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## Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by moss - 11/20/2007 11:15am

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I really want to like the Su sleeve variant of the traditional Dan House sleeve. This is the black conduit sleeve that's very flexible. Unfortunately I've worn through 3 of them in 2 months. The black plastic is wearing through in the middle part of the sleeve. I've tried taping the worn areas but it reduces the flexibility and transfers stress to the untaped parts of the sleeve. I'm back to using my traditional gray House style conduit sleeves which seem to be indestructible.

Anyone else experiencing rapid wear on their black House sleeves? Or am I the only one who is beating them up? I posted a gear review to shed light on this problem.

-moss

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by markf12 - 11/20/2007 12:06pm

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Moss,

I don't climb nearly as often as you do, but I've worn out one of my two Su sleeves in the past year, and the other one's a bit iffy. I thought at first that it was just because I had used the thing for one of my "cryogenic" climbs last winter - the plastic housing cracked then, but after that the metal conduit seemed to be breaking down even with electric tape repairs. I love the tight bending radius and the ease of installation, but this wear issue has me worried. If the sleeve fails during a climb it seems as though it could eat a rope.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by moss - 11/20/2007 02:01pm

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markf12 wrote:

...this wear issue has me worried. If the sleeve fails during a climb it seems as though it could eat a rope.

The good news is that the wear is incremental. First sign of wear is a roughed up surface, then deeper scratches and cracks, then you can barely see the steel conduit showing through and finally the plastic jacket really opens up and the steel coils start to separate.

I didn't inspect one of my sleeves well enough and I found (after the climb) that the coils were starting to separate during a climb. No rope damage occurred.

Pre-climb inspection is key. If the sleeve cover is solidly intact before the climb you're good to go.

-moss

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by treeman - 11/21/2007 11:32pm

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So are we back the leathers? The bomber House Sleeve is sooooo heavy and cumbersome. We have been using leather sleeves at the school for years now with little failure. I tie a bit of throw line around the sleeve and clip it to my saddle with a carabiner. It works for me.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by moss - 11/24/2007 09:42am

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treeman wrote:

So are we back the leathers? The bomber House Sleeve is sooooo heavy and cumbersome. We have been using leather sleeves at the school for years now with little failure. I tie a bit of throw line around the sleeve and clip it to my saddle with a carabiner. It works for me.

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I think it depends on your climbing style and how you use the black sleeve. If you put one on your lanyard it will probably last longer than one used on a 150' rope. If you're going on a long hike to the tree and you're minimizing gear weight then maybe it's worth the durability trade-off.

-moss

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by Electrojake - 11/24/2007 02:02pm

treeman wrote:

We have been using leather sleeves at the school for years now with little failure. . . It works for me. Product Development. . . The test of time shows what products will surface as the most trouble-free.

I still carry a House Sleeve in the gear bag.

In a narrow-V crotch it does provide the most robust mechanical protection.

But yes Mr. Treeman, the leather sleeves work great and have taken first place for rope protection and durability. They last a long time, can handle an occasional splash of 2-stroke fuel and they sure hurt a lot less than a House Sleeve if by chance your get bonked with one during a rope removal.

As for the Su Sleeve. . .

While obviously not as durable as leather, the Su Sleeve is so "high-tech" that I have one in my gear bag for effect. It kind of has that Panasonic Robot look. The Su Sleeve that I have is a little too tight for the 1/2 inch line I use but as I understand it, they now have a larger diameter version for fat-rope junkies such as me.

-Ej-

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## Re:Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by oldtimer - 12/26/2007 10:54pm

I was reading this old post after inspecting my small diameter friction savers to see how they are doing. I have a question that was not answered in the previous postings.

Is the material used by Elliot the same as the one used by Treetramp?

My two sleeves made by Treetramp are in perfect condition after one year of use. The only thing that I have done is replace the tape covering the end caps but the material appears in good shape. FYI: I never drop the sleeve from the tree since it is always lowered by riding the rope down and then I remove the rest of the rope from the TIP. I do not know if that makes a difference from what others climbers are doing or if the problem Moss described is related to the material that Elliot used (that appears to me to be different to the one used by Treetramp.)

I hope either one of them will post something or contact me by private message if they prefer that way.:lol:

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## Re:Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by moss - 12/27/2007 01:12pm

I've had wear problems with sleeves from Elliot and New Tribe (black House sleeves). I can't see any difference in the exterior vinyl material, I believe they are the same spec. Since many of you are not having wear problems it may be that I'm being too aggressive with them. Treetramp has sent me some black sleeves to test, I will observe closely how my use effects wear.

