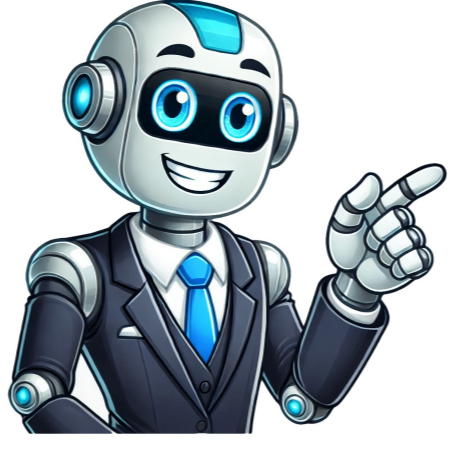


I'm not a robot



distinction is important for a couple of reasons: First, if you have a light-duty hedge trimmer with fixed teeth, you should only sharpen the serrated teeth, as the fixed teeth do not have an edge. Second, you need to make sure the serrated teeth are positioned properly so you can hone them with a file. Tony Carrick Start and stop the hedge trimmer a few times until the teeth stop so that one set of serrated edges is exposed. Once the teeth are exposed, disconnect the battery or remove the spark plug from the hedge trimmer so it cant start up while youre sharpening it. Step 3: Clamp the Blade Your hedge trimmer needs to remain still while youre sharpening it. If you have a workbench with a bench vice, clamp the blade in the vice and tighten it just enough to hold the trimmer securely. Do not over tighten or you could damage it. If you dont have a bench vice, you can also use a C-clamp to hold the blade securely to any large, stable work surface. Again, make sure not to tighten it too much. Step 4: Sharpen The Teeth Depending on what you have in your workshop, there are a few tools you could use to sharpen your hedge trimmers teeth. Here are three different ways to handle it. Metal file: Using a flat metal file to manually sharpen each tooth will take the most time, but reduces the chance of accidentally removing more metal than you should. Hold the file at the same angle as the bevel of the blade. Run the file across the tooth, pulling away from you, while applying a small amount of pressure. Working in only one direction, make about 5 to 10 strokes, or until you create a clean, shiny edge on the tooth. Tony Carrick Angle grinder: Using an angle grinder will speed up the job, but will remove excess material from the teeth if you arent careful. Applying very little pressure, move the disc of the grinder back and forth across the edge of each tooth, from the tip to where it meets the blade. Use a continuous motion to avoid holding the disc over any one spot, which could create an uneven edge. As with the file, youll know youre done when you have a sharp and shiny edge on each tooth. Rotary tool: As with an angle grinder, a rotary tool will save you time as you sharpen tooth after tooth. The small grinding bit also makes it possible to sharpen both serrated edges of each tooth without having to release and rev the blade. However, using a rotary tool requires care and attention to make sure you dont damage the teeth. Load the tool with a grinding stone bit. Position the bit at the same angle as the bevel, then move it back and forth over the tooths edge three to four times without applying pressure. As with the angle grinder, keep the bit moving to avoid creating an uneven edge. Once you notice the edge is clean and shiny, you can move onto the next tooth. Tony Carrick Regardless of what tool you use, your goal is to remove just enough metal to sharpen each tooth. Over sharpening can misshape the edge, or make it susceptible to chips. Only sharpen the teeth on the beveled side. Do not sharpen the flat sides of the serrated edges. Doing so may prevent them from sliding cleanly against the adjacent fixed tooth, compromising its ability to cut. Step 5: Work Your Way Down The Blade Sharpening a hedge trimmer is a repetitive process. To fully sharpen the trimmer, youll need to repeat the sharpening process above on both sides of each tooth. Depending on the length of the blade and whether all of its teeth are serrated, a hedge trimmer can have anywhere from 40 to 80 serrated teeth. I recommend working your way down one side of the blade, sharpening each exposed tooth edge, then working your way down the other side. Step 6: Remove Burrs The sharpening process may create small raised pieces of metal called burrs to form on the tooth edges. They can inhibit the scissoring action of the trimmer, so its important to remove them. Rub a whetstone along each tooth to remove burrs, using just enough force to remove the burr. Once youve finished sharpening and deburring once side of the blade, flip the trimmer over and sharpen and deburr the edges on each tooth on the other side of the blade. Step 7: Readjust the teeth After sharpening the exposed edge of each tooth on both sides of the blade, reconnect the trimmers power source and repeat step two: Start and stop the trimmer to expose the other side of serrated teeth that havent been sharpened yet. From there, repeat steps 4 and 5. Step 8: Oil The Teeth After sharpening, make sure to apply machine oil to each tooth of the trimmer, then use a rag to wipe away any excess lubricant. When its all said and done, run the hedge trimmer for a few seconds to work the oil into the teeth. Applying lubricant to the teeth reduces friction as they cross-over each other and prevents rust. Best Flat File Best Work Gloves Best Overall Hedge Trimmer Best Value Hedge Trimmer Tony Carrick Tony Carrick is a full-time freelance writer who specializes in technology, home improvement, DIY, home security, and outdoor recreation. Hes tested and written about everything from home security systems to power tools to gas grills. His product guides, how-to articles, and feature stories can be found in such publications as Bob Vila, Angl, U.S. News and World Report, Field & Stream, Futurism, and Switchful. When Tony isnt writing, he can be found working on his latest home improvement effort at his home in North Carolina.

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