

ABRASIVE BLASTING BASICS

Sandblasting is a generic term for the process of smoothing, shaping and cleaning a hard surface by forcing solid particles across the surface at high speeds. Historically the material used for sandblasting was sand. Currently many other better materials have been developed to abrasive blast, such as crushed glass, glass beads, aluminum oxide and steel shot/grit. Sand as a blasting abrasive is all but obsolete.

- Abrasive Blasting Equipment & Tools -

There are many different tools you will find in a blasting workshop from the air compressor to the abrasives. Here you have a general list;

- * Air compressor
- * Blasting cabinet, booth or portable pot
- * Blast gun or nozzle
- * Abrasives
- * Safety respirators & filters

There are two different systems for blasting; the suction system and the pressure-pot system. The latter is faster and easier to control and adjust. In a suction system, the abrasive is stored in a pot, sucked up through a connecting hose, mixed with air in the gun/nozzle and projected onto the object being blasted. Alternatively, in the pressure-pot system, air not only flows through the abrasive-delivery hose; it's actually introduced into the pressure pot itself. This helps to push the abrasive through the hose which makes it more efficient and up to 4 times faster than the siphoning system. Air and abrasive flow can be easily adjusted as required.

- Blasting Area -

* A blast cabinet is basically a large steel box with a front window and two holes with built-in gloves. You place your object in the cabinet, insert your hands into the gloves, look through the window at your project, and blast away. Blast cabinets will keep the blast dust and debris contained completely inside the cabinet. The only downside to a blast cabinet is that the size of the object you can blast is limited by the size of your cabinet.

* By blasting outdoors, you're not limited with space and this is practical for bigger projects. Dust and abrasive containment are the only challenges here.

* A blasting booth is a room set up only for the purpose of abrasive blasting. A booth allows you to blast both large and small objects while keeping the dust and debris contained.

- SAFETY NOTES -

Measures like ventilation, protective gear and a system to supply you with fresh supply of breathing air are a MUST.