

How to Make a Kill Stick

Basal Bark Treatment for Killing Small Trees

Eastern Nebraska Program

The Nature Conservancy



Tools :

PVC cement

PVC cleaner/primer

Tape measure

Hack saw

Scissors (not pictured)



Supplies (Part 1):

Oil-based floor finishing applicator refill (for the wick of the kill stick).

Available online or at many hardware supply stores.



1a

3

1b

2a

2b

5

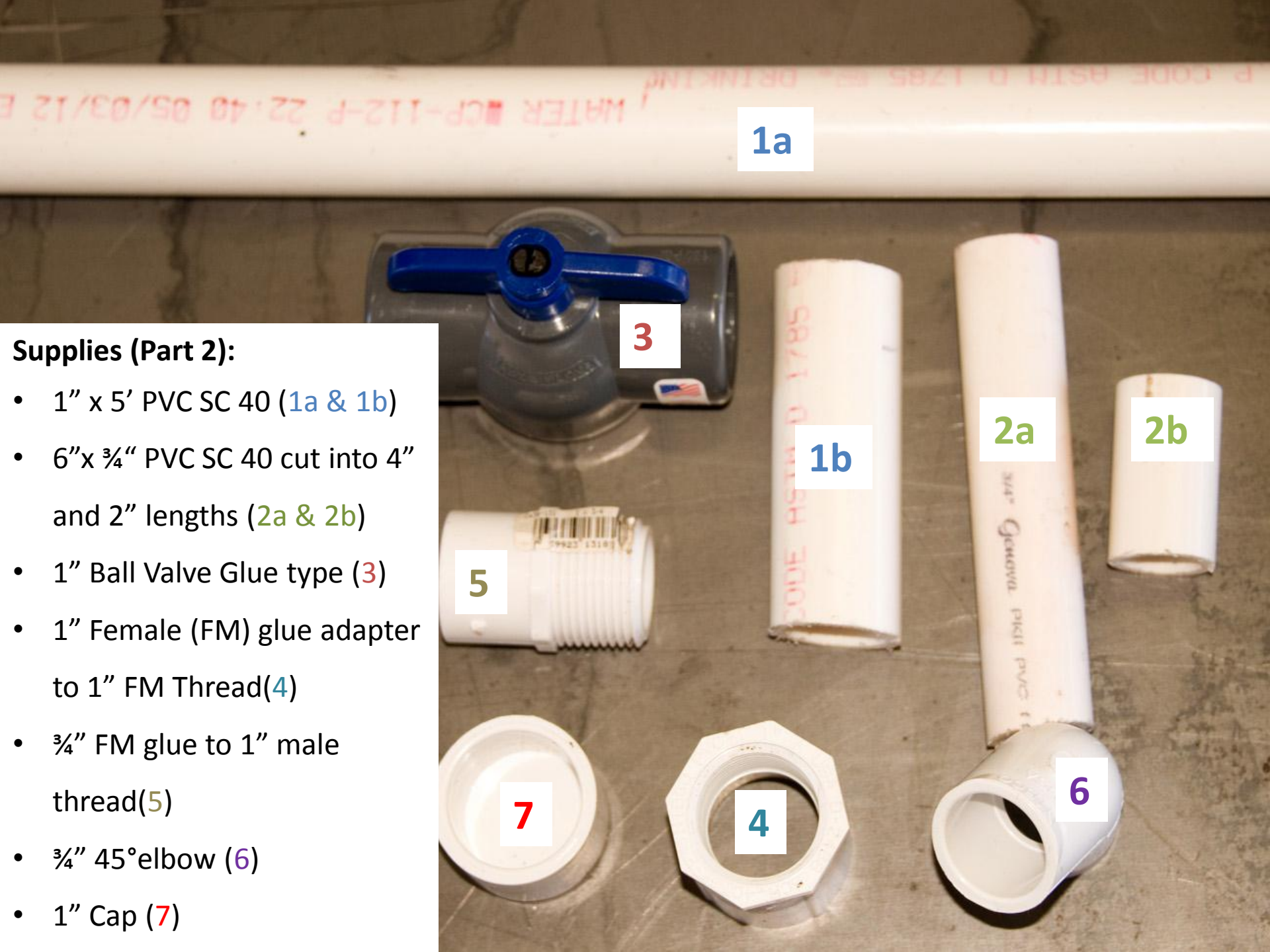
7

4

6

Supplies (Part 2):

- 1" x 5' PVC SC 40 (1a & 1b)
- 6"x 3/4" PVC SC 40 cut into 4" and 2" lengths (2a & 2b)
- 1" Ball Valve Glue type (3)
- 1" Female (FM) glue adapter to 1" FM Thread(4)
- 3/4" FM glue to 1" male thread(5)
- 3/4" 45°elbow (6)
- 1" Cap (7)



Assembly Instructions:

Cut the $\frac{3}{4}$ " PVC into 2" and 4" pieces if not done already (2a & 2b).
Cut a 3" piece (1b) off of the 5' PVC piece (1 a).

