

Common Terms and Nicknames used in Chainsaw Operation

The following is by no means a complete list! Also, there are many regional nicknames and terms that may differ from what is listed here! Safety protocols and standards are updated often, check with trusted resources to ensure you are aware of the most recent recommendations and regulations!

PPE

Stands for ***Personal Protective Equipment***. PPE includes protective clothing, helmets, gloves, goggles, facemasks, respirators, and other safety equipment designed to protect the person (wearer) from injury or the spread of infection or illness.

ANSI

Stands for ***American National Standards Institute***. A private, non-profit organization that administers the U.S. voluntary standards and conformity assessment system.

Scrench

A multi-purpose hand tool that can be used as a flathead screwdriver and a wrench, specifically for chainsaws. The wrench end has two different size sockets, typically they are designed so that one size fits the nuts that hold the bar and chain in place, and the other fits the sparkplug for removal and replacement.

Scabbard

A protective sheath, usually made of plastic, that fits over the bar and chain end of a chainsaw to protect both the person and the chain during transport. **NOTE: Always remove the scabbard before attempting to start the chainsaw!**

Rake

A part of the chain on a chainsaw. It removes the wood shaving that is cut during the forward motion of the chain when the chainsaw is operating in cutting mode. This clears a path for the “cutter” part of the chain to make an unobstructed, cleaner cut. It often resembles an outline of a small wave. The saw’s chain is made up of a series of rakes and cutters, each pair forming a link that make up the chain, and each rake and cutter face each other on each link. When looking at the top of the chain when it is mounted on the bar, the “crest” of the wave (the rake) should always be facing backwards, towards the handle of the saw – otherwise, your chain is on backwards!

Cutter

The blade or cutting section of the links that make up the chain on a chainsaw. The inside, sharpened end, should always be facing away from the chainsaw handle when looking at the top section of the chain when it is mounted on the bar. **NOTE: It’s called a “cutter”. It cuts! Caution should be used when handling as they are sharp, and there’s lots of them on your chain!**

This document is intended to provide a basic, unofficial explanation of commonly used terms! Please be sure to check trusted resources (e.g., OSHA, ANSI, PPE manufacturers, chainsaw & fuel manufacturers) for more complete information!

Common Terms and Nicknames used in Chainsaw Operation (continued)

Mix

Chainsaw fuel. It may be purchased as a pre-mixed liquid or it may be a consumer made mixture of gasoline and a specific weight of oil at a specific ratio. Check your chainsaw manufacturers specifications for which mix or mix-ratio you should use on your specific model of chainsaw, or you may damage the chainsaw! **NOTE: Mix is flammable!! Always make sure that you start your chainsaw at least 10 feet away from the re-fueling area or where fuel or other flammables are present!**

Chain Tension

The amount of tension that is holding (or not holding, if the tension is too weak or non-existent!) the chain in the bar's channel/slot of the chainsaw. **NOTE: Ensuring correct amount of tension is a major safety checkpoint that should be checked EVERY time before the chainsaw is started! Improper chain tension can easily incur serious injury or death to the operator and others nearby! A working knowledge of how to check the chain's tension, and knowing whether it is too tight or too loose, is absolutely necessary to avoid possible injury, death and/or damage.**

Chain Brake

The part of the chainsaw that, when engaged, prevents the chain from moving...whether the chainsaw is "on" or "off". It is a safety feature that is designed to protect the operator in the event of certain mishaps (not all!) that can occur during operation of the saw. **NOTE: The brake should ALWAYS be engaged (on) when starting the saw, or when placing an operating saw on a surface. A complete understanding of both (1) the reason for the brake, and (2) the operation of the brake, are extremely important!**

Chaps

Protective leg coverings for a chainsaw operator. Also known as "chainsaw pants". Chaps are available with different levels of protection, be sure to read and understand the description and use for the chaps you are intending to use, and choose wisely! **NOTE: Chaps are another important factor in operator safety (PPE). It is highly recommended to ALWAYS use chaps when operating a chainsaw!**

Eyes

A nickname for safety eyewear. It is highly recommended to use safety eyewear that has an ANSI "high impact rating" of Z87.1 or Z87.1+. Face screens and shields are also sometimes referred to as "eyes". **NOTE: Protective eyewear is another ESSENTIAL piece of PPE for chainsaw operators and anyone nearby the operation of a chainsaw!**