I really like the black sleeves and continue to use them. My current strategy is that when I'm running a group climb I use the indestructible gray House sleeves. When I'm climbing on my own I use the black sleeves to take advantage of their light weight and portability.

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The wear occurs when the sleeve is on the branch, the vinyl is abraded and eventually breaks down over many climbs. Dropping the sleeves to the ground doesn't seem to cause any problem. In other words it is a friction wear issue not an impact problem.  
-moss

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## Re: Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by oldtimer - 12/27/2007 09:52pm

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The material that I saw in the Su sleeves in Colorado was different than that one I got from Dan from his first batch. That material was more flexible and plastic like than that one my sleeves are made out. I think that may be the problem that you are having with your sleeves. The new material that Elliot used on the second batch is different than the one he had in Oregon the first time I saw his sleeves.

I wish any of those guys would shed some light into this mystery!

:S

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## Re: Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by TreeTramp - 12/27/2007 10:24pm

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Sorry for the delay in response but I needed to inspect as many black jacket conduits as I could.

All of the ultra-flexible conduits are covered with a black vinyl (PVC) with a vacuum forming process.

Of all of the sleeves I could inspect, the specification numbers were only visible on two. Each had the same numbers and they felt a little "looser" than a third one; a fourth had no number and felt "tight".

My conclusion is that all PVC is the same and the black vinyl jacket will soften with use.

Hope this helps,  
Dan

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## Re: Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by eriebuoy - 02/15/2008 12:33pm

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I know this thread about conduit rope sleeves is old, but I've only just noticed it (I've not been keeping up with the forums, I must admit).

I want to remind everyone that you can buy the conduit from McMaster-Carr (PN: 8069K13 and called "Ultra-Flex" within the "Liquid Tight Flexible Metal Conduit" category) very inexpensively (currently \$1.93/foot). When your sleeve starts to show some wear, simply remove the endcaps and screw them into a new length of conduit. I like to put some colored gaffers tape around the lip of the endcap so that the black sleeves are more visible and I can see how they are positioned. I have sleeves in a few lengths and use a different color tape for each length so that I can grab what I want more easily.

For those who'd like to get a hold of some endcaps, I've listed here (on my terribly out-of-date Flickr site) where you can get the endcaps, too.

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## Re: Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by moss - 03/31/2008 02:46pm

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eriebuoy wrote:

I know this thread about conduit rope sleeves is old, but I've only just noticed it (I've not been keeping up with the forums, I must admit).

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I want to remind everyone that you can buy the conduit from McMaster-Carr (PN: 8069K13 and called "Ultra-Flex" within the "Liquid Tight Flexible Metal Conduit" category) very inexpensively (currently \$1.93/foot). When your sleeve starts to show some wear, simply remove the endcaps and screw them into a new length of conduit. I like to put some colored gaffers tape around the lip of the endcap so that the black sleeves are more visible and I can see how they are positioned. I have sleeves in a few lengths and use a different color tape for each length so that I can grab what I want more easily.

For those who'd like to get a hold of some endcaps, I've listed here (on my terribly out-of-date Flickr site) where you can get the endcaps, too.

A belated thanks for doing the research and posting the links. I really like the qualities of the ultra flex black conduit despite the fact that it wears quickly (compared to the heavier-duty gray conduit). I just ordered 20 ft. and will swap out the endcap/ferrules from my current sleeves when they wear out.

Hey Erie! If you're listening, are going to attend the Bob Wray/Blue Ridge get together in North Carolina in late April? Check out the Announcements forum for more info.

-moss

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## Re: Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by oldtimer - 04/29/2008 04:15pm

Hello Eriebuoy;

McMaster-Carr (PN: 8069K13 and called "Ultra-Flex" within the "Liquid Tight Flexible \_meta\_ Conduit" category) very inexpensively (currently \$1.93/foot).

Did you happen to locate in the same catalog the metallic end caps? I was looking around but was not able to find them. Any helpers there? I would like to make a few small diameter (for 1/2 inch ropes) friction savers for me and a couple of climbing friends. My current F-saver supplier has not replied to my e-mails inquires. ;-(Sad) :blush: (Hint, Hint-tree tramp.)

If you are interested on this project let me know and we can split the end caps since you have to buy 100 per box and I only need about 20 or so. Or maybe I can buy more "Ultra-flexible" conduit and make more of them since New Tribe does not carry them anymore.

