

# 06 BRANCH REMOVAL SNEDDING / DE-LIMBING





## **Use of this worksheet**

This worksheet is part of a series of interactive worksheets that has been produced in association with Husqvarna to support the delivery of training for the City & Guilds (NPTC) suite of chainsaw qualifications.

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## **Content**

This worksheet covers the following outcomes:

**Be able to work safely**

**Be able to remove branches and breakdown crowns using a chainsaw**

**Know relevant health and safety legislation and industry good practice**

**Know how to remove branches and breakdown crowns using a chainsaw**

## Methods of branch removal vary with tree species

The method of removing branches will vary with tree species, branch form and pattern.



**De-limbing** is the process of cutting off the branches of a felled tree. The term is usually applied to deciduous trees with a crown of branches, but may also be applied to large coniferous trees.



**Snedding** is the process of stripping the side branches from felled trees to leave a smooth log. The term is applied mainly to coniferous trees, but also to small deciduous trees which have not developed a large crown.

## The risks to consider when snedding

The following are risks that should be considered (fill in the missing words):

- \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ over
- contacting \_\_\_\_\_ with the chainsaw
- tree \_\_\_\_\_ onto the operator
- \_\_\_\_\_ from cut branches or saplings when severed
- \_\_\_\_\_ from the saw.

## Identifying tension and compression in branches

It is important to identify the tension and compression in branches; this can be done in two ways:

- visually, by looking at the branch and assessing where the tension exists
- manually, by lifting or pushing against the branch to feel where the tension exists.

**Examine the picture below and indicate on the branches where tension and compression is present.**



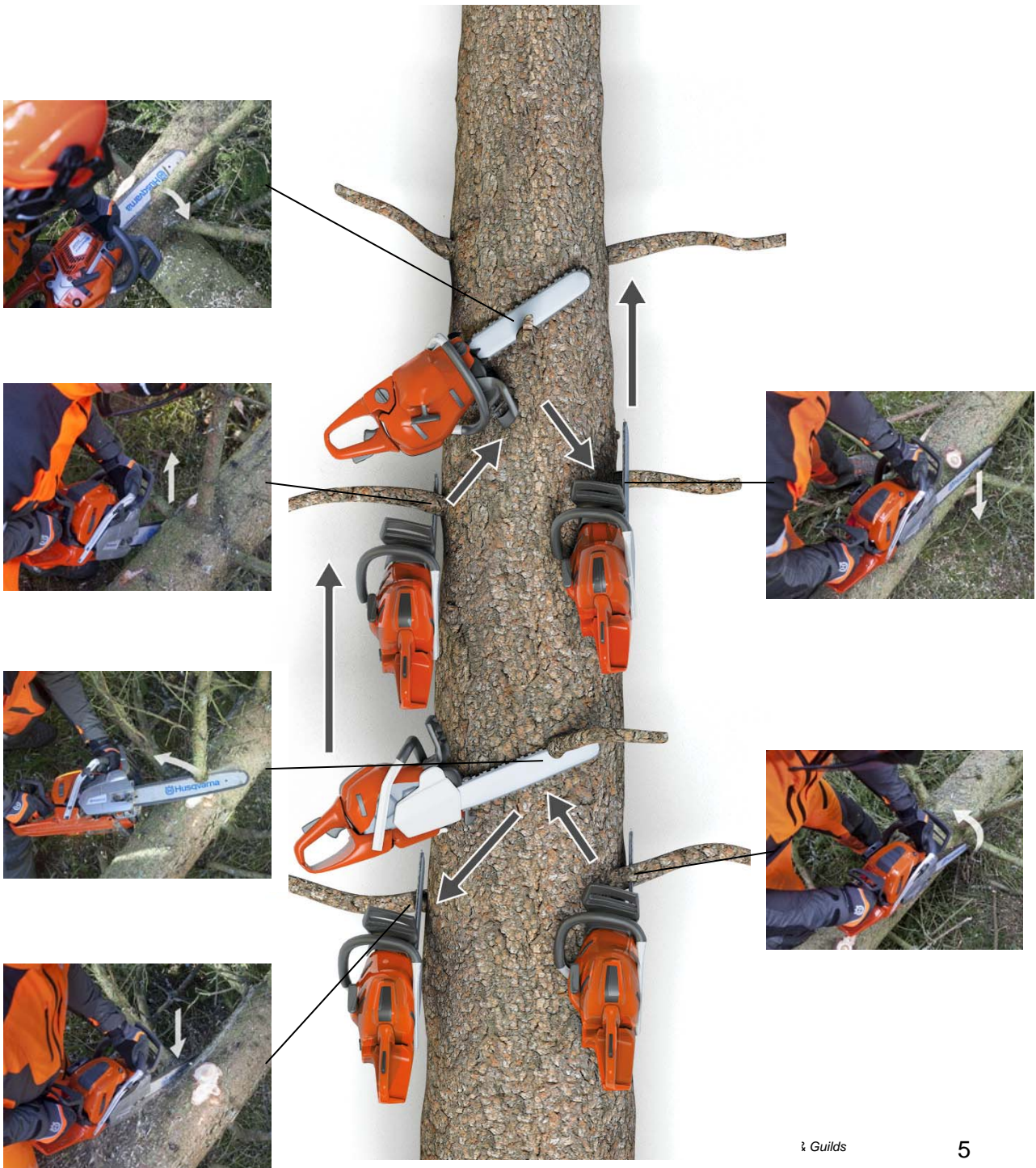
## The basic rules for snedding/ de-limbing

