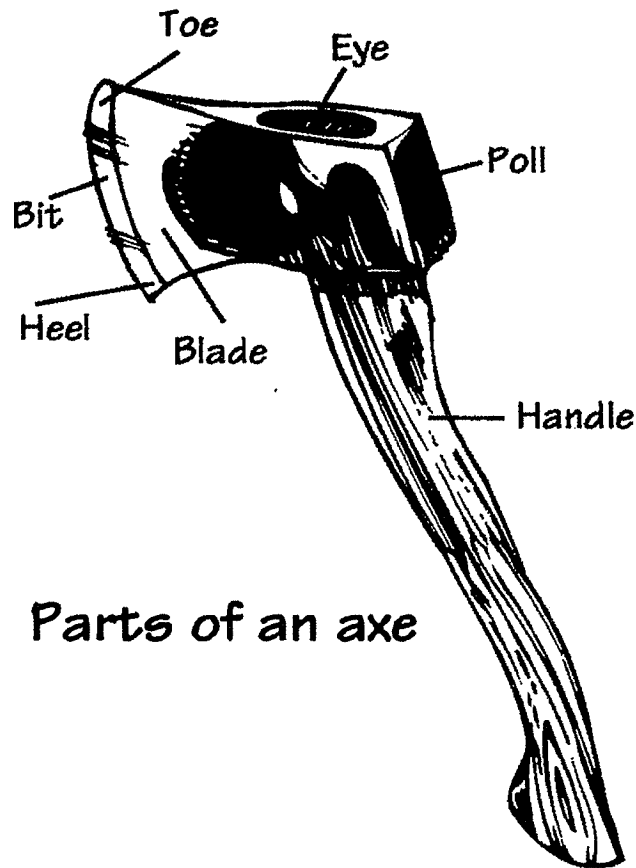


# Axe and Saw Safety



**Always use an axe or saw under adult supervision.**

An axe can be used to cut down trees, chop wood and with the use of a flint, to start a fire. The best way to learn how to use an axe is to work with an experienced adult who can teach you proper safety techniques.



**Parts of an axe**

## **How to Carry an Axe**

Never carry an unsheathed axe. Carry the axe at your side with the blade pointing slightly away from you. If you fall, throw the axe away from your body, being careful of anybody walking beside you.

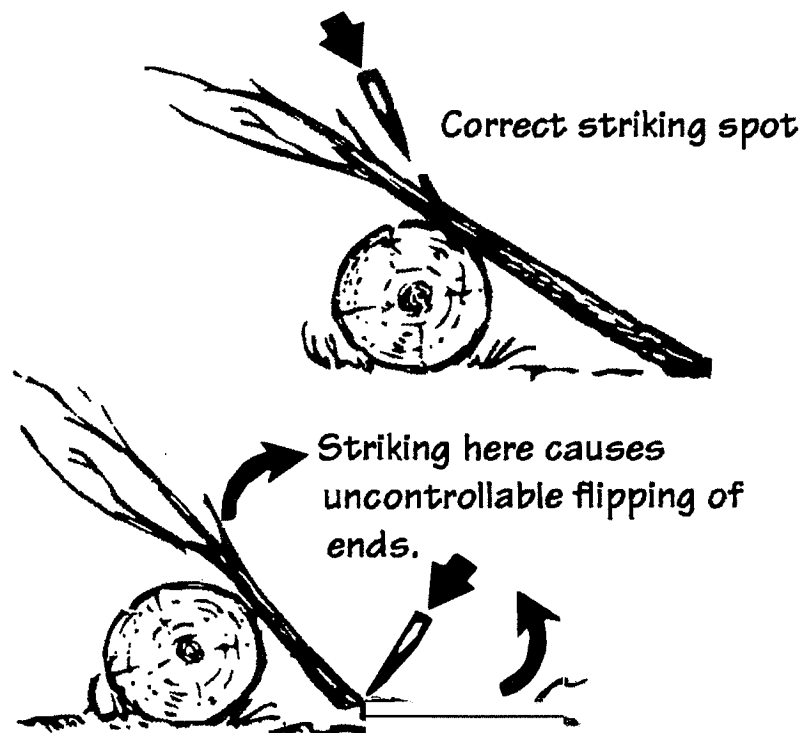
## Axe Safety

Always ask your leader before picking up an axe. If an axe head is loose, do not use it until it has been tightened.

