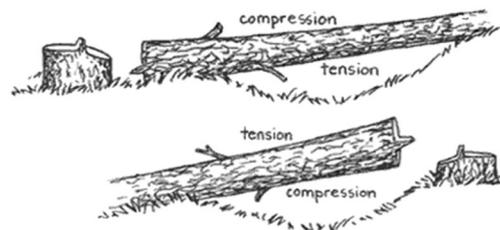


Heartwood Community Woodfuel Group

Guidance on safe and effective use of hand tools. 15 Feb 2018.

All Saws

Whatever the saw type, an understanding of tension and compression in the trunk or limb will aid effective use of the saw. Make cuts on timber in tension. Attempting to cut timber in compression will result in the saw sticking. Graphic shows an example.



Bow saw

1. Used for most felling, snedding large branches and crosscutting.
2. The blade is sharp. Use gloves.
3. The blade is non-sharpenable, so must be replaced when it loses its keenness.
4. Demonstrate how to remove and replace the blade guard. Leave the guard in the box to avoid loss.
5. Carry the saw in one hand, blade down.
6. When not in use, place the saw on the ground – do not hang it up in a tree!!
7. Explain the difference between peg (seasoned wood) and raker (green wood) blades.
8. The blade cuts on both the push stroke and the pull stroke.
9. If holding a branch or log with your other hand, cut away from that hand, not towards it.
10. Clear branches / twigs from the saw path before starting the cut. They can bounce the saw.

11. Use long slow strokes, the full length of the blade. Apply light pressure - "let the saw do the work". Keep the bow in line with the blade to cut straight and reduce sticking.
12. Keep the blade out of the ground, soil on the blade will blunt the saw.

Pruning saw, AKA Pull saw

1. Used for felling smaller trees, snedding smaller branches, smaller crosscutting.
2. The blade is VERY sharp. Use gloves before removing the saw from the scabbard.
3. Check the blade is clamped tight in the handle and all the screws are there. Hold the handle and press the teeth then the back of the blade against a log; any movement of the blade indicates the screws need tightening. See photograph below.



4. The blade is non-sharpenable, so the saw must be replaced when it loses its keenness.
5. Demonstrate how to remove the saw from the scabbard and then replace. Show how the saw locks in to the scabbard.
6. Most injuries happen not when cutting, but when holding the saw in that hand whilst doing something else.
7. Best practice is to wear the scabbard on a belt and return the saw to the scabbard when not in use. Otherwise lay the saw on the ground – don't hang it up in a tree!
8. Cut on the pull stroke only. Trying to cut on the push stroke will result in the blade bending, which essentially ruins the saw.
9. If holding a branch or log with your other hand, cut away from that hand, not towards it.
10. Keep the blade teeth out of the ground, soil on the teeth will blunt the saw.

When cutting close to the ground, cut in an upwards direction, allowing the back of the blade on the ground at the start of the cut if necessary.

Loppers

1. Used for cutting stems up to the thickness of your thumb or a 50p piece.
2. If its hard work using the lopper, the stem is probably too thick – use a saw.
3. Never put the cutting edge in soil.

Felling lever

1. In a hand tool context, the hook part is used for rolling a hung-up tree.
2. Practically demonstrate. See Tree felling guidelines.

Foresters friend.

1. This is an improvised tool and is a straight length of wood up to around 10 Cm diameter and 2 metres in length.
2. It is used as a lever to move the butt of a hung tree along the ground and so allow the hung top of the tree to come to the ground. Demonstrate.

Lifting tongs

1. Used to grip logs when moving them around. It allows a more ergonomic lift with a straight back, and keeps hands away from the crush zone when putting the log down.

Hand axe

1. Used for splitting firewood for the Kelly kettles (we do not use axes for felling or snedding as there are safer ways to do those tasks).
2. Keep 2 arms lengths away from other people when swinging the axe.
3. Do not wear a glove on the hand that is gripping the axe. It's more likely to slip out of a gloved hand.
4. Do wear a glove on the hand that is holding the timber.
5. Best practice is to hold the axe to the firewood and make a short swing both on to a block. That way the cut is not made towards your hand. Demonstrate.



Version history.

Revision	Date	Authors	Description
1.0	18/02/02	GB	Document created.
1.1	18/02/10	GB	Added date to title. Changed from bullet points to numbered points. Added Bowsaw point 10. Edited felling lever point 1. Edited Hand axe point 5. Added version history.
1.2	18/02/15	GB	Reworded points 9 of both bowsaw and pruning saw for clarity. Added to point 11 of bowsaw to give additional information. Reworded point 3 of pruning saw to give additional information and photograph added. Hand axe point 5 photograph changed for one that shows correct use of a glove.