- **Work at comfortable height** - trees can be felled so that they rest at a comfortable height for snedding.
- **Safe working position** - adopt a secure stance, the saw working on the opposite side of the trunk; do not move whilst snedding. Never work on the lower side on a slope.
- **Balance the chainsaw on the trunk or leg** - to reduce fatigue, always use a short guide bar (13 -15") as snedding will be easier.
- **Safe movement** – keep the saw on the other side of the tree and activate the chain brake when moving around.



- **Be aware of the potential for kickback** - avoid cutting with the tip of the bar, keep hands correctly positioned.
- **Consider the weight of the branch** - cut on the opposite side where the branches are tensioned, avoiding pinching the bar. On large branches, cut in stages.
- **Remove branches** – when removing branches, lock the chain brake, rest the chainsaw on the trunk and remove branches with the left hand.

## Method of snedding



## Using appropriate aid tools and methods

There are a number of tool/pieces of equipment that can be used to assist with the snedding/de-limbing of trees; these include:

- a winch to restrain timber, especially on slopes or when there is a risk of the tree rolling
- a felling aid such as a felling bar with a cant hook.

## Removing under branches

Once the branches on the left side, right and top have been removed, the log/trunk can be turn allowing access to the under branches. If the tree has been felled onto a bench then it will be possible to remove the majority of the branches as indicated in the picture below.





## There are some specific methods for dealing with problem branches

### Gradual reduction of the tension in the branch



1. Make a few cuts, about 1/3rd of the branch diameter, on the inside of the bow.
2. Cut gently from the outside of the bow until the branch breaks.

### Crosscutting rough branches without splitting



1. Make a cut on the underside of the branch, up to half the branch diameter, a little way from the trunk.
2. The next cut is sawn on the branch's top side, a few centimetres beyond the first cut, up to half the branch diameter.
3. The branch will break between the cuts along the wood fibres.

### Soft breaking of a tensioned branch



1. Hold the chainsaw, as shown. Avoid using the top of the bar.
2. Cut carefully, in stages, a diagonal cut on the outside of the bow until the branch breaks.

## **The advantages of leaving a clean stem after Snedding/de-limbing**

State the advantages of leaving a clean stem after snedding in the box below.



The advantages of a clean stem are:

## **How to deal with the arisings from snedding/de-limbing**

The arisings left behind after snedding can be dealt with in the following ways:

- left where they land
- moved and piled/stacked
- windrowed
- baled, possibly for use as a brash mat or to be processed
- processed for mulch
- processed into chippings for fuel



# Notes

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