

Vertical bandsaw safe operating procedure

Complete and approve before use

Complete this template for the machine and work listed below. A competent person appointed by the site must check it against the manufacturer's instructions, the risk assessment and applicable legal requirements. Do not use it as an operating procedure until it is complete and approved.

Document control

Site	Department
[Enter here]	[Enter here]
Machine make and model	Asset ID and location
[Enter here]	[Enter here]
Approved materials and cuts	
[Enter here]	
Procedure owner	Site document number
[Enter here]	[Enter here]
Revision and effective date	Review due
[Enter here]	[Enter here]
Technical reviewer and date	
[Enter here]	
Approved by and signature and date	
[Enter here]	

Attach these documents

- ☐ Current machine manual
- ☐ Task risk assessment
- ☐ Machine-specific lockout/tagout (LOTO) procedure
- ☐ Operator authorization and training record
- ☐ Site emergency instructions

Who and what this procedure covers

This procedure covers only the machine, materials and cuts listed above. Operators must be trained and authorized. Clearing jams, changing blades, cleaning and maintenance require authorization for those tasks and must follow the machine's lockout/tagout procedure. A stop button or blade-stopping system does not isolate the machine from its energy sources.

Scope and responsibilities

This procedure applies only to the vertical bandsaw, materials and tasks identified above. It does not authorize unlisted cuts, modifications or maintenance. Operators must be trained, assessed and authorized for the machine and task. Authorization to operate does not automatically authorize blade changes, isolation, jam clearing or servicing.

Operators complete the required checks, use the approved method and stop if the work is unsafe or the instructions are unclear. Supervisors ensure that suitable equipment, training and controls are available. Only people authorized under the site's energy-control program may perform work requiring isolation. The procedure owner reviews this document after changes, incidents or signs that the procedure is not working.

Operator authorization requirements

Personnel authorized for isolation and servicing

Person to contact for defects or unclear instructions

Machine and task controls

Identify hazards for the actual job, including blade contact, workpiece movement, entanglement, sharp edges, stored energy and manual handling. Assess noise, airborne contaminants, hot material, coolant, sanitation and other exposures where relevant. Specify engineering controls and safe work methods before relying on PPE.

Permitted workpiece dimensions, weight and condition

Approved blade specification, speed and feed method

Required guards, fixtures, push tools and supports

Upper guard and guide setting method

Minimum hand clearance or exclusion zone and how it is maintained

Extraction, coolant or other process controls

Additional controls for the material and environment

Clothing and personal protective equipment

Secure hair and clothing and remove jewelry or other items that could catch. Specify eye protection and any additional face protection, hearing protection, footwear and respiratory protection from the task assessment. A face shield, when required, does not replace suitable primary eye protection. Respirator use must follow the site's respiratory protection program.

Assess gloves separately for feeding, handling stock, handling an isolated blade and cleaning. The glove requirements must agree with the machine manual and approved method. Do not treat snug fit or a cut-resistance rating as proof that a glove is safe near moving machinery. Where a safety system requires approved detectable gloves or other PPE, identify the exact specification and its inspection and replacement criteria. Do not operate if instructions conflict.

PPE for normal operation

Glove rule for feeding and its basis

PPE for isolated blade handling and cleaning

Required safety-system PPE and checks, if fitted

Supporting document references

Record the identifier and current revision for each document. Keep these documents with the approved procedure or record where operators can find them.

Machine manual and revision

Task risk assessment and revision

Lockout/tagout procedure and revision

Operator authorization and training record

Site emergency instructions and revision

Before starting

1. Confirm that the job is permitted and the operator is authorized. Read the current procedure and resolve uncertainties with the responsible person.
2. Check access, lighting, footing and space for the full movement of the workpiece. Arrange any handling assistance and supports needed for the work.
3. With the machine stopped, complete the required inspection. Use the approved lockout/tagout procedure whenever the inspection exposes a person to hazardous energy or movement. Do not reach into the cutting zone to inspect a blade that could move.
4. Check the blade condition and suitability using the manual's method. Confirm that required guards and enclosures are fitted and secure, feed aids are available, and no tools or loose items remain in the operating area.
5. Set the upper guard and guide using the manufacturer's stopped-machine adjustment method and isolation requirements. Minimize exposed blade for the cut without creating another hazard.
6. Carry out the manufacturer's specified controlled tests of stops, interlocks and any blade-stopping system. Keep everyone clear and use prescribed test aids. Never use a body part to trigger or test a safety device.
7. If a check fails, do not start production. Follow the out-of-service process and report the defect. Only resume after correction and authorization.

