

## Axes and Saws

The information below will assist the Scout in obtaining their Forester badge.

Axes can come in different shapes and sizes, the two axes that are of most relevance to any Scout Troop will be the **hand axe** and the **felling axe**. These two axes are different in size and in use (as their names suggest).

### The Hand Axe.

Always make sure the head (see diagram) of the axe is tight before use. Use proper wedging - wedges may be metal or wood. If the head becomes loose because the handle dries out, soak the wood in raw linseed oil. For temporary swelling, soak in water.

An axe haft is usually made of hickory.

Never buy an axe haft with labels or paint on it - your hands will blister. Always keep the haft clean.

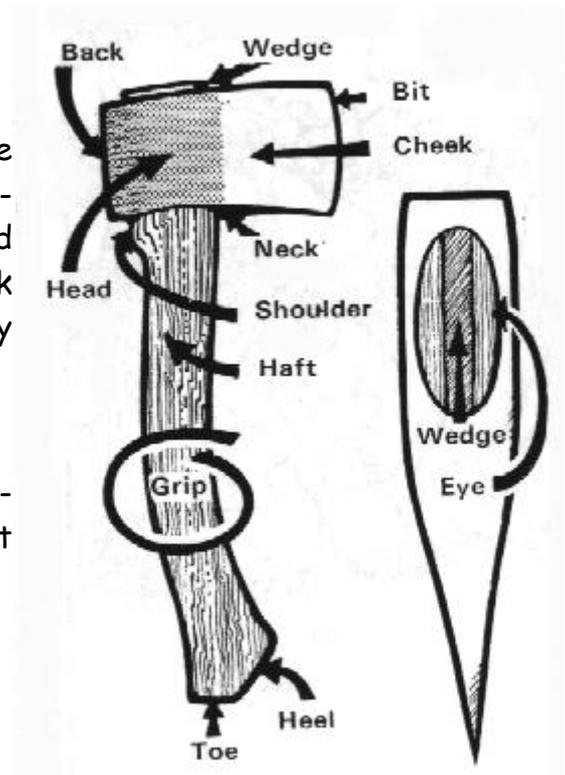
### The Felling Axe.

There are two types of felling axe:

- i) The Rounding Axe
- ii) The Wedge Axe

The rounding axe is used on hardwoods. It will cut deep on hardwoods but will tend to become wedged if used upon softwoods. It is different in the fact that it has a thin tapering blade, and that it has a smaller shoulder than the Wedge axe.

The wedge axe is used for felling softwoods, and will not become wedged in the tree. Very hard dead branches will damage the bit of a rounding axe but not of a wedge axe. The wedge axe has a less tapered blade than the rounding axe. It also has a larger shoulder than the rounding axe.



## Using An Axe

When using any axe boots should always be worn.

When using an axe a designated chopping area should be cordoned off. This should be in an area where there are few if any overhead branches.

Spectators should always be kept at least two axe lengths away.

NEVER chop on the ground always use a chopping block, and aim at where the branch is supported by the block.

NEVER use the axe if you are tired, and stop using an axe if you become tired.

Irrelevant as to which axe you have been using, when finished with or not in use the axe should always be masked. This can be done with a leather (or similar material) cover, or by being left in a log. When doing this make sure that the axe handle is never overhanging the length of the log.

When the axe has to be transported from one area to another, it should be masked (obviously not within a log) and should be carried so that the head is in your hand with the blade facing forwards and the toe facing towards the sky.

NEVER use an axe with a split haft. Always replace a damaged haft with a new one - NEVER attempt to repair a haft however slight the damage.

## Care

For day to day sharpening use a circular carborundum axe stone (wet or dry), making a rotary motion. Keep your finger tips away from the blade.