



Portable Tree for Tree Stand Training (The Swindle Tree)

Demonstrating tree stand safety is often difficult due to the lack of climbable trees. Utility companies frown on using power poles, and they really aren't as safe as trees. This is reason enough for the decision to build a "portable tree." I had observed the use of such apparatuses at trade shows by tree stand manufacturers but none were actually climbable.

Mr. Kevin Swindle of Fairview, Alabama, helped by designing and constructing the base. We received a piece of 10-inch by 15-foot long schedule 40 PVC pipe from our local water board.

The pipe is covered on the outside with a good quality carpet using outdoor carpet glue donated by a local carpet installer. The climbing surface can be covered with wood strips screwed to the surface with recessed screws for a more realistic feel when setting the

stand. Once the wood surface becomes worn it is easily replaced. The tree can be as tall as you feel comfortable using or have space for. It should be at least tall enough for a student to be able to move up several feet but not so tall as to surpass the instructor's comfort zone. If the tree is not to be portable, you can take extra measures of integrity by adding a board such as a 2x8 to strengthen down the middle of the pipe. Just remember, this also adds weight to the tree.



If the tree is to be portable, a set of wheels or casters is required to move the tree without having to disassemble. The wheels do not reach the point of rolling until the top of the tree is leaned over at waist level to an average height person. It is a good idea to have a wheel stand such as a boat jack to support the upper part of the tree while moving. At each end of the four legs you should place leveling screws for stabilizing on uneven surfaces.

Others and myself have climbed to the 15-foot mark and have experienced no problems. I have climbed on concrete, brick, and soil surfaces with little difference in each experience. Always use a safety harness when climbing. Good luck and be safe.

For more information, please contact Stuart R. Goldsby at Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries in Cullman, Alabama at (256) 737-8732 or e-mail sgoldsby@mindspring.com.

ITEMS:

- (1) 10" SCH 80 PVC Pipe, Sized for desired height
- (2) Tree stand support brace, 2" x 1/4" flatbar
- (3) 1/2" Leveling Bolts
- (4) 2" x 2" x 11ga. Square Tubing
- (5) 3/8" Jamb Bolts/Hitch Pins
- (6) 2-1/2" x 2-1/2" x 3/16" Square Tubing
- (7) 2" x 2" x 1/4" Angle

