

Welcome

How this knowledge base works and how to find your way around WMI.

- [What the Knowledge Base Is and How It Is Organized](#)
- [Expectations and Responsibilities](#)
- [Getting Around](#)

What the Knowledge Base Is and How It Is Organized

What this is

This is the Waukesha Makerspace (WMI) Knowledge Base: the place for how the space actually works. It holds finished reference material: safety rules, shop rules, how to use equipment, how the facility runs, and the policies the board has adopted.

Almost everything here is public. Anyone can read it, including people who are thinking about joining, so you can see how the space works before you sign up.

What is not here

Some things live in other places so there is only ever one copy to keep up to date:

- **Joining, membership rates and events:** waukeshamakers.com
- **Equipment inventory** (what tools we have and where they are): [Atlas](#)
- **Your certifications** (which tools you are checked off on): [Journeyman](#)
- **Day-to-day conversation, questions and announcements:** the WMI Discord (see [Getting Around](#))

Drafts, proposals and committee notes are not published here. A policy only gets a page once the board adopts it.

How it is organized

The Knowledge Base is arranged in shelves, each holding one or more books:

Shelf	What you will find
-------	--------------------

Start Here	This New Member Guide: expectations, orientation, membership life and the FAQ
Safety	Shop Safety: general rules, PPE, hazards, emergencies and broken equipment
Shop and Equipment	Training and Certification, plus one book per shop area (Wood Shop, Metal Shop, Digital Fabrication, Electronics Lab, Fiber Arts, Flex Space) with an overview, equipment SOPs and maintenance
Facility	Facility Operations: hours and access, layout, shared spaces, cleanup, trash and materials
Community	Shop Rules, Volunteer Runbooks, and Classes and Instructors
Organization and Board	Founding documents, the board, meeting summaries, committees and adopted Policies
Members and Board	Member Access (visible to signed-in members only) and the Board Handbook (board only)

Signing in

You can read the public books without an account. Members sign in to see the **Member Access** book, which covers things like opening and closing the shop.

Reading an SOP is not training

Equipment pages explain how a tool works at WMI, but reading one never replaces hands-on training. You must be checked off on a tool before you use it. See **How Certification Works** in the Training and Certification book.

Spotted something wrong?

If a page is out of date or missing something, say so on Discord or tell a board member so it can be fixed.

Expectations and Responsibilities

Waukesha Makerspace is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit run entirely by volunteers. There is no staff cleaning up after people or fixing things behind the scenes. The space works because members look after it and each other. This page sums up what that means for you.

Our mission

- Make tools, education and space accessible to all.
- Empower people to learn, share and create.
- Foster a kind and collaborative community.

Be safe

- **Get trained first.** All corded tools require training before use. Even experienced pros must complete training on certain equipment. See **How Certification Works**.
- **Inspect before you use.** We are hackers at heart, and equipment here may be modified beyond its factory state. Always assume a tool has been altered and check it thoroughly before use. Training gives you the inside scoop on how our tools differ from ones you may know.
- **Wear the right PPE.** See **Personal Protective Equipment** in Shop Safety.
- **Never use power tools while impaired:** after drinking alcohol, when drowsy, or otherwise not at your best.
- **Speak up.** If you see something unsafe, say something, kindly. We are all here to learn and keep each other safe.
- **Working alone is allowed,** but let someone know you are in the space, especially if you are doing something that could be dangerous. A post in #general on Discord works. See **Working Alone** in Shop Safety.

Take care of the space

- **Clean up after yourself.** Leave every area as good as or better than you found it.
- **Empty full trash cans,** and take food and food waste out of the building with you. See **Trash, Recycling and Hazardous Waste.**
- **Label everything you leave behind** with your name and the date. Anything left without a name is considered community property and may be used, moved or repurposed.
- **Store things only in designated areas or on carts,** and keep walkways clear. If a project is big, put it on wheels so others can move it. See the **Storage Policy.**
- **Keep the building secure.** WMI is not open to the public. Never leave doors unlocked or propped open.
- **Take initiative.** If you see something that needs doing, do it.

Respect each other

- Everyone is learning. No judgment.
- Assume good intent, and be patient and helpful.
- Many people in makerspaces are neurodivergent in some way. Personalities can clash even when everyone means well, so practice patience, empathy and clear communication.

Follow the shop rules

The full list of what is and is not allowed is in **Facility Use and Prohibited Activities** in the Shop Rules book. A few that new members most often ask about:

- No making guns or gun parts.
- Guests may tour but may not use any equipment. See **Guests, Family Members and Pets.**
- Tools may not leave the building without prior board approval.
- Donations of tools, equipment or materials must be approved by an area coordinator or the board **before** you bring them in. Do not drop off unapproved items.

Pay your dues and keep your profile current

Dues keep the rent paid, the lights on and the tools maintained. Manage your membership, payments and contact details in your member profile at waukeshamakers.com. Current rates are

always on the website. For help, email info@waukeshamakers.com.

Pitch in

This community only works if people help it work. Volunteers lead orientations, trainings, cleanups and events, and volunteering is a great way to meet people and build skills. Everyone has something to share. Ask in [#general](#) on Discord or talk to a board member to get involved.

Getting Around

WMI runs on a handful of online tools. Here is what each one is for.

Discord: talk to people

Discord is the main place members talk, ask for help and get updates.

- **#general:** introduce yourself here when you join. It is also where you let people know you are in the space, and where you can reach a board member.
- **#members:** ask questions about tools and how to do things.
- Share your progress, ask for help and connect with other members.

You get connected to Discord at orientation. If you missed it, ask a board member.

waukeshamakers.com: your membership

The website is where you:

- Log in to your **member profile** to pay dues or make donations, set up or manage automatic renewal, update your contact information and change your membership level.
- Use the **Members Directory** (login required) to find other members and message them through their profiles.
- Find events, classes, open houses and current membership rates.

For help with billing, access or your profile, email info@waukeshamakers.com.

This Knowledge Base: how things work

Safety rules, shop rules, equipment SOPs, facility information and adopted policies. See **What the Knowledge Base Is and How It Is Organized**.

Atlas: what equipment we have

[Atlas](#) is the inventory of tools and equipment and where they live in the shop.

Journeyman: your certifications

[Journeyman](#) records which tools each member is checked off on. See **How Certification Works**.