

Snow blower safety tips

Introduction:

Most injuries associated with snow blowers involve injuries to the hand or finger, including amputation. The typical cause: Users tried to clear a clogged auger or discharge chute with their hands.

No matter what kind of snow blower you're using, here are a few basic steps to follow to help keep you and others from being injured.

Stay safe when operating a snow blower.

- Turn off the engine on a gas machine or unplug the motor on an electric model before clearing a clog at the auger or discharge chute. Then use the clearing tool or stick, never hands or feet, to remove the clog. Always assume that when the engine is running, the auger is spinning.
- Protect yourself from carbon-monoxide poisoning by starting and running gasoline-powered snow blowers outside, rather than in the garage or shed.
- Don't wear loose pants, jackets, or scarves, which can get tangled in a snow blower's moving parts.
- Wear sturdy footwear with good traction. Exercise caution when operating on slopes or gravelly areas.
- Wear ear plugs or other hearing protection, especially with gas-powered models.

- Thoroughly mix fuel to the proper gas/oil ratio. Add fuel to the machine only when the engine is off and cooled. Use an approved fuel container to hold the gasoline.
- For electric models, use an outdoor extension cord and an outlet with ground-fault-circuit-interrupting protection. Then be sure to keep the cord safely away from the spinning auger while working.
- Never direct the discharge chute toward people or areas where damage can occur. The blower can discharge hard objects much further than it can discharge snow.

Conclusion:

Following these tips will help keep you safe. Clearing clogs is the number one cause of snow-blower-related injuries. Take special care when clearing clogs by ALWAYS making sure the machine is off and NEVER use your hands or feet to clear a clog. Use a clearing tool or stick instead.

Let's discuss what we can do here to avoid and prevent snow blower injuries.