GENERAL

stihl 020 av chainsaw

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Introduction

When it comes to tackling outdoor jobs—whether you're felling a tree, trimming branches, or clearing a firebreak—having a reliable chainsaw can make all the difference. Among the many options on the market, the **Stihl 020 AV** stands out for its blend of power, precision, and user-friendly design. This article delves deep into every facet of the Stihl 020 AV chainsaw, from its engineering brilliance to practical usage tips, helping you decide if it's the right tool for your needs.

Overview of the Stihl 020 AV Chainsaw

Design and Build Quality

The Stihl 020 AV is engineered with a lightweight frame that doesn't sacrifice durability. Its robust chassis is constructed from high strength aluminum, providing a sturdy yet manageable feel. The ergonomic handle and balanced weight distribution reduce operator fatigue during extended cuts, making it ideal for both professionals and serious hobbyists.

Engine Performance

At the heart of the 020 AV lies a 20 cc, two stroke gasoline engine that delivers a peak power output of roughly 0.9 horsepower. Though modest compared to industrial models, this power level is more than sufficient for routine pruning, small tree removal, and general landscaping tasks. The engine's compression ratio and fuel air mixture are fine tuned for quick starts, even in cold conditions.

Safety Features

Safety is paramount in any chainsaw, and Stihl has integrated several protective measures into the 020 AV. A low vibration system minimizes operator strain, while a built in chain brake halts the chain instantly if a kickback occurs. The saw also includes an anti start mechanism that prevents accidental ignition, and a protective guard that covers the chain bar during idle operation.

Key Features of the Stihl 020 AV

Lightweight and Ergonomics

Weighing just under 5 pounds (including the bar and chain), the 020 AV is one of the lightest chainsaws in its class. This low weight, combined with a comfortable grip and a well positioned throttle, allows operators to perform precise cuts without excessive effort. The handle's contour reduces wrist strain, a critical factor when working for hours on end.

Fuel Efficiency

Stihl's two stroke engine is designed to be fuel efficient. The 020 AV typically consumes around 0.7 liters per hour at full throttle, which translates to a longer working time between refueling. Moreover, the fuel tank's capacity of 0.4 liters means you'll need to refuel only after about 30 minutes of continuous cutting—an advantage in remote job sites.

Chain and Bar Specifications

The standard bar length is 20 inches (51 cm), with a chain pitch of 3.8 mm. The chain is a high performance, low friction design that offers smooth cutting and reduced heat buildup. For those who need larger cuts, Stihl offers an optional 22 inch bar kit that extends the cutting reach while maintaining the same chain type.

Noise Levels

Operating at an average of 95 decibels, the 020 AV is noticeably quieter than many older, heavier chainsaws. This lower noise footprint not only protects your hearing but also reduces the disturbance to neighbors and wildlife—a consideration for those working in residential or conservation areas.

How to Use Stihl 020 AV Chainsaw Safely

Pre Use Checklist

1. Inspect the chain for damage or excessive wear. Replace if necessary.
2. Ensure the chain tension is set correctly—tight enough to stay in place but loose enough to avoid binding.
3. Check the fuel level and verify that the engine oil is at the recommended level.
4. Verify that the chain brake is engaged and the protective guard is in place.
5. Wear appropriate PPE: safety glasses, hearing protection, gloves, and chainsaw pants.

Operating Procedures

When starting the saw, keep your feet firmly planted and maintain a stable stance. Once the engine is running, let the chain reach full speed before making any cuts. For straight cuts, keep the bar level and use a smooth, even motion. When cutting a tree, begin with a notch cut on the side facing the direction you intend to fell the tree, followed by a felling cut on the opposite side.

Maintenance Tips

- Chain Care: Clean the chain after each use with a brush and a mild solvent. Re oil the chain at least once a week to ensure smooth operation.
- Bar Inspection: Check for cracks or dents. Replace the bar if it shows signs of wear.
- Engine Oil: Change the oil every 50 hours of operation or as recommended in the user manual.
- Storage: Store the chainsaw in a dry, temperature controlled environment. Remove the fuel tank if you plan to store it for extended periods to prevent fuel degradation.

Comparison with Other Stihl Models

Stihl 020 AV vs 020 AV+

The 020 AV+ is essentially an upgraded version of the 020 AV, featuring a slightly more powerful engine (0.95 hp) and improved vibration dampening. While the 020 AV+ offers better performance for larger cuts, the standard 020 AV remains more affordable and still excels in light to medium tasks.

Stihl 020 AV vs 020 AV 2.0

The 020 AV 2.0 incorporates a newer engine design that enhances fuel efficiency by 10% compared to the original 020 AV. It also includes an updated safety lock mechanism. For users prioritizing long term operational cost savings, the 2.0 model is a compelling choice.

Stihl 020 AV vs 020 AV 3.0

The 020 AV 3.0 pushes the envelope further, offering a 1.0 hp engine and a reinforced bar capable of handling thicker branches. However, the added weight (approximately 6.2 pounds) may be a drawback for those who value

portability. The 020 AV 3.0 is best suited for professionals who require more power without moving to a larger, heavier saw.

Buying Guide: Where to Purchase Stihl 020 AV

Authorized Dealers

Purchasing from an authorized Stihl dealer guarantees that you receive a genuine product backed by manufacturer support. Dealers often provide on site demonstrations, maintenance workshops, and extended warranties.

Online Marketplaces

Major e commerce platforms list the 020 AV at competitive prices. When buying online, verify the seller's ratings and ensure that the product includes a full warranty. Look for listings that include the original packaging and any included accessories, such as a replacement chain or a carrying case.

Price Range and Warranty

The Stihl 020 AV typically retails between $350 and $450, depending on the region and any ongoing promotions. Stihl offers a standard one year limited warranty covering defects in materials and workmanship. Extended warranties can be purchased for an additional fee, providing coverage for up to five years.

Common Questions About Stihl 020 AV

- What is the recommended chain tension for the 020 AV? The chain should be tight enough that it does not slip when the saw is stationary but loose enough to allow smooth rotation without binding. Follow the manufacturer's tensioning guide in the manual.
- Can I use the 020 AV for felling large trees? While the 020 AV is capable of cutting branches up to 2 inches in diameter, it is not designed for felling large trees. For such tasks, consider a larger Stihl model.
- How often should I replace the chain? Chains should be replaced when the teeth become blunt or the chain has sustained significant damage. A general rule of thumb is to replace the chain after approximately 200 hours of use.
- Is the 020 AV compatible with electric chains? No, the 020 AV is a gasoline chainsaw and requires a two stroke oil/fuel mixture. Electric chains are not compatible with this model.
- What maintenance schedule is recommended? Follow the maintenance intervals in the user manual: oil changes every 50 hours, chain oiling weekly, and a full inspection at 200 hours of operation.

Conclusion

The Stihl 020 AV chainsaw offers a balanced combination of lightweight design, reliable power, and robust safety features, making it an excellent choice for homeowners, landscapers, and small scale forestry professionals. Whether you're trimming a hedge, clearing a firebreak, or preparing a small tree for removal, the 020 AV delivers precise cuts with minimal operator fatigue. By following the safety guidelines, maintaining the saw regularly, and choosing the right purchase channel, you can enjoy years of dependable service from this versatile tool.

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