
SOLDERING STATION SAFETY



SAFETY GLASSES REQUIRED

Solder can “spit” (an air pocket or impurity can pop as you heat the solder and send bits of solder flying).



TURN ON EXHAUST BEFORE STARTING

Before starting the soldering process, turn on local exhaust such as an extraction arm/snorkel exhaust hood, benchtop fume extractor with an activated carbon filter, or small benchtop fan.

- Flux generates the fumes seen during soldering. Exposure to flux can cause eye, throat, and lung irritation. Repeated exposure can result in respiratory and skin sensitization, and can cause or aggravate asthma.



CAUTION: THE TIP GETS VERY HOT

Hold the soldering iron like a pen, near the base of the handle.

DO NOT touch the hot element or tip - it can reach up to 400°C.

DO NOT touch electrical cords with the hot iron tip, which would pose a serious risk of burns and electric shock.

ALWAYS return the soldering iron to its stand when not in use, so that the tip does not touch items that could burn or melt.



PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE

DO NOT eat or drink in soldering areas.

When you are done soldering, remember to clean your work area, and wash your hands.

- Wiping your work surface with a wet towel will minimize ingestible lead contamination from your work surfaces.



SOLDER WASTE IS HAZARDOUS WASTE

Manage waste generated from soldering processes, including solder wire, sponges, brass wool, soldering iron tips that have been tinned, items contaminated with paste, dross, surface area wipes, etc. as hazardous waste.

Note: If you don't use an electric soldering iron (e.g., if you conduct open flame soldering), additional training and state fire code hot work requirements apply. Contact ehs@harvard.edu for more details.