In extremely cold weather, always warm the axe before using it. Cold temperatures make the metal brittle and could cause the axe blade to snap.

**Always** use a chopping block such as a sturdy stump or log.

**Always** make sure no one is standing in the area of the swing of your axe. **Always** make sure there are no obstructions. Practice using an axe only when your leader is watching you. Put the axe away in the proper storage place immediately after using it. Tell your leader if the axe is dull. A dull axe can be dangerous. A sharp blade will cut into a log, but a dull blade may bounce off the mark and cause a serious accident.



## Saws

You can also cut firewood and cut down trees with a saw. Some reasons to use a saw are:

- You will use less energy to saw wood than you will to chop wood with an axe.
- Saws can be used in confined or awkward spaces.
- Saws are useful when you need to cut wood of a specific size, such as wood for a stove.

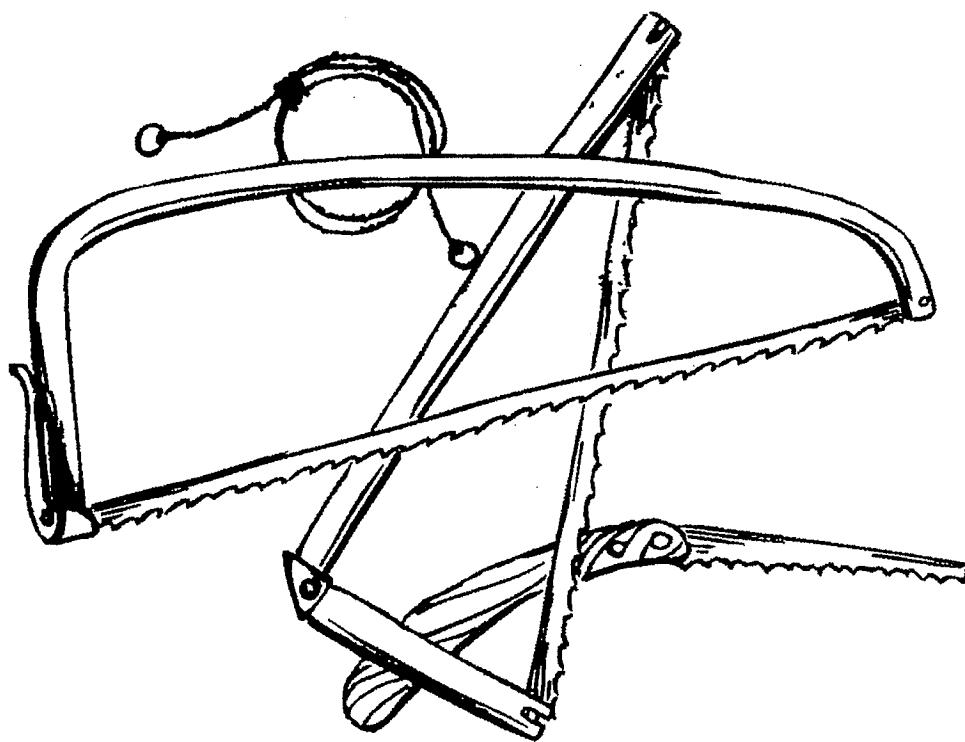
Saws can be a very useful camp tool. Learn how to select, use and care for them.

