

Increment Borer Instructions:

How to take a tree core using an increment borer

Equipment:

An increment borer has three parts: a handle, an auger, and an extractor tray (Figure 1). To assemble it, first remove everything from the handle (which doubles as a storage case), and then put the back end of the auger into the middle of the handle so it locks in place. Remove the extractor tray before using the borer.

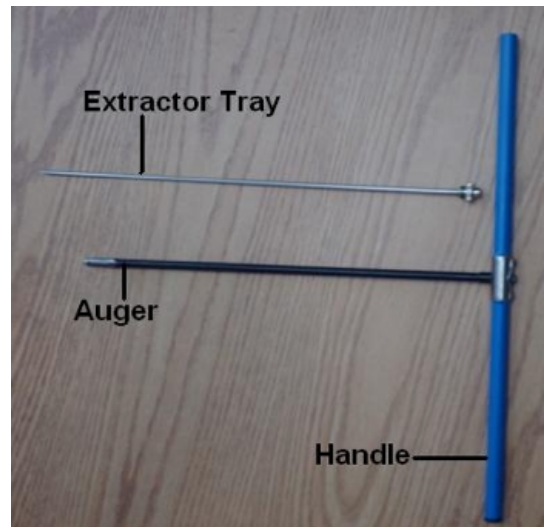


Figure 1: Parts of an increment borer.

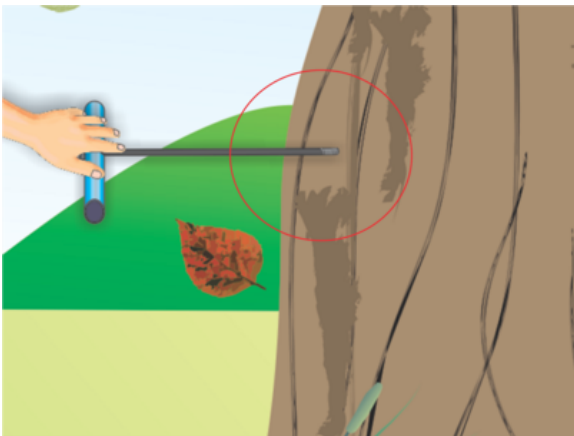


Figure 2: How to hold an increment borer.

Using the borer:

Once you've selected a tree to take a core from, hold the assembled borer so the auger is perpendicular to the tree (Figure 2). If the tree is on a hill, stand on the uphill side. To start the increment borer, press the tip of the auger firmly against the tree and begin to turn the handle clockwise. Once the tip of the auger is firmly embedded in the tree (~ 2 cm), stop applying forward pressure and simply turn the handle clockwise until the auger goes in to the desired depth (ideally a little past the center of the tree).

Extracting the core sample:

Next, insert the extractor all of the way into the bit. The concave side of the extractor should face down (like a ☹️). Next rotate the borer a half turn counter-clockwise, so that the extractor has the concave edge pointing up (like a 😊). The core should now be resting in the extractor; remove the extractor and the core should come with it (Figure 3). Remove the borer after taking the core (otherwise the corer can become stuck in the tree). After you're done with the borer, make sure to clean it before storing it. Plastic straws are usually the right size to store your tree core(s).



Figure 3: removing the extractor tray and tree core.