

Marc Adam's Rules for using the Jointer

1. Wear protective personal safety gear; remember your eyes, ears and lungs. Make sure all loose clothing is secured and away from any action that could pull it in – no gloves. Always stay alert.
2. Keep the guards in place and in working order. Make sure there are no chips or cut-offs that could affect the performance of the guard.
3. Use proper blades that are sharp and well maintained. Make sure that all moving parts on the fence, infeed table and outfeed table are free and clear. Maintain a regular maintenance schedule and read the important user information in the owner's manual.
4. Always follow the 12" and 3" rule and be mindful of your control surfaces. Never cut free hand or cut wood without using the fence or table as your control surfaces.
5. Never pass your hands directly over the cutterhead unless they are beyond the 3" rule when edge jointing or being used with safety devices when face jointing.
6. Always make sure that the exposed cutterhead behind the fence is guarded, especially when you are jointing stock near the guard side of the cutterhead.
7. Always work within the machine's capacities. Do not joint boards less than 12" in length, narrower than 3" or wider than the blades and thinner than $\frac{5}{8}$ ".
8. Avoid cuts deeper than $\frac{1}{8}$ " per pass; $\frac{1}{16}$ " is the ideal depth of cut.
9. Do not back your work out of the cut; keep it going in the direction of the outfeed table. Lifting your work off the blades is OK as long as you do it with good control. Do not let go or drop the board back into the blades.
10. Never operate the machine with the guard off.
11. Do not use boards with loose knots, nails or foreign material on their surfaces or edges. Knife impact on these objects can cause kick back or the knives to be pulled out.
12. Before you walk away from the jointer make sure that you turn the machine off and that the blades come to a complete and full stop. Never open the guard to watch the blades while they are on.
13. Avoid tip-in. Never apply pressure to stock directly over the cutterhead. This may result in tipping the board or your fingers into the cutterhead.
14. Always run wood through the jointer with the grain in the same direction that you are cutting and never across the grain. Always examine the condition of the stock and evaluate the grain direction, warp, twist, burl, swirl, kink and cup. With this type of stock you might need to use a lesser cut and a slower feed rate.
15. It is a good practice to use your left hand as the hold-in hand and the right hand as the push/pull and hold-down hand when edge jointing. However, you will have to move both hands during the process of moving the stock through the jointer. Make sure that you always have one hand on the board at all times. As one hand approaches the cutterhead, remove it from the stock in an arc motion away from the guard and place it back on the stock in a position beyond the cutter. Hold the stock firmly at all times.
16. Position your stance to allow you to walk through with the board. Never stand flat footed facing the fence.
17. There are a variety of hold downs, push sticks, two-handed push blocks, magnetic hold-downs and featherboards. Make sure that you are correctly using these devices on all short or small stock.
18. If you are jointing long or heavy stock make sure that you get an assistant to help you. If you are controlling the feed of the material then you are in charge.
19. Although the fence can be tilted make sure that are aware that manipulation of the stock will be difficult and cumbersome. The use of proper push stick and hold down devices is highly recommended. If possible, consider another machine for this operation.
20. Before making any cuts always check to make sure all the parts of the machine are locked securely. Always check square on the fence at least 6" from the point of contact. Never check the fence for square with the machine on.
21. Never hook your thumb or fingers on the back of the board for pushing.
22. Do not become distracted; concentrate on the process of the cut and the action that is taking place.
23. Use either a good vacuum system or the dust-collection system.
24. There is no substitute for common sense. Remember that these are only general guidelines and that you should stop using your saw at any sign of abnormality.