other saw which is moved towards the wood;

"plain band saw" means a band saw, other than a log saw or band re-sawing machine, the cutting portion of which runs in a vertical direction;

"planing machine" includes a machine for overhand planing or for thicknessing or for both operations.

3. (i) These Regulations shall come into force on a date to be fixed by a Notice in the Malta Government Gazette consistently with the provisions of section 3 of the Factories Ordinance (Chapter 169);

(ii) A copy of these Regulations in English and Maltese shall be posted up in a conspicuous place in any factory where any woodworking machine is used.

4. (i) Every woodworking machine shall be provided with an efficient stopping and starting appliance, and the control of this appliance shall be in such a position as to be readily and conveniently operated by the person in charge of the machine.

(ii) All cutting tools on wood working machines shall be kept in sharp condition.

(iii) If the Director of Labour is satisfied in respect of any factory to which these Regulations apply that, owing to the special conditions of the work or otherwise, any requirements of the Regulations can be suspended or relaxed without danger to the persons employed therein he may by certificate in writing authorise such suspension or relaxation for such period and on such

¹ This is the text of the Factories (Woodworking Machinery) Regulations, 1949, which are being republished in this format for the convenience of readers and are not to be regarded as the official text thereof. The text includes all amendments to date.

conditions as he may think fit. Any such certificate may be revoked at any time.

5. Sufficient clear and unobstructed space shall be maintained at every woodworking machine while in motion to enable the work to be carried on without unnecessary risk.
6. The floor surrounding every woodworking machine shall be maintained in good and level condition, and as far as practicable free from chips or other loose material, and shall not be allowed to become slippery.
7. Where the natural light at a woodworking machine is inadequate and can be improved by the provision of additional or better windows not involving serious structural alteration, or by whitening the walls or ceilings of the factory or by any other reasonable means, the occupier shall take steps as aforesaid to improve the natural light at the said machine.
8. The means of artificial lighting for every woodworking machine shall be adequate, and shall be so placed or shaded as to prevent direct rays of light from impinging on the eyes of the operator while he is operating such machine.
9. (i) Every person while being trained to work a woodworking machine shall be fully and carefully instructed as to the dangers arising in connection with such machine and the precautions to be observed;

(ii) No person shall be employed at a woodworking machine unless he has been sufficiently trained to work that class of machine or unless he works under the adequate supervision of a person who has a thorough knowledge of the working of the machine.
10. Every circular saw shall be fenced as follows:-
 - (a) The part of the saw below the bench table shall be protected by two plates of metal or other suitable material, one on each side of the saw; such plates shall not be more than six inches apart, and shall extend from the axis of the saw outwards to a distance of not less than two inches beyond the teeth of the saw. Metal plates, shall be of a thickness adequate in relation to the machine in use;
 - (b) Behind and in a direct line with the saw there shall be a riving knife, which shall have a smooth surface, shall be strong, rigid, and easily adjustable, and shall also conform to the following conditions:-
 - (i) The edge of the knife nearer the saw shall form an arc of a circle having a radius not exceeding the radius of the largest saw used on the bench;
 - (ii) The knife shall be maintained as close as practicable to the saw, having regard to the nature of the work being done at the time, and at the level of the bench table the distance between the front edge of the knife and teeth of the saw shall not exceed half an inch;

- (iii) For a saw of a diameter of less than 24 inches, the knife shall extend upwards from the bench table to within one inch of the top of the saw, and for a saw of a diameter of 24 inches or over shall extend upwards from the bench table to a height of at least nine inches;
 - (c) The top of the saw shall be covered by a strong and easily adjustable guard, with a flange at the side of the saw farthest from the fence, i.e. the vertical guide for the timber. The guard shall be kept so adjusted that the said flange shall extend below the roots of the teeth of the saw. The guard shall extend from the top of the riving knife to a point as low as practicable at the cutting edge of the saw.
11. A suitable push-stick shall be kept available for use at the bench of every circular saw which is fed by hand, to enable the work to be carried on without unnecessary risk.
 12. The revolving shaft holding the blade of a circular saw shall be so maintained as to prevent undue play on the bearings.
 13. The surface of the blades of a circular saw shall be smooth and free from cracks and bulges.
 14. Every plain band saw shall be guarded as follows:-
 - (a) both sides of the bottom pulley shall be completely encased by sheet metal or other suitable material;
 - (b) the front of the top pulley shall be covered with sheet metal or other suitable material;
 - (c) all portions of the blade shall be enclosed or otherwise securely guarded, except the portion of the blade between the bench table and the top guide.
 15. No planing machine, which is not mechanically fed, shall be used for overhand planing unless it is fitted with a cylindrical cutter block.
 16. Every planing machine used for overhand planing shall be provided with a "bridge" guard capable of covering the full length and breadth of the cutting slot in the bench, and so constructed as to be easily adjusted both in a vertical and horizontal direction.
 17. The feed roller of every planing machine used for thicknessing, except the combined machine for overhand planing and thicknessing, shall be provided with an efficient guard.
 18. The cutter of every vertical spindle moulding machine shall when practicable be provided with the most efficient guard having regard to the nature of the work which is being performed.
 19. For such work as cannot be performed with an efficient guard for the cutter, the wood being moulded at a vertical spindle moulding machine shall, if practicable

be held in a jig or holder of such construction as to reduce as far as possible the risk of accident to the worker.

20. A suitable "spike" or push-stick shall be kept available for use at the bench of every vertical spindle moulding machine.
21. The chain of every mortising machine shall be provided with a guard which shall enclose the cutters as far as practicable.
22. The guards and other appliances required by these Regulations shall be maintained in an efficient state and shall be constantly kept in position while the machinery is in motion, except when, owing to the nature of the work being done, the use of the guards or appliances is rendered impracticable. The guards shall be so adjusted as to enable the work to be carried on without unnecessary risk.
23. Regulations 10, 14, 16 and 17 shall not apply to any woodworking machine in respect of which it can be shown that other safeguards are provided and maintained which render the machine equally safe as it would be if guarded in the manner prescribed by those Regulations.
24. Every person employed on a woodworking machine shall -
 - (a) use and maintain in proper adjustment the guards provided in accordance with these Regulations;
 - (b) use the "spikes" or push-sticks and holders provided in compliance with regulations 11, 19 and 20; except when, owing to the nature of the work being done, the use of the guards or appliances is rendered impracticable.