How to avoid hand/knife Injuries.

**Injuries often happen when the knife slips during cutting or trimming. In most cases the blade comes into contact with the other hand. Injuries can occur to other parts of the body including the knife hand itself.**

**Step 1 Eliminate the need to use a knife from all or part of the task.**

Can you use scissors?

**Step 2 use the right knife:**

We have three types of knife here at the Guildhall:

The largest are our Poly carving knives which are freshly sharpened kitchen knives

Next are Stanley Knives

The smallest are Scalpels.

Choose the right sized blade for the task you are doing.

Poly carving knives need to be sharpened on a sharpening stone, a grindstone or a shop bought knife sharpener. You should sharpen them regularly. It’s best to start a new job with a newly sharpened knife. If you haven’t been shown how to sharpen a knife ask for a demonstration.

Stanley knife blades need replacing frequently, you can usually tell by eyeballing if the knife is sharp and pointy, if it isn’t then replace the blade. If you haven’t been shown how to do this, ask for a demonstration.

The same goes for scalpels; use a pair of pliers to remove the old blade and wear goggles in case you shatter the blade you’re removing. Again, If you haven’t been show how ask for a demonstration.

New Stanley and scalpel blades are in the top right hand shelf of the green cupboard.

Used blades go in the sharps jar next to the sink.

You may have a multitool or a swiss army knife. We would advise you not to use these knives for propmaking jobs, don’t make do with one of those, go find the right tool.

**Do’s**

Wear Steelies, not ballet pumps when using knives.

When passing a knife to someone put it down on a clean work surface and let them pick it up.

Make sure the object you are cutting is on a bench and will not slide or twist when you apply the knife.

Always cut away from your body and away from your other hand.

Ensure that you are far enough away from other students that you can’t be bumped or shoved into them accidentally

**Don’ts**

Don’t put a knife in your pocket.

Don’t walk through the workshop carrying a knife. If you must carry it a small distance keep it to your side with the point down and blade away from you.

Don’t continue to use the knife if you are distracted, or interrupted by someone else talking to you, or any other distractions.

Don’t leave knives near the edges of tables.

Don’t cross your arms to hold the object you are cutting steady.

Don’t put anything down on top of a knife. If it’s hidden it is more likely to be knocked off the table.

Don’t use the knife to pry twist or turn other objects.

Don’t try and catch a falling knife.

Don’t stab a knife into the work surface when you finish, as your hand may slip down the blade.