

## Install and maintain structural supports for trees

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### Overview

This standard is about installing and maintaining structural supports for trees. These supports will aid the stability of trees. Bracing or supporting a tree means installing, in the appropriate circumstances, a flexible or rigid system into the tree to support its trunk and or branches thereby reducing the risk of failure.

Access to tree crowns can be either by Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP) or rope and harness techniques.

When working with machinery you need to be appropriately trained, and hold current certification where required, in line with relevant legislation.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice when carrying out this work.

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### Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. assess the risks associated with the site and the proposed work
2. select and implement appropriate working methods in accordance with the assessed risks
3. select and use the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work
4. identify trees where structural support would be beneficial
5. select the most suitable structural support system for the situation and the well-being of the tree
6. calculate the expected load and select compatible components within their design/safety factors
7. determine the appropriate position of the installation according to the situation
8. select an appropriate access method and rescue plan for safe working at height
9. communicate the work plan to the ground crew
10. install the selected structural support system into the tree, following current British Safety Standard guidelines and minimising damage to the tree and the environment
11. report on the structural support system used and implement an inspection regime for maintaining structural supports for trees
12. ensure the site is left in a condition which meets environmental requirements, in accordance with the specification
13. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in line with relevant legislation

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### Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards and assess risks
2. how to interpret risk assessments
3. the selection, use and care of personal protective equipment (PPE)
4. emergency planning and procedures relevant to the site
5. how to identify when a structural support for trees is appropriate
6. the different types of structural support system and their application
7. how to identify the correct position for the installation of a structural support system and why this is important
8. how to calculate the load and match the materials used to the expected loads to be placed on them
9. how to apply any pruning requirements to supplement the structural support system
10. how to identify tree species and their characteristics in relation to the selection and installation of the structural support system
11. the basic principles of tree biology and how they affect your work
12. how to install each structural system safely and correctly
13. the maintenance requirements and maintenance period of each type of structural support system
14. the implications and liabilities of installing a support system into a dynamic structure
15. the implications of relevant legislation, codes of practice and current British Safety Standards for your work
16. the potential impact of your work on the environment and how this can be minimised
17. your responsibilities under relevant environmental, health and safety legislation and codes of practice

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### Scope/range related to knowledge and understanding

How to install the following types of structural support systems:

- rod brace – a rod to stabilise a weak fork OR to bridge a cavity OR to stabilise two rubbing branches
- invasive flexible brace – cable into the tree crown
- non-invasive flexible brace incorporating belt attachments into the tree crown prop to restrain downward movement of a heavy or long branch within a few metres of the ground
- propping

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