Set-up:

- Select a hedge trimmer appropriate for the work (e.g., consider the size and height of shrubs and hedges being trimmed (e.g., 1 m (about 3 feet) versus 4.5 m (about 15 feet)), cutter bar length, single- or double-sided blades, weight and balance of the equipment, availability of electrical power source, etc.).
- Before operating the equipment, read, understand and follow the manufacturer’s operating manual and safety decals on the equipment.
- Wear proper eye protection.
- Check hedges for any foreign objects (e.g., metal posts, wires) before trimming.
- Do not use electrical tools in the rain, or on wet grass or shrubs.
- When using gasoline-fuelled trimmers, ensure air filter and muffler screens are clean prior to use; use the recommended grade of fuel and gasoline/oil mixture.
- Keep the blades sharp and ensure the cutter bar bolts are torqued correctly (not too loose and not too tight).

Operation:

- Keep fingers and hands away from the blades.
- Keep the power cord of an electric hedge trimmer behind you to avoid snipping it or tripping. Leave enough cord slack for normal work motions.
- Use both hands to hold and guide the tool.
- Avoid overreaching during trimming operations.
- Use long-reach or telescoping trimmers for tall hedges and shrubs.
- Do not stand on unstable supports (e.g., chairs or boards on saw horses) or on ladders when using hedge trimmers.
- Do not force tools to cut something they are not designed to cut.
- Turn off the power and wait for the blades to stop before cleaning out twigs or grass. To prevent injuries, use a brush or other device to remove material from between the knives.