

 **Tree Driving**



An introduction
to SafetreeTM

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Tree Driving

Tree driving means pushing a tree over by felling another tree into it. Tree driving is used when it's actually more practicable than more common methods, such as machine-assisted falling or wedging.

Tree driving rules

Because tree driving is dangerous – even when it's safer than other methods – there are rules in the ACoP around the practice.

11.7.1 Tree driving shall only be used to fell trees that either:

- ▶ are leaning against the intended direction of fall and cannot be safely felled using wedges
- ▶ have hazards that could dislodge as the tree begins to fall, such as a broken top
- ▶ are hung-up or cut-up

11.7.2 Tree driving should not exceed one onto two trees [but can be allowed with a competent tree faller observer present]

11.7.3 When tree driving, the following minimum requirements shall be met:

11.7.4 The faller shall notify the person available to them that they intend to undertake a tree drive

- ▶ The faller shall notify the person available to them that the drive has been completed successfully
- ▶ If a one onto two tree drive is unsuccessful, falling shall cease until an observer is present to help plan management of that hazard

11.7.5 A holding wedge shall be inserted in the backcut of each tree to be driven

11.7.6 A minimum of two wedges shall be available to insert in the backcut of the driver tree.

Use an observer

An observer, who is a competent tree faller, is needed on site to help plan how to bring that tree down if a one onto two tree drive doesn't work. The faller cannot fall the tree until they have arrived. The observer must stand in a safe position and watch for any tree movement or any other hazards. They must be able to communicate clearly with the faller, warning them of any hazards and making practical suggestions if necessary.

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Tree to be driven – procedure

1. Communicate the plan. Then choose a driving tree that's in good condition, of sufficient size, weight and distance from the tree to be driven. Prepare the work area and escape route around both trees.
2. Cut a conventional scarf quarter to third of the tree's diameter in the intended direction of fall.
3. Make the back cut using a quarter or split level quarter cut. Insert and firmly set a wedge in the first quarter cut.
4. Periodically pause and look up, checking for tree top movement and overhead hazards. Keep on making the back cut. **STOP** cutting when there's the right amount of hinge wood. Take care not to jam the cutter bar in the back cut.

Driving tree – procedure

1. Cut a conventional scarf quarter to third of the tree's diameter in the intended direction of the fall. Use the chainsaw's sight lines to aim the driving tree to hit the tree to be driven.
2. Make an appropriate back cut – a split level or quarter cut is recommended. Then, if you need to, firmly insert a wedge.
3. Periodically pause and look up, checking both trees for tree top movement and overhead hazards. Keep on making back cut. **STOP** cutting when you have the right amount of hinge wood.
4. If the tree starts to fall, use your planned escape route to retreat to a safe position.
5. If the tree stays standing, check for tree top movement, then drive the wedge until it starts to fall. Immediately retreat to a safe position using your planned escape route. Many fallers have been injured by not doing this basic step.
6. As you escape, keep watching for any overhead hazards or tree movements.
7. Stay in your safe position until the tree canopy stops moving.
8. Communicate that the tree drive was successful.
9. Assess area for any further hazards and, only when it's clear, go back to retrieve your felling equipment.

For more information: ACoP Section 11: 11.7, Tree Driving; BPG for Tree Felling, Section: Advanced Tree Felling/Tree Driving.