Machine-specific inspection items and acceptance criteria

[complete]

Safety-device test method, frequency and acceptance criteria

[complete or reference controlled instruction]

Record required for pre-start checks

[complete]

Starting and cutting

1. Confirm that people are clear and controls are accessible. Start the machine using the exact sequence below; allow only the operating condition specified by the manual before feeding.
2. Use the approved fixture, push tool, carriage or other feed method. Support the workpiece against unwanted movement. Keep hands outside the defined exclusion zone and out of the cutting path throughout the cut, including at breakthrough.
3. Feed at the specified rate. Do not force a cut, twist a trapped blade or attempt a workpiece that cannot be controlled with the approved setup. Stop for binding, unusual noise, vibration, damaged stock or unexpected movement.
4. Stop before measuring, repositioning that requires entry into the danger zone, removing offcuts or withdrawing a trapped workpiece. Wait for all movement to stop. Follow the lockout/tagout procedure before freeing trapped material or any task that exposes a person to hazardous movement.
5. Never defeat a guard, interlock, detection system or stop. Do not distract another operator. Stop work when attention, visibility, footing or the approved method cannot be maintained.

Exact start sequence and operating checks

[complete]

Approved cut sequence and feed aids for each permitted task

[complete; attach diagrams if helpful]

Normal shutdown sequence

[complete]

Jams blade changes and cleaning

Stop and report the problem. Keep people away from the hazard. Only people authorized for the task may work on the machine. They must follow its lockout/tagout procedure. Emergency stops, control switches, safety-system activation and apparent standstill are not substitutes for isolation of all hazardous energy.

The referenced procedure must identify every energy source and isolation point, stored-energy hazards, verification methods and restart controls. It must address group work or shift changes where applicable. The summary below is a reminder, not a replacement for that procedure.

1. Notify affected people and shut the machine down by the approved method.
2. Isolate all hazardous energy sources and apply personal locks and tags as required by the site's lockout/tagout (LOTO) procedure. A tag alone does not provide the physical restraint of a lock; use tagout only where the applicable requirements and approved procedure permit it.
3. Release, restrain or otherwise control hazardous stored energy, including any potential for reaccumulation.
4. Verify effective isolation by the prescribed method before work begins. Only appropriately qualified people may perform electrical testing. Return controls to the safe position after verification.
5. Perform the task using approved tools and PPE. Account for sharp stationary blades, released blade tension, hot parts, chemicals, gravity and handling hazards as applicable. Maintain isolation for the duration of exposure.
6. Before restoring energy, inspect the work area, remove tools and loose items, refit guards and confirm that everyone is safely positioned. Remove locks only under the site's authorized removal procedure, notify affected people and carry out a controlled restart and required checks.

Isolation points and procedure location

[complete; attach verified machine-specific instruction]

Jam-clearing and blade-change instructions

[complete or reference]

Cleaning method, approved chemicals and sanitation controls

[complete or reference]

Maintenance permissions and release-to-service requirements

[complete]

Stopping work and emergencies

For a defect or near-miss, stop operation, prevent unauthorized restart under the site's process and notify the responsible person. Record the event and the corrective action. Do not use the machine again until it is released for service.

For an injury or entrapment, raise the alarm and summon emergency assistance immediately. If it is safe to do so, use the emergency stop. Keep yourself and others clear of moving or trapped parts; do not attempt an improvised release. Follow the emergency plan and the direction of trained responders. First aid must be provided within the responder's training and only where it is safe to approach. Do not delay calling for help while arranging isolation.

The person responsible for incident reporting must check which legal reporting and recordkeeping duties apply, including deadlines. This template does not establish whether an incident is reportable.

Emergency number and site location to give responders

Alarm method and first-aid arrangements

Emergency isolation and rescue arrangements

Incident reporting contact and record location

Training review and document control

Before authorizing an operator, check that they can carry out the permitted tasks safely on this machine. Check their use of guards, PPE, pre-start checks and feed aids, and that they know when to stop, which tasks require isolation and what to do in an emergency. A quiz or signature alone does not establish competence. Record any restrictions and arrange reassessment when equipment, work or operator performance changes.

Training assessor and record reference

Reassessment triggers and review interval

Revision history

Template basis and use notice

Source template: Guardian, GB018, edition 18 September 2026. The source edition date is not the site's approval date. Current source: guardianbandsaw.com/bandsaw-sop-template.

This general template does not replace the manufacturer's instructions, a machine-specific assessment, training or applicable law. It is not a certification of safety or compliance. Site management is responsible for adapting, approving and maintaining its operating procedure. Nothing in this notice excludes liability that cannot lawfully be excluded.

Reference framework: OSHA 29 CFR 1910.212 (general machine guarding), 1910.213 (woodworking machinery only), 1910.147 (hazardous energy control) and 1910.132 (PPE). These US provisions are not a statement of requirements in other jurisdictions. Check the rules that apply to the site.