

Safety in the Studio

Preliminary concerns

- 1) Clothing worn should be natural fiber (cotton, wool). Synthetics can burn or melt when exposed to flame/heat. Long sleeves are to be avoided, but may be worn if snug fitting. Do not wear shorts.
- 2) Wear closed footwear.
- 3) Long hair should be tied back.
- 4) Didymium/safety glasses (filter UV, IR, and sodium flare) should be worn at all times when working or when near someone who is working (these are always available in the studio).
- 5) Immediately attention should be paid to any injury. First aid is available, and minor burns should be immediately treated with a cold water bath. Tell the instructor immediately about any accidental injury.

While working

- 1) Lighting the torch: Turn on the gas valve first. Use the scratch lighter to ignite the gas. If it does not ignite after a couple of tries, shut off the gas, and wait several seconds before trying again. When turning on the gas again, listen for the sound of gas flowing. You will get an idea as to how far you must turn the valve before the gas actually begins to flow. Turn off the gas again, wait, then try to ignite the flame again, trying to open the valve to the correct point where gas is flowing slowly. **DO NOT OPEN THE VALVE QUICKLY** or you could create a cloud of gas, which, when ignited, could burn you.

After the gas has ignited, slowly open the oxygen valve. If the torch has been idle for some time, the gas that comes out of the oxygen ports will just be air at first, and, if you open the valve too quickly, it will blow out the gas flame. Open the valve **slowly**, until you see the flame begin to burn tighter, then you can open it further and adjust the flame to the type you wish to work with.

When turning **off** the torch, the sequence is reversed: **oxygen** is turned off **first**, the **gas second**.

- 2) It is important, when handling hot glass and tools, to develop habits that can prevent injuries to one self. The most prevalent injury among those beginning to work with hot glass is minor burns. After you handle a glass rod, or a tool that has been in the flame, focus on **ALWAYS PLACING THE USED ITEM ON THE WORKBENCH WITH THE HOT END AWAY FROM YOU**, toward the center of the bench. It is fairly obvious which end of most tools was in the flame, but it is very easy to become confused regarding which end of a glass rod is hot, and which is cold. By developing a habit of always placing the hot end away from you, you will not have to think when picking up a piece of glass to use it again.