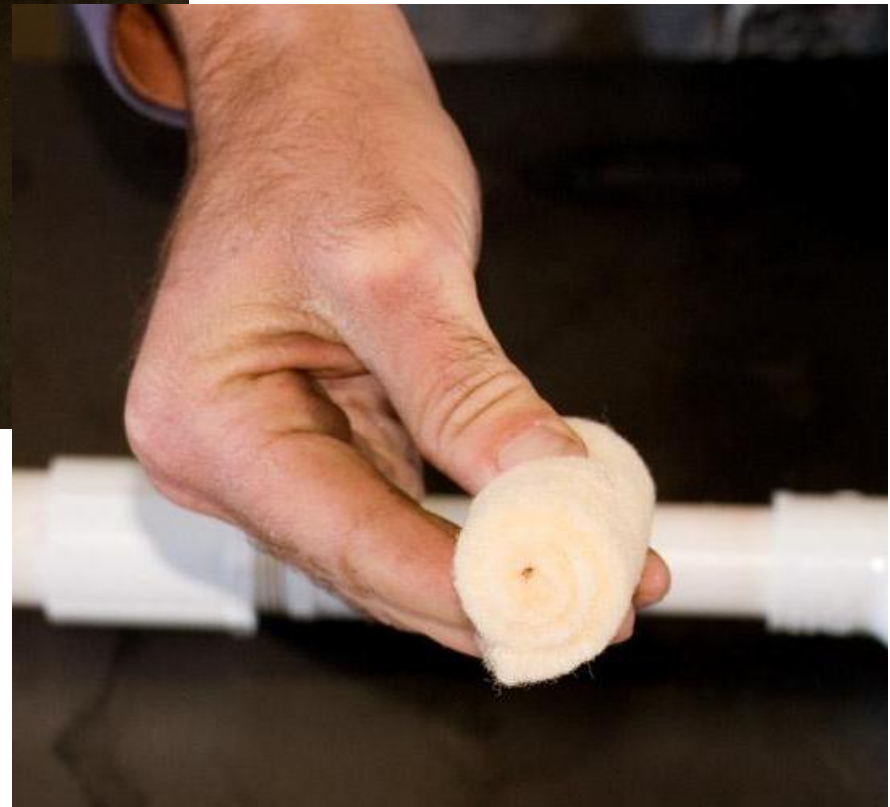
Cement the pieces of PVC together (except the threaded union between 4 and 5) as shown below.





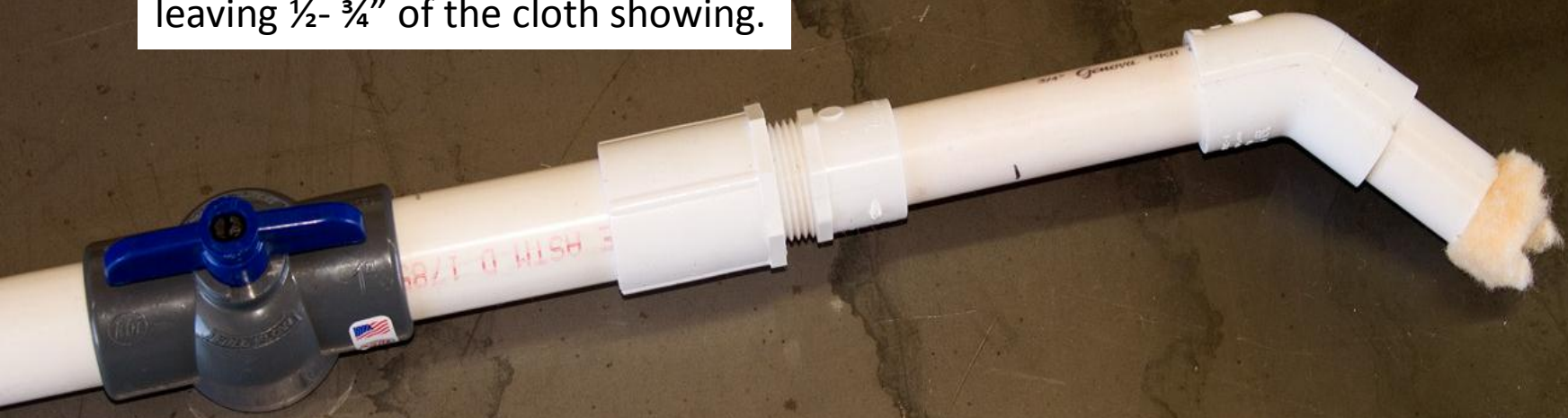
Cut the finishing applicator cloth into thirds crosswise.

Roll one of them tightly as shown.





Twist the piece of applicator cloth snugly into the end of the stick (2b) leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ " of the cloth showing.





Valve is in the closed position here but should be open.

To Fill:

Unscrew the threaded joint of piece 4 & 5, open the valve, and fill with herbicide mixture using a funnel (make sure other end is capped). Once filled, close valve. When in use, adjust valve as needed to keep the cloth saturated with herbicide.

Herbicide Mixture:

1pt Remedy Ultra a.i. 60.45% triclopyr-ester
3pt JLB oil (Basal Bark treatment oil) RTU
.5oz of Bas-oil dye per gal of mix.

This information is not meant to replace herbicide labels and recommendations. Always read and follow label directions.



Apply the herbicide generously to create a wet band around the base of the tree. The width of the band should equal the circumference of the tree.

With small trees (<1" diam.) application to one side may be enough for the herbicide to soak around the entire trunk.

Additional tips:

- One of the ways the herbicide works is by girdling the cambial tissue of the stem. This is why it is both important to make a complete band around the tree, and to apply enough herbicide mixture soak through the bark into the tissue.
- It is important that herbicide is applied below the bottom-most branch of the tree. If the tree has multiple stems emerging from the ground, treat all of the stems.
- The bark of the tree must be dry to allow the oil to penetrate. Treatment should not occur if rain is forecast within 24 hours.
- Basal bark treatment works on most deciduous trees young enough to have thin smooth bark, including buckthorn, willow, dogwood, sumac, cottonwood, mulberry, ash, Siberian elm, Russian olive, etc.
- Herbicide can be applied any time of year— including winter. When applying in the dormant season, trees may green up for a week or two in the spring but then should die.
- When the wick becomes ragged, it can be twisted out, flipped around, and re-used.

Questions ? Email Nelson Winkel (nwinkel@tnc.org)