Safe Working Procedures and Instruction

Electric Iron

The risk of injury when using this machine is LOW - Level 1 Risk

All fabrics (natural or synthetic) are made of several textiles woven together. These fibres are naturally different in shape.

When a fabric is washed, the combined action of water and heat slackens fibres and restores their natural shape and position.

When the fabric dries, the fibres become rigid and take anarchic shapes and positions.

Irons simply use heat and pressure applied by the soleplate to return the fibres to their rightful place: either by removing creases or by forming them.

Steam irons have an additional advantage as steam slackens textile fibres before drying them, thereby considerably increasing the efficiency and ease of ironing.

Identified Risks and Hazards

Hazards that may be encountered when using the electric iron include:

- Burns from steam or the sole plate of the iron
- Fire from fabric catching alight
- Electrical faults
- Dropping the iron onto the feet
- Back injury due to poorly adjusted ironing table

Burns can occur from touching hot metal parts, hot water or steam. Use caution when you turn a steam iron upside down - there may be hot water in the reservoir.

Pre-Operational Safety

The following safety checks and precautions should be carried out when preparing to set up and use the electric iron in the textiles area:

- Ensure you have had instruction and training in the use the iron and satisfactorily completed the relevant OHS test.
- Electrical equipment must be isolated from the main electricity supply when not in use.
- The operator should seek permission from the teacher before using iron.
- Always check that the iron and its cord are in good working order.
• Check all adjustments and settings carefully before commencing any ironing operation.
• Check the water level of the iron and make sure it is not topped beyond the full level.
• Make sure the iron is turned off before filling it with water.
• The work area should be clean and free of equipment, rubbish and other obstacles.
• Set up the ironing board at the right height for you.
• Whether you’re sitting or standing, you should be able to place your palms on the board without bending your arm or your back.
• Adjust the temperature correctly. Consult labels for manufacturers suggestions. For blended fabrics, set the temperature according to the most delicate fabric in the blend.

Operating Safety Precautions

• Ensure that the workpiece rests flat on the ironing table at all times.
• Allow the iron to reach maximum temperature before applying pressure.
• Never stand in an awkward or unbalanced stance while ironing.
• Keep hands well away from the sole plate when the iron is operating.
• When the ironing operation has finished, switch the iron off and wait until the sole plate has cooled down before placing it in the storage area.
• Make sure all other students keep away from the immediate work area at all times.
• Do not wear loose clothing, especially long sleeves and neck ties.
• Never leave the iron unattended when turned on and in use.
• Check with the teacher about the fabric type before ironing and set the iron to the correct temperature for the fabric. The settings are:
  - cotton – high
  - silk and wool – medium
  - man made fibre – low
• Make sure the ironing board is set at an appropriate height and is stable.
• If steam is required to iron the garment, adjust the iron to the steam setting.
• Do not use the iron with an extension cord unless the cord has been tested and tagged.
• Keep fingers away from the iron’s heating sole plate whilst ironing.
• Turn the iron off after use and remove the electrical plug from the power point.
• Always leave the iron in an upright position when not in use.
• Do not wind the cord around the sole plate while the iron is still hot.

Daily Maintenance

Daily maintenance of the electric iron should include checking the condition of the sole plate, checking the operation and height of the ironing table and checking the condition of the electrical cord and plug.
Iron Storage

- Remove the cord from the outlet by grasping the plug rather than pulling the cord.
- Empty the water tank AFTER EACH USE while the iron is still HOT.
- Allow the iron to COOL COMPLETELY before putting it away. Wrap the cord loosely around the heel rest. WRAPPING TOO TIGHTLY CAN DAMAGE THE CORD.
- Always store the iron ON ITS HEEL REST with the temperature control knob in the MIN position.
- DO NOT store in the carton, as any residue of moisture may cause the soleplate to discolor.

Additional operating procedures and precautions

Selecting the Correct Fabric Setting

- When ironing, use the temperature and steam settings recommended for the type of fabric being ironed.
- Garments requiring low temperatures and steam should be ironed first. This will help avoid damaging garments with a too hot iron.
- If you are not sure of the fabric content of the garment, start with a low heat and steam setting and test the iron on an area of the garment where it will not show, such as a seam or facing. Gradually increase the heat and steam settings until wrinkles are removed without damaging the fabric.
- When changing the temperature from a high setting to a lower setting allow approximately 2 minutes for the lower temperature to be reached.
- Check garment labels and follow recommendations given by the manufacturer. For blended fabrics use the setting for the fabric in the blend requiring the lowest temperature, for example: 65% polyester, 35% Cotton fabric.

Using as a Steam Iron

- When using as a steam iron be sure the temperature setting is within the STEAM range on the temperature selector to avoid spotting the garment.
- Fill the iron with water, plug the cord into an electrical outlet. Allow 2 minutes for the iron to reach the desired temperature and remove from the heel rest and use.
- When steam ironing, if the temperature control setting is accidentally lowered, water may appear on the soleplate, indicating that iron temperature has dropped below steaming level. If this should occur, reset temperature control to desired level. Rest the iron on its heel rest for 1 minute to allow it to reach temperature.
- If the iron starts losing its flow of steam and you wish to continue steam ironing, you may refill without cooling the iron, unplug the iron and FILL THE WATER TANK.