

Toolbox Talk

Brick Saws

A brick saw (also known as a Stihl saw/cut off saw) is an extremely useful tool on a restoration site, enabling you to cut reinforcing bar to size or to quickly cut bricks with minimal wastage—but **in inexperienced hands they can be dangerous!**



Safety Considerations:

There are a number of general safety considerations to follow when using brick saws:

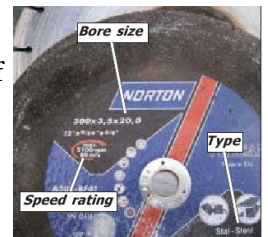
- Saws **must** only be used by experienced personnel who have been **trained in their use** and in the changing of discs.
- Make sure the correct disc is fitted for the job. Stone and steel discs have different properties.
- Make sure the water system for dust suppression is fitted, filled with water and is in working order.
- Goggles are mandatory for the user, a full face visor is preferable. **When cutting stone, concrete or brick, a FFP3 dust mask must be worn.**
- Keep other workers and the public out of range of flying debris and dust.
- Take special care not to drop portable grinding tools as the wheel could be damaged and break when in use.
- **Never** force a grinding machine against the work, as dangerous flat spots could develop on the wheel.
- **Personal Protective Equipment—Cutting Bricks;** Minimum Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for cutting bricks and concrete is steel toe capped boots, gloves, ear defenders, visor/goggles and a dust mask rated to FFP3. **Water spray should always be used when cutting bricks as it cuts down on the nuisance of dust for everyone on site.**
- **Personal Protective Equipment—Cutting Metal;** Minimum PPE is steel toe capped boots, full length trousers, long sleeves, gloves, ear defenders and visor/goggles.
- Limit the amount of time spent using the brick saw because the vibration of the brick saw could cause Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS).



Types of Blades:

General Notes; The blade must be the right size for the saw, have a speed rating higher than the saw and the fixing hole must be the right size to snugly fit the drive spindle.

Abrasive Blade; There are 2 types of blade, one for cutting metal and one for stone/brick. Abrasive blades can be fitted to the saw either way around, but are dangerous to use as the blade can crack or break if they get caught while cutting. Carefully inspect blades before use for cracks or flat spots.



Diamond Blade: Made out of metal and has a diamond dust abrasive welded to the edge. Blade is direction sensitive and must be fitted the right way round. Water spray should always be when cutting brick and stone to keep dust down.



Use & Maintenance:

- ✓ Set up away from people and flammable materials.
- ✓ Check fuel before use—brick saws generally use 2 stroke petrol. Check manufacturers instructions for mix of oil to petrol.
- ✓ Before starting machine ensure you have a firm footing and guards are fitted correctly.
- ✓ Allow machine to run up to full speed before use.
- ✓ Clean the saw after use.
- ✓ Air filters must be cleared out regularly.
- ✓ Grinding wheels may only be fitted by competent persons.