



Innovative log arch pins to tractor drawbar and uses its own tongue to lift front end of log off the ground.

“Winchless” Log Arch Uses Tongue To Lift

When Daniel Miller’s main tractor broke down he only had his old Farmall to haul logs home for firewood. To handle the biggest logs, he built an innovative log arch. It uses its own tongue to lift the front end of the log off the ground.

He looked at log arches on the market but they required a 12-volt battery to run a winch, and his little tractor has a 6-volt system. He wanted to avoid hydraulics and keep it a simple implement that pins to the tractor’s drawbar.

Miller built the arch out of 2-in. sq. tubing, 2 in. flat iron and wheels from an old baler.

He explains how it works: “As the cart is backed up over top of the log, the tongue slides backward changing the position of the lifting rod and lowering the log beam. Attach a chain or grapple hook to the log, block the tires and simply pull forward. As the tongue is drawn forward it changes the position of the lifting rod and pulls the log beam upward lifting the log with it. Once the log is moved to its desired location block the tires again but on the other side, back up enough to lower the log to the ground and go get another log.”

The arch has a 30-in. dia. capacity, but so far Miller’s biggest log was 20 in. in dia. and



Miller built the arch out of 2-in. sq. tubing, 2-in. flat iron and wheels from an old baler.

15 ft. long.

Cost to build the 120-lb. unit is less than \$260 when using all new materials. It works so well Miller put it on a website and offers plans. He also has plans for a firewood processor that was in FARM SHOW in 2008 (Vol. 32, No. 3).

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Mark Folz built this log skidder to pull behind his ATV. By using mostly scrap metal he kept the cost down to about \$300.

Log Skidder Made From Scrap Metal

Mark Folz, Merrill, Wis., recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a log skidder that he built to pull behind his ATV.

The log skidder is made mostly from scrap metal. “I saw a commercial model similar to mine in a logging magazine that sold for \$1,500. Mine cost only about \$300,” says Folz.

The wheels came from an old trailer that he no longer used. He bought a heavy-duty winch for about \$75 and attached it to a 3/8-in. dia. steel cable.

“I pull the cable out to the log and choker it. If I can’t back the ATV up to the log, I use the winch to pull the log to the ATV,” says Folz. “I can haul logs completely suspended off the ground, or let 10 to 20-ft. logs ‘end drag’ along the ground, depending on the diameter and weight of the logs. All the weight is on the skidder’s wheels, so all the ATV has to do is pull. With the log suspended completely off the ground it stays cleaner, and as



Log skidder’s wheels came from an old trailer, and the heavy-duty winch was purchased new for about \$75.

a result I don’t have to sharpen the chainsaw’s chain as often.”

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Dan Jacobson’s home-built log skidder mounts on front of his Yanmar 18 hp garden tractor.

Simple “Garden Tractor” Log Skidder

“It works like a dream and lets me skid logs up to 18 in. dia. and 15 ft. long,” says Dan Jacobson about his “garden tractor” log skidder.

The log skidder mounts on front of Jacobson’s Yanmar 18 hp garden tractor. A hand-operated, 2,000-lb. boat winch is used to lift one end of the log 10 to 12 in. off the ground. The operator drives backward to skid the log.

“It does a great job. I use it all year long,” says Jacobson. “A big advantage is that I can leave the log skidder on the tractor all the time. It’s never in the way of rear-mounted attachments.”

To support the winch he welded together a 3-in. channel iron “boom” that bolts onto the tractor’s front bumper. It extends up 18 in. and out 12 in., where the winch is mounted. The boom is reinforced by a pair of angled, galvanized steel pipes.

To lift a log, Jacobson screws a bracket into the top of it with two 4-in. lag screws, using a cordless impact driver he carries on the tractor.

“It’s a simple idea but it really works well,



Hand-operated, 2,000-lb. boat winch is used to lift one end of log off ground.

and it didn’t cost much to build. My total cost was only about \$50. Commercial rear-mounted log skidders mounted on wheels sell for \$300 or more. Driving backward is a bit inconvenient. It isn’t the answer if you have to pull logs out of the woods a long ways, but for short distances it’s the cat’s meow.”

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Small Log Skidder Handles Big Logs

“It lets me skid logs that far outweigh my tractor, and is also equipped with a winch that lets me haul big logs up the steepest hillsides,” says Gene Geiss, Enumclaw, Wash., about his home-built, 2-wheeled log skidder. The heavy-duty tow truck winch is belt-driven by a Briggs & Stratton 6 1/2 hp engine that mounts on the skidder’s frame.

“The winch lets me park the skidder at the top of a hill and block the wheels against a tree stump, then winch logs up onto the hill and skid them out,” says Geiss. “If the log is too heavy for the tractor to drag out, I can lift the back end of the log onto a separate dolly so that it’s completely off the ground.”

“I like this system because I can use it with a small tractor and get into tight places. Some commercial skidders can handle big logs but they can’t winch them up steep hills. Or if they can, they’re so big they require a big tractor that can’t get into tight places.”

He used 1/4-in. thick, 3-in. sq. tubing to build the 2-wheeled dolly, which has an open arch design. The wheels are off a Ford Bronco and were reversed so the valve stems are on the inside, protected from trees and brush. A pair of levers are used to operate the winch’s clutch and brake.

He made a metal subframe on the skidder and mounted the engine crossways. The engine belt-drives the worm-drive style winch at a right angle. “The winch has a multi-disc clutch so I can disengage the worm drive and freespool the cable out. That way I can leave the engine running at idle all the time I’m using the winch,” says Geiss.

A separate dolly on back is used to support big logs weighing 1,500 lbs. or more. Geiss uses the skidder’s winch to lift the front end of the log off the ground, then places a block under the log just back of dead center to form a pivot point. He releases the brake and lets the front end of the log down, which



“My home-built log skidder lets me skid logs that far outweigh my tractor, and can winch big logs up the steepest hillsides,” says Gene Geiss.



Skidder is equipped with a heavy-duty tow truck winch that’s belt-driven by a Briggs & Stratton 6 1/2 hp engine.

causes the back end of the log to lift up off the ground. Then he walks back to the dolly and places the wheels under the back end of the log.

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