



# INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

## LESSON 4: TREESTAND SAFETY

V. 2/2018

### Bowhunter Education 2017 Standards – Section 4 Objectives 10, 13, 14, 15, & 16

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| <p><b><u>Instructor Notes</u></b></p>      | <p>This lesson introduces the students to the knowledge and skills necessary for the safe and proper use of tree stands while hunting. This lesson corresponds with Chapter 6 (pgs. 45-49) in the Today's Bowhunter student manual. Teach this lesson to the entire class.</p> <p><b>Teaching Methods Used In This Lesson</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture</li><li>• Demonstration</li></ul> |
| <p><b><u>Time Suggested</u></b></p>      | <p>25 Minutes</p>   |
| <p><b><u>Materials Required</u></b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Climbing, ladder, or hang-on tree stand</li><li>• Full Body Fall Arrest Harness System (FBFAHS)</li><li>• Haul-line</li><li>• Ladder System (if using a Hang-on)</li><li>• Lifeline climbing rope w/ Prusik knot</li><li>• Lineman's style belt</li></ul>   |

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension relief strap</li> <li>• Treebelt</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b><u>Station</u></b><br/> <b><u>Set-up</u></b><br/> <br/> 20 minutes</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attach one or more types of tree stands of your choice to a live, healthy, and straight tree for this demonstration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• climbing tree stand: find a tree with no lower branches; attach both the bottom and upper sections of the stand no more than three feet off the ground; connect the two sections together with a connecting strap</li> <li>• ladder stand: use only the top section of the stand containing the platform; secure the stand to the tree with an attachment strap</li> <li>• hang-on stand: secure it no more than three feet off the ground; place a separate ladder or set of climbing sticks on the tree as well; have the ladder extend at least three feet above the platform of the stand</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Hang the lifeline climbing rope with Prusik knot on the tree six feet above the platform to show the students how it would be used. The haul line should be hung from the seat of the treestand so that it is within reach while sitting.</li> <li>3. The FBFAHS should be near for easy access.</li> </ol> |

**Vocabulary**  
**Builder**



Note: Do not read the vocabulary to the students. These are terms commonly used during this lesson, and the definitions are for instructor reference only.

**Climbing tree stand** – A tree stand consisting of two parts (an upper and lower section) used to climb the tree.

**Full Body Harness** - A harness with five points of contact (e.g. left leg, right leg, midsection, left arm, and right arm, and includes a tether)

**Full Body Fall Arrest Harness System (FBFAHS)** – A fall arrest system that includes a Full Body Harness, a tethering system designed to keep you continuously attached to the tree (tree belt, lineman’s belt, or lifeline climbing rope), and is designed to keep you upright after a fall.

**Hang-on tree stand** – A tree stand that is attached to a tree with either straps or chains where the primary means of climbing the tree is separate from the stand.

**Haul line** – A rope, or other device, that is used to pull a hunter’s equipment up into the stand.

**Lifeline climbing rope** – A rope, with Prusik knot, attached to the tree for maintaining a connection to the tree while ascending and descending.

**Ladder stand** – A tree stand with a built in ladder.

**Lineman’s style belt** – An adjustable strap or rope that is wrapped around the tree and attaches to both sides of a harness and allows the hunter to be secured to the tree with their hands free.

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**Lock-on tree stand** – Synonymous with Hang-on tree stand

**Portable tree stand** – Synonymous with Hang-on tree stand

**Prusik knot** – A friction knot used to put a loop of cord around a climbing rope.

**Suspension relief system** – In the event of a fall, a strap that is connected to your full body harness near the waist and hangs down toward your feet. The hunter stands in the strap to relieve the pressure from his lower extremities to prevent suspension trauma.

**Suspension trauma** – An effect that occurs when a hunter hangs from their harness for a period of time and blood circulation is restricted due to pressure on the lower extremities.

**Tether** – A shock absorbing strap on a full body harness that extends from the top of the hunters back to the treebelt.

