
HOW TO TAP A MAPLE TREE WITH TUBING



Tools to have on hand

- Drill (4 Amp/h or more) and batteries
- Specialized bit for maple tapping, depending on your spout
- Specialized maple tapping hammer
- Bottle of alcohol with a spray nozzle or alcohol-soaked sponge
- Paint
- Snowshoes
- Spouts and fittings
- Tension ropes
- Repair pliers
- Tape

The basics

- You can tap a maple tree with a diameter of at least 10" (25 cm). A second tap can be added starting at a 17" diameter. Do not exceed 2 taps per tree.
- The tree reacts to the tap by compartmentalizing, which results in an area where the sap flows deeper within the tree. This area extends on each side of the tap hole by the width of the bit used for drilling, and about 6" above and 6" below the tap.
- Tapping can be done 360 degrees around the tree, regardless of north or south.

The steps

1. Check your tubing. It should be slightly higher than the main line to flow downward at a slope.
 2. Observe the tree's crown to assess its health, making sure the tree is not damaged or dead.
 3. Locate last year's hole and find a healthy part for this year's tap. Consider the best placement based on compartmentalization and the length of your drop line.
 4. Sanitize your drill bit with alcohol.
 5. Make sure you're stable on your snowshoes before drilling. Gently remove any excess bark, if necessary, that could cause the bit to veer off course. Position yourself with both hands to drill your tap hole. The hole should be 1-3/4" (4.5 cm) deep and have a very slight downward angle (about 5 degrees) to promote sap flow. Blow into the hole if there are wood chips left inside.
 6. Sanitize your spout with alcohol.
 7. Gently insert the spout into the hole. Lightly tap the spout with your hammer. It's all in the wrist! As soon as you hear a different sound on impact, stop tapping. Otherwise, you risk splitting the tap hole.
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