

How to make your very own Bowsaw for just the price of a blade. Jon Cree (all photos taken by Jon)

Last week I was introduced to making a bucksaw, or bowsaw to most FS practitioners, without having to make all the really fancy woodworking joints and packs down to a flat pack – just like a certain Swedish store.



instructions

So here goes with

First choose the length of blade you want to work with – in the following illustrations I have used a 21 inch peg tooth.

Hazel is a good wood to use for this but ash, beech or sweet chestnut would be equally good. Remember to think hard about sustainable harvesting of the material – on the hazel suitable sunshoots are best.

Cut two lengths about $\frac{3}{4}$ length of your saw blade and at least thumb thickness. Then saw a slit in the end of each length that as deep as the width of the blade. Chamfer both ends to prevent fraying and splitting. Then on each length whittle a notch about an inch from the top (other end to the sawn slit) in the same plane as the slit.



In the middle of each stick whittle a flat area for the central length to rest flat against at each end.

Then cut a length of wood almost the same length as the blade and the same diameter as the two uprights. Whittle a flat piece of wood to act as the tensioner – see picture.



Thread the bow saw blade lug holes with a key ring at either end. Then slide the uprights on to the ends of the blade – teeth side of the key rings. Recommend you do this on a flat surface.



Then place the longer piece of wood between the two uprights butting on the whittled out flat area half way up the uprights.

Cut a length of paracord that will wrap around the two uprights. Tie the paracord between the two notches with a reef knot or sheet bend – whichever is best and easiest for you! Insert the flat piece of wood between the two paracord lengths and twist until the whole saw tightens and the blade is the right tension, the tension on this tensioning wood will hold it in place against the central 'beam'. Hey presto you have a bow saw.



For extra strength and stability you could make peg/dowel joints to join the central support to the two uprights - as shown in the following pictures. Make a cut around the ends of the central support according to the size of hole drilled in the uprights in the flat whittled area – I found that with a Laplander pruning saw this was teeth depth for a mm hole and the width of the upright for the peg length. Be sure to make this a tight fit as the peg will shrink. Then insert the central support into the two uprights and then slot into the bow saw and tension up the paracord as above. This will still come apart and be that portable flat pack bowsaw you intended it to be.

This ideal for transporting and much cheaper than a metal bow saw – all you need is the blade and I recommend you buy the cover for the blade to prevent injury when transporting and not in use.