**Treebelt** – A strap that surrounds the tree, to which the tether is attached, to anchor the hunter to the tree.

## LESSON PLAN

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| <p><b><u>PART A:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Focus Activity</u></b></p>  <p>1 minute</p>      | <p>The purpose of the focus activity is to get everyone focused on the lesson. Ask: “Can anyone tell me the three types of treestands?” (<i>hang-on, climbing, ladder</i>) Follow-up this question by stating that no matter which style a hunter uses; they must take safety precautions while using them.</p>   |
| <p><b><u>PART B:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Objectives</u></b></p>  <p>1 minute</p>          | <p>State the learning objectives to the students. “At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• list the common types of bow hunting injuries and how to prevent them;</li> <li>• identify the causes of falls from an elevated stand;</li> <li>• identify safe practices for hunting from an elevated stand;</li> <li>• explain how the Full Body Fall Arrest Harness System is essential for reducing the risk of serious injury;</li> <li>• And describe how to recover from a tree stand fall.”</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b><u>PART C:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Teaching Method</u></b></p>  <p>15 minutes</p> | <p>State: “Each year, across the country more hunters are injured from falling out of a tree stand than from any other hunting related incident.”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask: “Does anyone know at what point, while using a tree stand, most falls occur?” Allow time for a few responses and continue by explaining that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Errors occur while climbing into or out of the stand</li> <li>• Errors are made in the placement and use of equipment                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ not following manufacturers recommendations; watch the video</li> <li>○ not selecting proper tree (select live trees)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol> |

- leaving stand on tree for long periods (*weather wear; tree growth*)

Note: When showing the FBFAHS, demonstrate how to properly wear the Full Body Harness (FBH).

2. Explain and demonstrate a FBFAHS and how it works:
  - FBH is advised over single strap harness
    - distributes fall forces throughout the body, reducing the chance of injury
    - keeps the hunter suspended upright in the event of a fall
  - Explain the benefits of a vest style over a strap style FBH
    - easier to put on
    - more likely to be put on correctly
    - can easily be put on in dark
3. State the importance of staying connected to the tree with a FBFAHS from the time they leave the ground until they return to the ground, and explain how to achieve this with each option and when each option would be sufficient:
  - Lifeline climbing rope with Prusik knot – hang-on, ladder
  - Lineman’s style belt – hang-on
  - Treebelt – climbing
4. State the importance of three points of contact while climbing any treestand with a ladder or steps (i.e. two hands and one foot or one hand and two feet).
5. Explain how high above the platform to secure the treebelt to the tree and why:
  - Tether should have no slack when sitting
  - Allows the hunter to more easily re-enter the stand after a fall

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6. Say: “Even though you’ve taken precautions to prevent a fall from a tree stand, sometimes incidents still happen. In the event you do fall, you need to understand how to recover.” Explain to the students the process of recovering after a fall:
    - Don’t panic
    - Re-enter the stand as soon as possible
    - If they cannot re-enter the stand on their own, they will need to signal for help
      - cell phone
      - whistle
      - personal locator beacon
      - keep signaling device within reach
    - Take precautions to prevent suspension trauma
  7. Explain the dangers of suspension trauma and how to best avoid it:
    - Being suspended causes blood to pool in legs
    - Use a suspension relief strap to relieve pressure from the legs
    - Move the legs to keep blood flowing
  8. Explain the importance of proper harness care:
    - Discard a full body harness after a fall
    - Harnesses have an expiration date and should be replaced in a timely manner
  9. Explain how and why to properly and safely use a haul line to lift gear into a tree stand:
    - Have it connected within easy reach while sitting
    - Never climb with anything in their hands or on their back
    - Raise bow with nock end of arrows pointing down
    - Lower bow with nock end of arrows pointing up
    - Crossbow unloaded with barrel facing down
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|   | <p>10. Explain/demonstrate to students that when shooting a bow from an elevated position the archer must maintain proper form while shooting downward by bending at the waist.</p> <p>Students are not being tested at this stage; they are gaining new knowledge. Your role as the instructor is that of a facilitator/coach to help the students learn the material. Lead the students through the discussion, and ensure everyone thoroughly understands the information and vocabulary.</p>   |
| <p><b><u>PART D:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Student Summary</u></b></p>  <p>3 minutes</p> | <p>Ask students to recall the important topics that were covered in the lesson. It is important for students to be able to verbalize these points. Use questioning strategies to flesh out answers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When do most falls occur?</li> <li>• What device do we use to reduce injuries from falls?</li> <li>• When should you attach yourself to the tree?</li> </ul> <p><b>END OF LESSON</b></p>  |
| <p><b><u>Additional Instructor Notes</u></b></p>                                   | <p>If time remains at the end of the lesson, use the time to show the students characteristics of the tree stand (i.e. climbing, hang-on, or ladder) and explain the differences among the three types of stands including how each stand works, when each stand should and can be used, and how to get in and out of each stand safely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hang-on: use a lineman’s belt; use a lifeline climbing rope; maintain three points of contact while climbing; attach FBH to the Prusik knot before ascending; climb above the stand and step down onto the center of the platform; check to ensure the stand supports weight before placing all of your</li> </ul> |

