

Chopping Wood Procedure

Health and Social Care Standards:

2.21 I take part in daily routines, such as setting up activities and mealtimes, if this is what I want.

2.24 I make informed choices and decisions about the risks I take in my daily life and am encouraged to take positive risks which enhance the quality of my life.

3.14 I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.

Safety consideration

- Ensure risk benefit assessment has been read and signed
- Adult should retrieve the axe/hatchet from secure sharp storage and keep the axe/hatchet on their person until they return it after use - the axe/hatchet should not be left unattended under any circumstances
- Check axe/hatchet for signs of damage (rust, rot, broken)
- Ensure correct gear/PPE is worn
 - long trousers
 - sturdy and covered footwear
 - goggles
- If chopping wood with children, ensure an effective safety briefing is given (give space, sharp tools etc)
- Ensure that the sheath is on at all times when the axe/hatchet is not actively cutting wood
- When holding the hatchet/axe do so by the handle
- When passing the hatchet/axe to another adult, pass the handle first

Chopping wood independently

- Place the wood you want to split on a stable, strong surface for a chopping block
- Check the grain of the wood to see ideal direction to cut (follow grain of wood, avoid knots)
- Ensure you have plenty of space around you (if necessary do a practise swing)
 - Ensure your own position means that if you miss the wood, the axe/hatchet does not impact yourself or someone else
 - If chopping wood with children observing, use visual markers to establish safe space
- Raise the axe/hatchet up, holding a good firm grip of the handle with both hands

- Firmly bring down the axe/hatchet into the log - you do not need to hit it with all of your strength, just firm enough to impact the wood
- Once the axe/hatchet is wedged into the wood, raise the axe/hatchet and the wood together and firmly bring them back down onto the chopping block repeatedly until the wood splits
- Repeat entire process for desired size/quantity of wood
- When finished chopping, sheath the axe/hatchet and return to sharp storage

Chopping wood with children

Wood chopping must only be done 1:1

- Give safety briefing to group - sharp tool, safe space etc
- Examine (sheathed) axe/hatchet and mallet with the group, discussing any possible damage (rot, rust or broken)
- Other children must stay a safe distance away if observing
 - use visual markers to establish a safe space
 - Anyone unable to stay safe should be removed
- Ensure you and the child are wearing the correct PPE
 - Goggles
 - Long trousers
 - Sturdy footwear
- Follow the steps from above to wedge the axe/hatchet into the wood - Child should remain a safe distance away until invited in to help
- Staff will hold the axe/hatchet steady in the wood
- Child uses a wooden mallet to bash the top of the hatchet/axe to wedge it further into the wood until fully split or until staff needs to use axe/hatchet again
- If staff need to use the axe/hatchet to finish the wood, then the child should return to the safe area away from the chopping
- Repeat as needed
- When finished chopping, sheathe the axe/hatchet and return to sharp storage