## Choosing a Saw

First decide why you will use a saw. Most wardens in the Green Tree, Trailblazer program use a saw to cut firewood. A saw should have the following features:

- A strong frame that will support the blade while you are sawing.
- A hand guard to protect your knuckles.
- A blade guard to prevent clothing and equipment damage when the saw is not being used. You could be cut if you fell on a saw.
- Choose a saw that you can easily use and is the right size for you.
- A straight blade. A twisted or bent blade is impossible to use.

### A few different styles:



## Safety

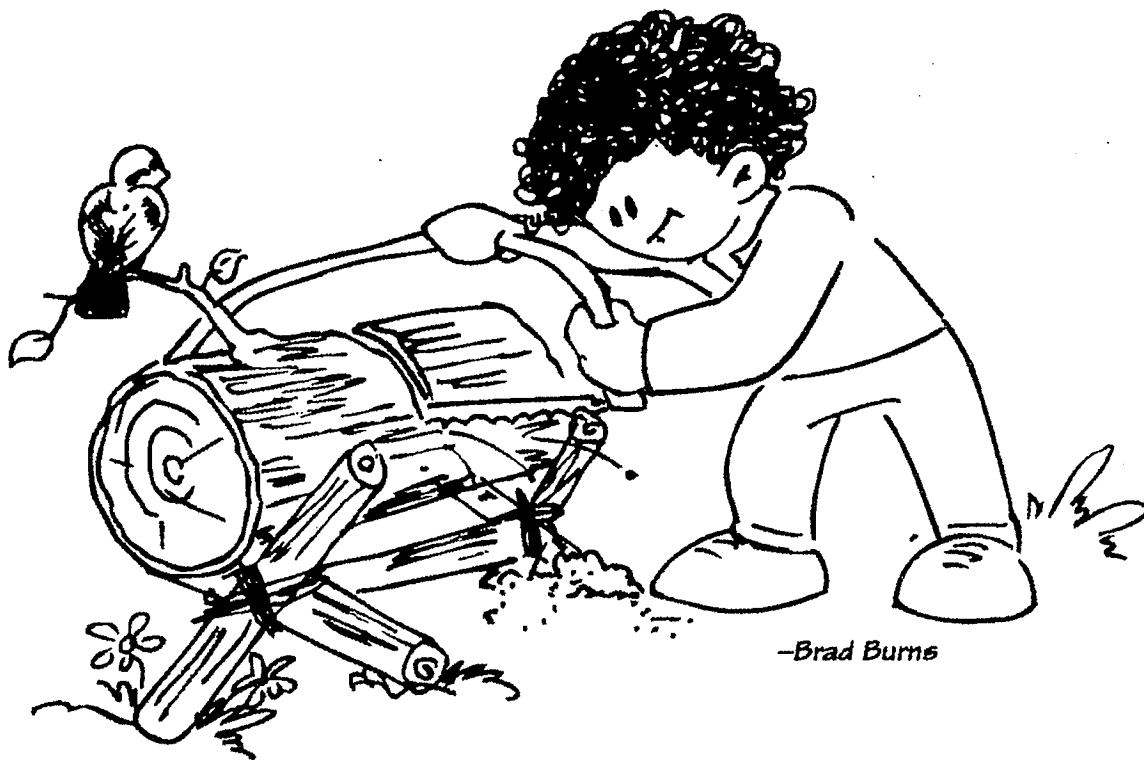
Always ask permission to use a saw. Practice using a saw with your club leader. Here are some tips to remember:

- Place the wood you are sawing on the ground or on low supports. Make sure it will not move when you are sawing. Ask another warden or a club leader to hold the wood steady.

- Remove the guard from the saw blade.
- Kneel down beside the wood.
- Make a groove in the wood.
- Saw back and forth using only the weight of the saw.

As you become more skilled, you can saw more forcefully in a downward motion. Practice sawing with a long stroke. This takes less effort than short strokes.

Sawing with a friend is fun and cuts the wood faster. Try it!



*Source: Text and illustrations courtesy of Mors Kochanski*