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The Lost Art of The Fire Service

Four Cut Forcible Entry Technique

Roll-Up Overhead Doors and Roll-Down Security Gates

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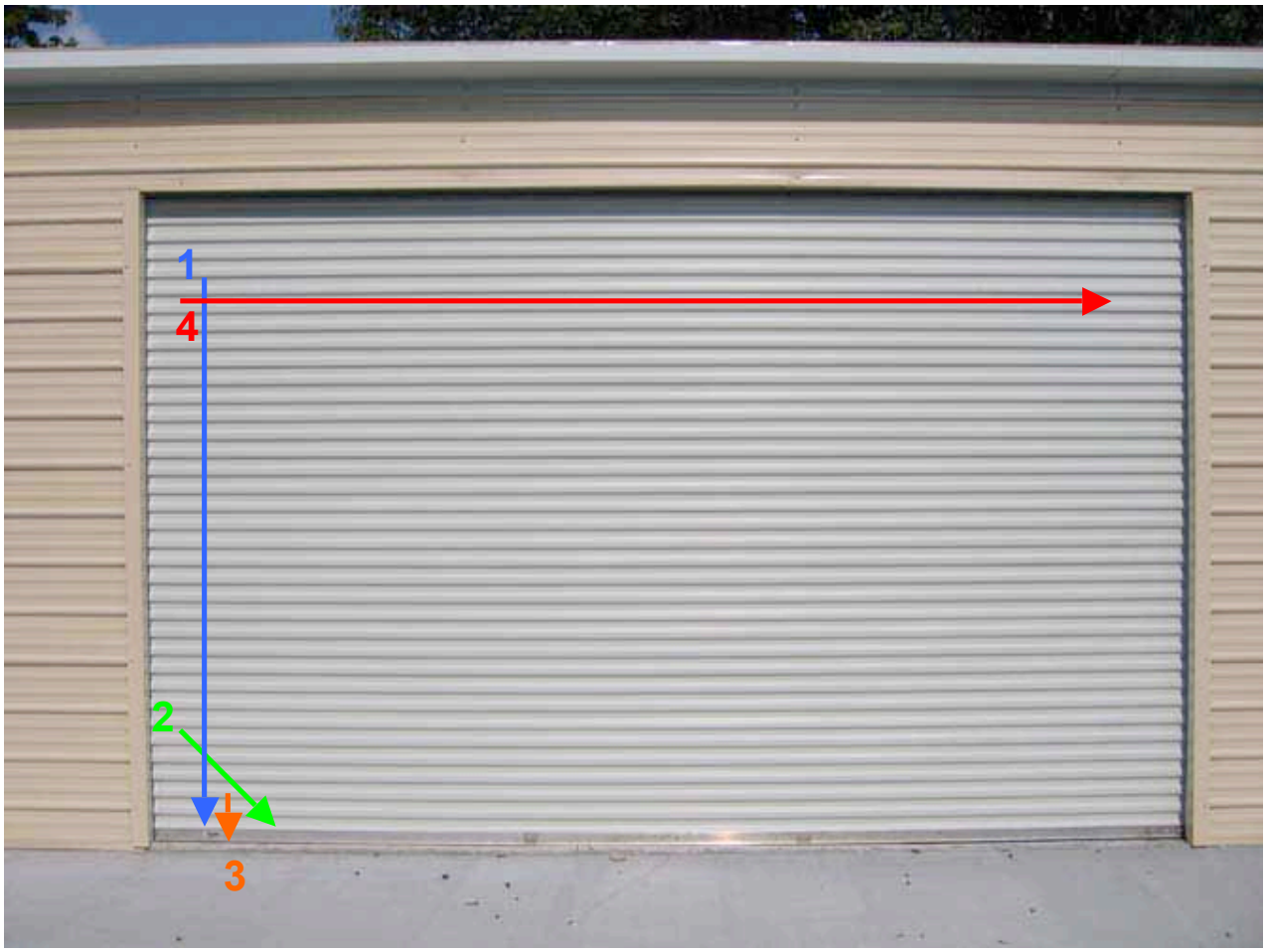


1. Make **Cut #1** down, vertically, from as high as you can reach to the ground just inside one edge.

2. Make an angular cut (**Cut #2**) from about two feet above the ground, crossing your first cut to the ground, creating a triangle. Use a halligan to knock the triangle into the building. This creates an opening to insert the saw head into for Cut #3 and serves as a "knock out" to pull the door open by after Cut #4 is complete.