The original Inventor and Master Friction Saver maker has not been around the boards lately but his are the best I have seen and they are durable enough for me.

Any other "hose" will not work because they melt with the friction generated by the rope. So Michael's Idea of the "Shower Hose" will not work because it is too light weight to stay in shape under the heavy weight of the climber.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 04/30/2008 06:12am

Hi. Sorry to butt in on your discussions. I need something similar for my climbing in England. The conduit looks like shower hose. Is that the case or does it need to be more rigid so that it holds its curved shape and doesn't get dragged off the branch when you pull the rope through?

(I going to order some from a trade supplier over here - possibly this week)

Thanks,  
Michael

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## Re: Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by eriebuoy - 04/30/2008 08:53am

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Oldtimer -- I haven't found the endcaps in McMaster-Carr. The official name for that part is a "ground cone" and it's a part of a fitting for liquid-tight conduit called a "Liquid Tight Connector Assembly (T&B Part #5333). Since I can't use 100 of them, what I do is go to my local electrician supply store that carries Thomas and Betts and buy the whole fitting (~\$4.00) and take out the ground cone and throw the rest of it in my junk drawer.

However, if we could find enough takers within the rec-TC community (via this forum and others) I'd be happy to buy a bag of 100 and send them to people for only the cost of the parts and shipping. I've gotten a lot out of reading the very good information shared by the community and would be delighted to have a way to return the favor.

I wonder how many would be interested? If the minimum order is 4 cones, we'd need 20 people to make it worth doing (I don't mind keeping a few).

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by eriebuoy - 04/30/2008 09:07am

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Michael, no problem to butt in -- that's the whole point of a forum! If tangents weren't allowed, we'd all be stuck in the same circle (get it?)

I'd be mildly surprised if there isn't liquid tight conduit in England -- there must be some equivalent. In any case, the stuff that we know works as a cambium-saver/rope-sleeve has a spirally wound steel core that provides the required structure and low-friction interface between the sleeve and the rope. The outside is coated with a plastic/rubber coating of some kind (I think some kind of PVC, but not sure). The coating is aesthetic and also may let it slide around the branch union and protect the tree a bit better than it would if it weren't there.

The part that is important is the steel core -- I've tried some all plastic alternatives and they just don't hold up well or provide a smooth enough surface for the rope to pass through. You can more easily find non-coated conduit -- just the naked steel core. Maybe you can coat that with plasti-dip to protect it and provide the same kind of properties that the rubber coating provides on the stuff we buy.

Also, there are a few different varieties of liquid-tight conduit. As you can see on my flickr site, I've tried another one and it works okay -- not as well as the black ultra-flex, but it worked. I'm not sure at all what you mean by shower hose, but the ultra-flex that I use is very flexible and does not "remember" or hold its shape once deformed. The Allflex (the alternative conduit I've tried) does hold its arc shape, which actually seemed to make it more difficult to set and keep in the branch union.

Do let us know if you try something else with success (or failure, for that matter). Sorry to be pedantic, but remember to go low and slow when you're testing new stuff -- even though this doesn't seem life-support critical, you never know how things might backfire on you . . .

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## Re: Black conduit sleeves Question

Posted by eriebuoy - 04/30/2008 09:15am

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Moss, thanks for the invitation . . . it sounded like a can't miss opportunity which I, unfortunately, missed. I had plans that couldn't be changed for that weekend.

However, I'll try to check the forums more often and hopefully I can make a gathering sometime soon. Virginia and points in the northern South is not a long drive from Central PA -- after all, Mason and Dixon started in Philly!

Is there a report/review/photo-site up anywhere yet?

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 04/30/2008 10:40am

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I think I've found something similar, however I need to wait until my account is activated before I can even see the prices!

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There is a choice of 13mm or 17mm ID (1/2" or 11/16"). I would tend to go for 17mm with my 10mm climbing rope - would you agree that more clearance is preferable?

If I had a lathe I could make up some tapered end fittings instead of the chunky screw fittings that are available!

