

Attract Bucks with Hinge Cuts

by Gerald Almy

You know the simple pleasure a lean-to can provide in bad weather. Well, a buck will seek shelter in just such a spot, too—and you can create one for him. Here's how:

Build It

#1 - Find a spot where you can hinge-cut several low-value trees so that their tops fall and rest upon the branches of a live uncut tree. A fruit tree works well for the latter, as it supplies food. So does almost any thick conifer, which offers shelter into the late season. Greenbrier, honeysuckle, grapevines, bittersweet, or other climbing vines contribute additional cover and food.

#2 - A natural lean-to will hunt best if you locate it somewhere between a buck's regular bedding cover and the nearest major feed area. You want the haven to become the buck's personal favorite staging area—a place where he'll loaf, feed, and even rest on his way to and from the main grub.

#3 - Once you pick a spot, cut the low-value trees 3 to 5 feet above the ground, slightly more than halfway through—just enough so the tops fall where deer can browse on them. The trees remain alive and can provide food and cover for several years.

Hunt It

Set your stand so the prevailing wind flows perpendicular to the buck's line of travel, which will let you hunt mornings—when the buck may loaf at the lean-to on his way back to bed—or evenings, when he's apt to stage there before feeding. If he shows after dark in the evening, move the stand closer to the bedding area. Or wait for some nasty late-season weather, then grab your gun and slip in downwind. You may find your buck bedded in his favorite storm shelter.

(Courtesy of www.fieldandstream.com)