

Safety First

Safety is the most important part of working in a laboratory. During your chemistry labs, we want you to have fun and gain hands-on learning experience, but safety is the highest priority. The following rules are standard Good Laboratory Practices. You are required to follow them at all times (even if it seems unnecessary to you) in order to develop good safety habits and chemical hygiene practices.

Rule 1. Be Prepared: Think about the experiment before you enter the laboratory. Knowing the materials that you are working with will not only help you complete the lab quickly and correctly, it will help prevent dangerous mistakes. Be on time, with your completed handwritten procedure.

Rule 2. Dress Appropriately: Keep your safety glasses on at all times. Wear full coverage shoes (no open toed shoes, slippers or backless shoes). Clothes must fully cover all skin from ankles to shoulders (no shorts, tank tops, skirts, or cropped tops). Droopy pants (below the hips) and leggings are also not allowed because they do not provide adequate protection. Long hair must be tied back.

Rule 3. No Gum, Food, Drinks, or Smoking in Lab: You DON'T want to ingest the little particles of stuff floating around in here. Similarly, don't put your backpack on the bench, you don't want to contaminate it. You will leave them in the prep room, so do not bring anything valuable that might get stolen.

Rule 4. No Cell Phones, Headphones or Electronics: Turn your cell phone off, place it in a bag, and leave the bag at home. No cell phones should be VISIBLE, let alone used during the laboratory experiment. Use the wall clocks, not your phone.

Rule 5. Report Accidents. If you spill or break something, report it as soon as possible. Accidents happen. You won't get in trouble as long as you act responsibly. Never put broken glass in the trash. Replacement glassware can be obtained from the stockroom. You may be charged breakage fees for careless behavior.

Rule 6. Know How and When to Use Safety Equipment: In case of emergency, you must know the location of the following items, and how to use them:

Safety Showers – dump a lot of water, use in case of a severe, dangerous spill on a person. Remove contaminated clothing while using (other students will leave the lab) .

Fire Extinguisher – pull the pin, aim at the base of the fire, pull the trigger and spray back and forth.

Fire Blanket – use to smother flames, especially if a person is on fire (Stop, drop and roll).

Eyewash – use one hand to hold eyelid open and let water flow directly in eye for several minutes. Remove contact lens first if possible.

Minor Cuts and Burns – First aid kit is in stockroom, use as needed.

Rule 7: Make sure set up is correct: Be sure that things are stable and correctly assembled, especially tripods and buret clamps. When in doubt, ask.

Rule 8: Keep Clean: Before the end of your laboratory period, all glassware should be returned to your drawer, clean and dry. NEVER return broken glassware to your drawer, and don't make other people clean up after you.

Science is Fun!: Laboratory experiments have been carefully selected to support your coursework. While science is fun and exciting, students should NEVER carry out their own, unauthorized experiments. Ask a professor if you want to try something.