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by eriebuoy - 04/30/2008 11:58am

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I just measured the ID of the ultra-flex (the black liquid-tight conduit from McMaster-Carr) to be 20 mm. I think that of the two choices that you have, 17 mm is the way to fly. Do you have a link for the product you are contemplating? In any case, let us know how it works out, with some photos if possible.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by oldtimer - 04/30/2008 04:04pm

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17 mm is about 1/2 in of inside diameter. That's how big the inside of the flex pipe is. The outside diameter is about 3/4 in or around 19-20 mm. So it should work. Hopefully they are the same as the ones DanH. used on his. They sure worked fine for me almost 2 years or more. One is starting to show some signs of age now. Make sure they will fit inside th pipe or you'll get stuck with 100 pieces of useless metal rings.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 04/30/2008 06:58pm

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Here's the picture - it should be alright, but I think 10m is the shortest reel I can buy.

Michael

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 04/30/2008 06:59pm

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<http://www.treeclimbing.com/images/fbfiles/images/FSU.jpg>

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## Parts for Rope Sleeves

Posted by TreeTramp - 05/01/2008 11:52pm

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Hey Y'all,

Just got back from Charleston, SC with my wife and read that you all are looking for parts to make your own sleeves. If you want reply with your needs and I can figure out the costs for each one of you.

See you at the top,  
Dan

PS In England call up a friendly electrician and have him tell you what he uses for flexible conduit that is water prove.

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## Re:Parts for Rope Sleeves

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Posted by oldtimer - 05/02/2008 10:06am

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I would be interested in about 10 sleeves for me and my climbing buddies.  
(22 ft of flex conduit plus 20 end caps will make 10 sleeves)  
That will keep us out of trouble and in the trees for a few years unless you climb with "Mossy Moss" and he eats sleeves for lunch with his high speed squirrel climbs maneuvers! He went back to the heavy duty gray sleeves!

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by oldtimer - 05/02/2008 10:35am

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Michael, That end cap is LOT heavier than the ones TreeTramp uses on his design and the opening looks kind of small for the rope to pass thru but it would probably work fine if that is all you can get overseas. I will try to take a photo of the ones we use FYI.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by eriebuoy - 05/02/2008 11:00am

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Oldtimer -- there are photos of the T&B ground cones that we use on my Flickr site (link).

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 05/03/2008 07:37am

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Oldtimer, that fitting just happened to be shown in the photo - The fittings I bought (6 of them) are much simpler. However I did end up buying 10m of conduit, so I'll need to find some treeclimbers in the UK to sell them to!

One further question is how long do you typically make these friction savers? I intend to use them for SRT where the rope is fixed at ground level but also DRT. Is 2ft long enough?

Also, if you're skywalking with a split tail system would you use one of these sleeves on each end of the 'V' or are cambium savers required with their lower friction?

Michael

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 05/04/2008 09:03pm

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I was climbing a Scots Pine today, practising my techniques (switching from ascent to descent mid rope, self-locking abseil setups, using split tail systems, installing false crotches from the ground and height measuring techniques)

Anyway, looking at the indentation that the static rope made in the bark just by us hanging on it, I'm now concerned that steel conduit (albeit plastic covered) would be much harder than rope so even though there is no risk of friction burn the compression of the cambium would actually be more severe with the steel conduit.

What can we do about that?

Michael

By the way, this was the first branch I got the line over - it looked perfectly healthy from the ground but fortunately I decided to try again for a thicker branch above. Scary eh? :unsure:  
<http://www.treeclimbing.com/images/fbfiles/images/S8300962.JPG>

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by moss - 05/04/2008 09:52pm

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michaeljspraggon wrote:...Anyway, looking at the indentation that the static rope made in the bark just by us hanging on it, I'm now concerned that steel conduit (albeit plastic covered) would be much harder than rope so even though there is no risk of friction burn the compression of the cambium would actually be more severe with the steel conduit.

What can we do about that?

The vinyl covered steel coil conduit distributes the rope pressure enough. I use 3/4" (inside diameter) conduit with my 11mm rope for that reason, less friction for DRT on the inside and better load distribution on the outside. A bare static rope used in a trunk-tied SRT system will definitely cut into a thin-barked conifer branch. I try to tie into the largest branches available on a conifer for the initial SRT entry because the bark will be thicker.

michaeljspraggon wrote:...By the way, this was the first branch I got the line over - it looked perfectly healthy from the ground but fortunately I decided to try again for a thicker branch above. Scary eh?

Classic. That's why it's good to examine high TIPs with binoculars from multiple angles, the rot on that branch would be visible from a side angle. In retrospect did the foliage and outer structure on that branch give you any clues that it was compromised? If you can't get a good view of the branch you're going to hang on you have to put the SRT rope over multiple branches as a backup.

I wouldn't hang my rope on that skinny branch for an SRT ascent, healthy or otherwise.

