BLADE SETUP CHECKLIST

A quick pre-cut checklist for cleaner cuts, better tracking, and longer blade life.

Use this before starting a new blade, after changing blades, or anytime cut quality changes.

Always follow your sawmill manufacturer's specifications for tension, guides, tracking, and lubrication.

1 BLADE CONDITION

- [ ] Inspect the blade for cracks, kinks, weld damage, or missing teeth.
- [ ] Check teeth for dullness, chips, or uneven wear.
- [ ] Make sure the blade is clean and free of heavy pitch, sap, or debris.
- [ ] Confirm the blade is the correct length and width for your mill.

2 BLADE TENSION

- [ ] Tension the blade to your sawmill manufacturer's recommended setting.
- [ ] Recheck tension after installing a different blade.
- [ ] If the blade has been running hot, let it cool before making final tension adjustments.

3 TRACKING

- [ ] Confirm the blade is riding correctly on both band wheels.
- [ ] Turn the wheels by hand with the mill off and verify the blade tracks consistently.
- [ ] Check for unusual movement, rubbing, or a blade that wants to walk forward or backward.

4 BLADE GUIDES

- [ ] Make sure guide rollers or blocks are clean and move freely.
- [ ] Verify guide spacing and clearance according to your mill manual.
- [ ] Check that the guides are aligned and not forcing the blade sideways.
- [ ] Inspect bearings for wear, looseness, or damage.

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Finish the setup, make a test cut, and watch how the blade performs.

5 LUBRICATION & CLEANING

- [ ] Fill or check the blade lubrication system, if your mill uses one.
- [ ] Make sure the delivery tube/nozzle is aimed correctly.
- [ ] Use enough lubrication to reduce buildup without flooding the cut.
- [ ] Clean pitch or sap buildup before it begins affecting tracking or cut quality.

6 FEED SPEED & FIRST CUT

- [ ] Start with a steady, controlled feed rate - do not force the blade.
- [ ] Watch the blade through the cut for wandering, vibration, or excessive heat.
- [ ] Listen for changes in sound that may indicate the blade is struggling.
- [ ] Inspect the first board for waves, roughness, burn marks, or taper.

7 LOG & BLADE MATCH

- [ ] Remove as much dirt, mud, and grit from the bark as practical.
- [ ] Watch for metal, wire, nails, rocks, or other foreign material.
- [ ] Use a blade and tooth profile suited to the species and size of log being cut.
- [ ] If performance drops suddenly, stop and inspect rather than pushing through the cut.

STOP & CHECK IF YOU NOTICE:

- Blade wandering or pulling to one side
- Wavy or rough lumber
- Excessive blade heat or burn marks
- Unusual vibration, noise, or tracking changes

If the mill setup checks out, the blade may need professional sharpening and setting.