Nobody knows saw chain like Bailey’s. Our company started selling saw chain to loggers and arborists in 1975, so we have nearly 40 years of experience serving our customers. Today, we sell to everyone from professional timberfallers to suburban homeowners. We also stock and sell more saw chain than anyone in North America. We have a huge selection available, and unlike your local saw shop or box store, we stock all major brands, not just who they choose to represent. Our sales staff is well versed about the different types of saw chain available to best fit your cutting conditions. Buying saw chain can seem confusing at first, but once you understand the basics, it’s quite simple. We’ve explained the key features that will help you choose the right chain, below and on the next page.

I am a New Customer, What Chain Do I Have?

Saw chain and guide bars have identification marks on them, and unless they are extremely worn out, they explain what type of chain is on your saw. Look for any numbers and letters on the drive links. That will often tell you what pitch and gauge you’re running. Also, look for any combination of numbers stamped on the guide bar. The chain must match the guide bar to work properly. Finally, count the number of drive links on your chain loop. If you don’t have a bar and chain for your saw, just get the chainsaw manufacturer and model and we can help you from there.

Saw Chain Manufacturers

There are only three major saw chain manufacturers in the world as of 2012. Carlton, Oregon and Stihl. We carry saw chains from all of these major manufacturers, and all are made in ISO 9001 factories in the U.S., China, Canada, Brazil and Switzerland. Box stores are starting to bring saw chain in from other small manufacturers in China, but quality standards vary greatly, and safety is a concern with chain breakage.

Saw Chain Measurements

Although there are over 100 different styles, saw chain has only two distinct measurements, pitch and gauge.

**Pitch** is the overall size of the chain. We measure pitch as the distance between drive links divided by 2. The pitch of the chain must match the pitch of the drive sprocket and guide bar tip. Common saw chain pitch sizes are .325”, .375”, and .404”. Sometimes .375” is referred to as a fraction (3/8” pitch) and the low profile version is referred to as “Picco.”

**Gauge** is the thickness of the drive link. It is determined by measuring the portion of the drive link that fits into the groove of the guide bar. Common saw chain gauge sizes are .043” (1.1mm), .050” (1.3mm), .058” (1.5mm), and .063” (1.6mm).
Saw Chain Cutter Types

Saw chain is made with several different cutter types for different cutting environments. Here, we have broken this down into four basic styles, although there are slight variations available for each.

**Low Profile** cutters have a round radius edge and round grind profile. This is a common cutter style on small consumer and arborist saws. Low profile chain is simple to file or grind and is also known as “Picco.”

**Semi-Chisel** cutters have a round radius edge and round grind profile. Semi chisel chain cuts slower than chisel chains, but will stay sharper longer in abrasive cutting conditions. It is simple to file or grind.

**Chisel** chain is also known as flat top or round chisel. Cutters have a square radius edge and round grind profile. Cuts faster than semi-chisel, but dulls quickly in abrasive cutting conditions. Simple to file or grind.

**Square Chisel** cutters have a square radius edge and square grind profile. Fastest cutting saw chain, but dulls quickly in abrasive cutting conditions. Difficult to file. Usually maintained on a chisel chain grinder.

**Skiptooth** is a cross between standard and skip sequence. This specialty chain is capable of kickback that could result in serious injury to the chainsaw operator or bystanders. Operate your chainsaw safely. Read all warnings in your chainsaw operator’s manual.

Saw Chain Sequence

Saw chain is available in three different sequences to match your cutting conditions.

**Standard** also known as full-compliment or “full-comp.” Most saw chain is made this way. This type of saw chain is common on all guide bars up to 24” long. “Full-comp” chain cuts fast and smooth.

**Semi-Skip** is a cross between standard and skip sequence. This specialty chain is used mainly by professional cutters who want the slight benefits of each sequence. Semi-skip chain is only available in square chisel cutter types.

**Skiptooth** is also known as full skip. This chain is usually used on bars of 24” and longer. This chain has the advantage of better chip clearance in long cuts and quicker sharpening time (less cutters). It has the disadvantage of being prone to vibration, and the lack of cutter teeth make it “grabby” in smaller cuts.

Saw Chain Safety Features

Saw chain can be incredibly dangerous if used improperly, and many injuries come from a force known as kickback. Kickback occurs when the moving chain at the nose or tip of the guide bar touches an object, or when the wood closes in and pinches the saw chain in the cut. Many saw chains have safety features to reduce kickback potential, and are approved by ANSI as low kickback saw chain.

**Bumper Drive Link(s)** have a built in ramp that reduces kickback potentialal. Some of this chain is ANSI approved as low kickback saw chain.

**Bumper Tie Strap(s)** have a bumper link that significantly reduces kickback potential. All of this chain is ANSI approved as low kickback saw chain.

**Ramped Depth Gauge** Cutter depth gauge (raker) has a built in ramp that reduces kickback potentialal. Varies in length between standard and low profile cutters. Some of this chain is ANSI approved as low kickback saw chain.

**Wide Track Depth Gauge** Cutter depth gauge (raker) has a built in ramp that reduces kickback potentialal. All of this chain is ANSI approved as low kickback saw chain.

Important Safety Information

Chainsaws can be incredibly dangerous tools. Each year there are over 40,000 chainsaw related injuries in the U.S. alone. Many of these injuries occur when the chain saw user experiences “kickback”, which is the sudden upward thrust of the chainsaw bar tip when contacted. Certain types of saw chain are more prone to ‘kickback’ than others, and manufacturers have set up a simple color coordinated identification system (Known as ANSI B175.1) to let the user know which saw chains are more and less susceptible to kickback. In general, all green labeled saw chain is ANSI approved as a low kickback chainsaw chain and all yellow labeled saw chain is not. Bailey’s recommends the use of green labeled saw chain whenever possible. Yellow labeled saw chain is for professional use only. These are the actual warning labels from Oregon saw chain.

Yellow Label Chain Does NOT Comply with the Low-Kickback Requirements of the Standard.

ATTENTION: READ THIS WARNING

This saw chain may be capable of kickback that could result in serious injury to the chainsaw operator or bystanders. DO NOT USE THIS SAW CHAIN UNLESS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE AND SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR DEALING WITH KICKBACK. Saw chain with reduced kickback potential is available.

Green-Label Chain is Low-Kickback Chain.

ATTENTION: READ THIS WARNING

The sawchain in this package is low kickback chain. It met with the reduced kickback requirements of ANSI B175.1 when tested on a representative sample of chainsaws. Its safety features significantly reduce the hazard of kickback while maintaining high cutting performance, ALL CUTTING CHAINS CAN KICKBACK, which may result in severe personal injury to the chainsaw operator or bystanders. Operate your chainsaw safely. Read all warnings in your chainsaw operator’s manual.