Thanks for posting that photo, a good reminder of what to look for.

-moss

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 05/05/2008 06:05am

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The stuff I bought is about 2/3" ID and 13/16 OD.

That branch looked perfectly healthy from the ground with plenty of foliage. However I thought it was too thin to use. It was also the lowest branch on that side so as you say there would be no back up. I will definitely use binoculars next time!

Michael

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by oldtimer - 05/05/2008 11:06am

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michaeljspraggon wrote:

One further question is how long do you typically make these friction savers? I intend to use them for SRT where the rope is fixed at ground level but also DRT. Is 2ft long enough?

The sleeves I have are 26 inches long but I assume that 24 inches will work fine. It all depends on the size of the trees you climb regularly.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by moss - 05/05/2008 11:17am

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I make mine around 30" to work with a variety of branch diameters. I have a couple extra long ones for super fat limbs.

-moss

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by oldtimer - 05/05/2008 12:13pm

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Can we Please change the Title of this discussion? It makes it sound like there is a terrible "problem" with the sleeves but everyone keeps making them and using them.

As a matter of fact I just bought 8 more last week for me and my friends. :blush:

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by eriebuoy - 05/05/2008 12:31pm

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That's a good point -- but instead of changing the title of the original thread, let's split the thread at Michael's first post about finding equivalent material in England (post #131564) and title that new thread appropriately. I suspect we'll need a moderator to do this.

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by moss - 05/05/2008 01:19pm

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oldtimer wrote:

Can we Please change the Title of this discussion? It makes it sound like there is a terrible "problem" with the sleeves but everyone keeps making them and using them.

As a matter of fact I just bought 8 more last week for me and my friends. :blush:

There isn't a terrible problem but there is a problem. The black conduit sold by New Tribe wears quickly compared to the previous gray conduit sleeves which are nearly indestructible. I've talked to NT and Dan House about it and they are aware of the problem. Anyone using the NT or Elliot Su sleeves should inspect before using, the steel coils will come apart when the black vinyl wears out.

I love the black NT sleeves for their lightness and flexibility, I make new ones when they wear out. I use them normally, I'm not thrashing them. There is space between the steel coils (that's why they're more flexible), that's what causes the faster wear.

The black conduit that Erie Buoy has linked to has a tighter steel coil, less flexible but they should last longer, possibly much longer than the NT conduit (haven't used it long enough to see how long they'll last). Erie Buoy, have you had any of your conduit version fail yet?

-moss

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by zionstree - 05/21/2008 06:33am

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I need help,

I am having trouble sourcing the ground cones for the sleeves. I need the size that works with 1/2inch rope. outside diameter 25mm approx 75. would anyone in the US be willing to post these to me in Australia. I will pay of course and you could keep heaps of them as payment for your efforts.

Cheers

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by moss - 05/21/2008 07:46am

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zionstree wrote:

I need help,

I am having trouble sourcing the ground cones for the sleeves. I need the size that works with 1/2 inch rope. outside diameter 25mm approx 75. would anyone in the US be willing to post these to me in Australia. I will pay of course and you could keep heaps of them as payment for your efforts.

Cheers

Ok so that would be the 3/4" inside diameter conduit or 3/4" end caps/ferrules. How many ferrules are you looking for?  
-moss

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by oldtimer - 05/21/2008 10:35am

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Zionstree, It is probably easier to just buy a few Sleeves already made by Dan House. He can mail them to you and you can pay the charges. I just bought eight from him for me and my friends and he warranties they will last under normal Recreational Tree Climbing Conditions. Good Luck and take care of those trees.

P.S. Get in Touch with Eric Frey in Brisbane Palm tree Services)or visit his web site at treeworld.com They will point you in the direction to a F-Savers supplier in your local area or a Free Tree and Green Industry Link Directory.

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## Rope Sleeve Ferrules

Posted by TreeTramp - 05/21/2008 05:56pm

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Hey there Zionstree,

I can PM you and we can talk about your needs.

Dan House

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## Re:Black conduit House sleeves problem

Posted by oldtimer - 11/13/2008 03:54pm

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The conduit is wider than the rope distributing th eclimber's weight over a larger surface area and the saver is not moving as much after installation so the impact on the tree is much less than just using the rope alone with all the friction and dragging over the branch.

I do not think that the fact that the friction saver has an internal metal jacket makes more impact on the branch as a matter of fact what is in contact with the branch is the softer outer coat of plastic that is rather soft. IMHO ;)

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