



RECOMMENDED STEPS TO MINIMIZE DAMAGE TO CHAIN:

- Make sure your log is free of inclusions (rocks, metal or other debris that may be hiding inside the log). Examples we have heard about include fencing or baling wire, nails, bolts, electrical cables, bike locks, rifle slugs, cannonballs, beer bottles/cans, chains and hibernating animals. If you plan to do a lot of milling on urban or farm trees, it may be worth investing in a metal detector.
- Remove bark from the log. Even if the felled log has not been sitting in dirt, windblown grit or stones may have been picked up as the tree grew, and are waiting there to damage your chain. If you cannot remove the bark, the next best thing is to thoroughly power-wash the log before milling.
- Maintain your equipment. Thoroughly clean chain, bar and drive sprocket with a brush or compressed air after each use. Pay particular attention to gunk buildup in the bar groove, oil ports, and sprocket nose on the bar. Regularly rotate the bar to ensure even wear (every time you change or sharpen your chain is a good time to do this). Worn bars and drive sprockets can cause unnecessary strain on your chain.
- Regularly inspect your chain for signs of damage, and make sure it is properly tensioned. There are no hard and fast rules for proper chain tension, but in general you should be able, using your fingers, to barely pull the chain clear at the midpoint of the bar, leaving just the tips of the drive links in the bar groove. Once the chain is released, it should snap back neatly without hanging up on the lip of the bar groove.
- Use wedges when milling. One in the base of the log once you have gone about 7-9 inches into the cut, then on alternating sides every 12-18 inches as you go. Bars don't like to be pinched, and neither does chain.
- Use the right tool for the job. If your saw is underpowered for the size of the log, or the hardness of the wood, you will create unnecessary stress on your chain.
- Know what you're getting into. Logs that have been charred by fire, or have been sitting in swamp mud, or have been on the ground for more than a couple of months (particularly hardwoods) will all create opportunities for chain damage.

There is no way to 100% prevent chain damage, but following these simple steps will give you the best chance at a long and productive life for your chain.