Belt Thickness Sanders

These sanders are similar to thickness planers in that they remove material from the upper surface of a board. However, instead of using a series of rotating knives and shaving the material, they use a sandpaper belt to abrade it. The sanding medium spins above the workpiece, which feeds past it on a conveyer belt.

Safety Rules

1. Use these machines to sand only workpieces 6" long or longer. Shorter workpieces cannot be safely supported as they pass through the machine.
2. Check the integrity of the conveyor belt and sanding medium before turning the machine on. Any ripped belts or burn marks should be reported to the shop foreman.
3. Set the depth (with the sander and conveyor OFF) so that the abrasive is in contact with the workpiece just firmly enough that you can still pull the workpiece free. Do not attempt to remove large quantities of material in a single pass.
4. Start the conveyor at 50% of its full speed, adjusting up or down in small increments to improve the quality of the sanding.
5. Beware of getting your hand caught between the sanding medium and the conveyor belt when the machine is operating; serious injury could result.
6. Push the workpiece from the in-feed side until the belt catches it. Remove your hands and let the conveyor belt feed the material through the machine.
7. Stand to the side of the machine while sanding to avoid kickback.

Avoid feeding more than one piece through the sander at once. Gang-feeding material may result in kickback. A proper cut is achieved by balancing the depth of cut with the feed rate, keeping in mind the qualities of the material being sanded. A soft wood can have a greater depth of cut and rate of feed than a hard wood.