
Rock climbing wall in a tree

Posted by turbodog - 03/23/2004 12:53am

I apologize in advance if this question is irrelevant to the subject of this board but it seems the most likely place to find an educated answer.

I live on 5 acres of forest in Victoria on the Canadian west coast and I want to build a rock climbing wall supported by two trees spaced 8 feet apart. The trees are 16" and 30" in diameter respectively and I have no doubt that if I fix a wall made of 2"x6" spruce and 3/4" plywood to them they will support it easily.

I am concerned that I will damage the trees though.

I have been told that I should use big lag bolts and soak them in Clorox first to reduce the risk of infection to the tree. Is this accurate/sufficient? Do I have to worry about termites in my wall?

Also, in a year or two I will want to take it down (since we're house sitting) and move the wall to a new house. Will I have problems disengaging the wall? What should I do to fill in the holes or should I just screw the bolts back in to protect the tree?

Has anyone had any experience with this kind of set up. I'm sure it's pretty unusual but any advice would be greatly appreciated.

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Posted by stevebullman - 03/26/2004 12:33pm

have you considered tying the wall to the trees, this way the tension could be regularly adjusted on the ropes and you wouldn't be damaging the trees at all

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Posted by NickfromWI - 05/17/2004 12:23am

It is reasonable to put a bolt in a tree. They do it on ropes courses all over the country and arborists install cables in the trees using bolts.

Keep in mind that a hole in a tree is a path for infection/disease.

When you take it down, do not pull the bolt out. Cut them off. Pulling them out will open the tree to infection right to the area of already damaged cambium.

That being said, I like the idea of using lashings to hold it. A good lashing can be amazingly strong. I repeat... A GOOD lashing can be amazingly strong. If it's too tight, it could cut into the tree, which would be bad.

Have fun...I built my own wall in my dorm room while I was in college....They sure can be fun!

love
nick

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Posted by Ron - 08/30/2006 04:10pm

Just a comment about using rope in a semi-permanent installation like the wall project described. I wanted to install some "semi-permanent" anchors in some pine trees so I could leave a pull rope attached to pull up my climbing rope. I planned to use a tubular steel platform (just enough to hold the rope, not to sit on or anything like that, although, now that I think about it...hmmm..) and attach the platform with some 2 inch 4000 pound tie downs. Then I read on a hunting supply sight that it's not good to leave tree stands in trees for long periods because the tree animals, squirrels I presume, tend to chew through the nylon bands. That's scary!

So maybe that suggests that only metal should be used???

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