weight onto the stand

- climbing: attach the top and bottom sections to the tree; secure top to bottom with connecting straps; bottom section must be placed low enough on the tree to easily step onto the platform; top section is attached at shoulder height; step onto the platform and stand up through the top section; attach the FBH to the tree
- ladder: need multiple people for set-up; use a lifeline climbing rope; maintain three points of contact while climbing; attach FBH to the Prusik knot before ascending

Addendum

A



**INDOOR OPTION – SAFE TREESTAND HUNTING STRATEGIES VIDEO**

Although an outdoor learning station is preferred, it may not always be an option. In this case, teach the lesson with a video and discussion.

**Time allotted:** 35 minutes

Introductory discussion: ~ 5 minutes

Video: ~ 24 minutes 37 seconds

Discussion/review: ~ 5 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

- Audio visual equipment (DVD player, projector, and screen)
- “2009 Safe Treestand Hunting Strategies” DVD
- Full Body Fall Arrest Harness System (FBFAHS)
  - full body harness
  - lineman’s style belt
  - treebelt
  - suspension relief system
- Lifeline climbing rope

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**Set-up:**

Prior to the lesson, start the video and choose the “Hang-on stand” option from the Main Menu. Cue the video to 3:23 and pause until ready. Close the cover of the projector to block the image so the students don’t get distracted during the introduction.

**PART A – Focus Activity**

Complete the focus activity on page 4

**PART B – Objectives**

State the objectives on page 4

**PART C – Teaching Method**

1. Inform the students that they will now watch a 25 minute video on the proper and safe use of treestands. **End the video at 28:00 run time indicated on the DVD player.**

**Note: If you do not stop the video, it will play continuously for several minutes beyond the 28:00 minute mark.**

2. Follow up the video by reviewing the key points
  - FBFAHS
    - follow manufacturer instructions;
    - remain attached from the moment you leave the ground until you return;
    - prevent suspension trauma after a fall)
    - answer any questions the students may have.
  - If time remains demonstrate the use of the full body harness and lineman’s style belt, and inform the students that it will be available during breaks if they would like to take a closer look or try it on themselves.

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**PART D – Student Summary**

Conclude with the student summary on page 8

**END OF LESSON**

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**Addendum**

**B**



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. Which stand do you prefer and why?

*This is going to be a personal answer. Feel free to discuss why you prefer a specific style, but try to avoid talking about specific brands.*

2. Can you use a tree that has tree limbs?

*Yes, tree limbs can be very helpful for concealment. However you must use a hang-on or a ladder stand. A climbing stand can't be safely maneuvered around tree limbs while climbing.*

3. Does hunting out of a tree make it easier/harder to get a shot?

*Treestands typically allow the hunter to view wildlife approaching at a further distance and helps to conceal the hunter's movements; however, by being elevated, the size of the hunters target is made smaller because of the hunter's angle to the target. The higher in elevation, the more acute the angle, thus the smaller the target.*

