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Five Step Felling Plan



An introduction
to SafetreeTM

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Five Step Felling Plan

There are five steps that must be worked through to create a safe tree felling plan. Each step is as important as the others and no step can be missed out.

1. Assess the site
2. Assess the tree
3. Prepare work area and escape route
4. Use the correct, and safe, falling techniques
5. Retreat and look out!

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Work your way through every critical step

1. Site assessment

- ▶ Assess the stand for hazards: terrain, roads, tracks, other operations, powerlines
- ▶ Wind strength and direction – will it affect safety?

2. Tree assessment

- ▶ Any defects? Look for decay, heavy lean, interlocked branches, debris in branches, dead tops?
- ▶ Soil wet? Could that affect stability?
- ▶ Falling direction – what could it hit as it falls? Which way will you escape?
- ▶ Can you fell it safely? Decide which cuts to use.

3. Prepare work area and escape route

- ▶ Clear around the base of the tree – leave no vegetation or obstacles
- ▶ Plan your escape route – opposite the felling direction, 45 degrees away from directly behind the tree.

4. Use safe felling techniques

- ▶ Over 200mm at the stump? Always use a scarf and back cut
- ▶ Work out lean – how many wedges needed? Do you need machine assistance?

5. Retreat and observe

- ▶ Finish cut on the safe side of the tree – use escape route as soon as tree begins to fall
- ▶ Watch out – for kick back, butt swing (or bounce), anything falling or being flicked back
- ▶ Don't walk directly behind the tree.

For more information about Tree Felling: ACoP Section 11 Tree Felling; Professional Tree Felling Field Guide Version 2; and the BPG for Tree Felling.