

Hornsby Woodworking Men's Shed

Chainsaw Safety & Usage

SP18

The following must be read in conjunction with SP01 General Workshop Safety Rules.

Chainsaws can be very dangerous. Use of the chainsaw is restricted to Supervisors and members who have demonstrated the ability to safely use a chainsaw. e.g. A member who has used a chainsaw in a work situation over an extended period is qualified to use the chainsaw.

There are many hazards in using a chainsaw and, apart from contact with the moving chain, the single most dangerous aspect of the saw is kickback. Kickback occurs when the chain on the bar nose contacts an object as shown in the Diagram 1, resulting in an instantaneous kick reaction which can throw the chain bar up in an arc towards the operator. Severe injuries and sometimes death can result. Photo A shows a typical kickback injury.



Diagram 1.



General Chainsaw Safety Rule

It is a prerequisite that the following protective clothing is used: hard hat, ear protection, eye protection, steel capped shoes and full leather gloves.

Pre Start Safety Checks

1. Ensure that the chain is sharp and properly tensioned.
2. Check that all nuts and covers are secure
3. Push the chain brake handle fully forward and check by hand that the chain cannot move. Leave the brake engaged until you start the saw.
4. Check that the oil level in the chain/bar lubrication tank and, if required, top up with a quality brand of chainsaw Chain & Bar oil
5. Check the fuel level in the fuel tank and, if required, top up with a 50 to 1 95 octane unleaded petrol / two stroke oil mixture. Do not spill fuel over saw when refuelling. Clean up before starting saw and keep fuel container at least 3m from start-up operation.

Continued on page 2

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Starting Procedure *(These instructions are specific to the Husqvarna saw in the Shed)*

The saw must not be started in the Shed. Preferably start and use the saw on the roadside reserve opposite the Shed.

1. Place the ignition switch in the ON position and engage choke if cold starting.
2. Check chain brake is engaged.
3. Grip the front handle with your left hand and hold the saw down on the ground by putting your left foot in the rear handle.
4. With your right hand, slowly pull on the starter handle until the starter pawls engage. Then pull sharply.
5. If choke is engaged, disengage the choke control immediately the engine first fires. The saw should start with the next sharp pull.
6. When the engine starts, rapidly give it full throttle then release the throttle to return the saw to idle.

Caution: Do not release the starter handle from the fully pulled out position as this can damage the saw.

Note: If the saw is difficult to start the cause may be that the petrol/oil mix is greater than 6 months old.

Safe Usage Rules.

1. When you are ready to commence cutting, disengage the chain brake by pulling the chain brake handle fully back towards the front handle.
2. Always operate with two hands on the saw handles with the thumb of the left hand placed under the front handle and the thumb of the right hand under the rear handle.
3. Never use the saw above waist height.
4. Always stand to the side of the saw furthest from the chain. *Note for Left Hander's - Most chainsaws are designed for right handed operators therefore left hander's need be especially careful since standing to the side furthest from the chain may not be the natural position that you want to adopt.*
5. Ensure that you have a firm footing and good balance before starting a cut.
6. Never use the bar nose in a cutting operation. Be alert to anything coming into contact with the bar nose.
7. Cut by pivoting the saw down into the work-piece using the saw dogs at the bottom rear of the bar as the pivot point for the cutting action.
8. Always shut the saw down or engage the chain brake when the saw is not being used in a cutting operation.
9. The engine is stopped by switching OFF the ignition.

Notes:

- 1) *Before using the chainsaw, consider if the cut(s) to be made could be safely performed on the 19 inch bandsaw. If the answer is yes, use the bandsaw.*
- 2) *Seek the assistance of another member for heavy work such as manoeuvring a heavy branch into a position where it can be safely cut.*