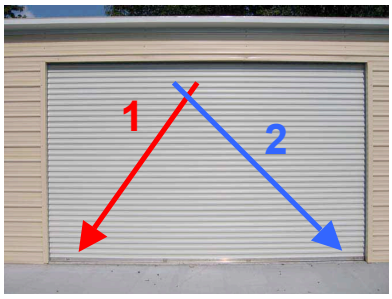
3. Insert the fork of the halligan under the bottom rail or angle iron of the door beneath your triangular opening. Step on the handle of the halligan to lift the bottom rail off the ground. Make **Cut #3** completely through the bottom rail.

4. Make **Cut #4** horizontally, as high as you can reach while cradling the saw, from the edge, across your vertical cut, continuing to the opposite edge of the door. Use a hook or halligan to fold the door outward, hinging on the uncut edge.

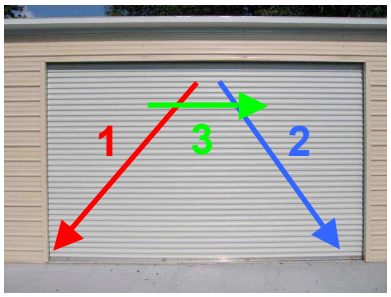
Some additional thoughts about this technique:

- This technique works, regardless of the type or construction of the overhead door or roll down gate.
- This technique creates the largest possible opening quickly with the least physical labor.
- Members operate from the relative safety of a closed door until they control the opening.
- The door can be folded back into place to control ventilation.
- No debris is left in the door opening for members to climb or trip over, or to drag hose over causing damage.
- There is no need to defeat track or rail-mounted locks before opening the door.
- Members are not exposed to danger while removing slats, which may prove to be a time consuming operation.

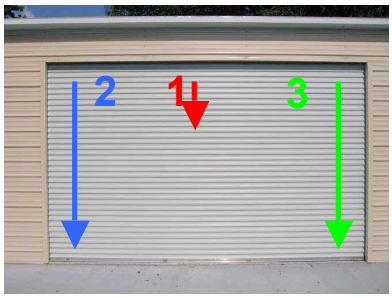
Other popular methods:



Inverted V (2 Cut Method)



Inverted V (3 Cut Method)



1 Cut & 3 Cut Slat Removal

Notes on the "Inverted V" technique:

- If the "Inverted V" is used on a roll down gate, members should remove the slats from the top of the cut area to create a larger clear opening. This usually doesn't happen.
- Members usually cut the "Inverted V" using two cuts. This allows the door/gate to fall while the second cut is still being made, exposing the members to fire conditions and allowing uncontrolled ventilation.
- While the three-cut method of the "Inverted V" provides additional protection while cutting, the debris still falls without control or is pushed into the fire area.
- The "Inverted V" leaves a large debris pile in the door area that is usually not removed before entry is made.
- The bottom rail or angle iron is usually not cleared to allow the door area to be fully cleared. This could prove catastrophic if the door is raised for some reason after hose lines are advanced over the bottom rail.

Notes on Slat Removal Techniques:

Slat removal techniques are often a fast and effective means to open a roll down gate. The "1 Cut" technique for roll down gates employs a quick, short vertical cut high in the center of the door. Members then remove slats laterally toward the center of the door using tools or by hand. The slats may become hung up or jammed, and become very physically intensive to remove. When this happens, members often end up transitioning to a "3 Cut" technique, which is the same theory as a "1 cut", but vertical cuts are made down each edge of the door, just inside the rail. Once the weight of the lower slats is removed, the torsion spring of a manual roll down gate will generally lift the remaining upper slats. These techniques generate a large amount of debris to contend with, and if they fail frustration often sets in, resulting in random saw cutting until the door is defeated.

Reasons to cut, rather than raise, an overhead garage door:

- Speed. There are numerous reasons an overhead door may not open, such as primary and supplemental locks, an engaged electric opener, and bent or deformed tracks.
- Numerous firefighters have been trapped inside a burning structure when an overhead door spontaneously closed during operations (either electrically or via gravity). There are numerous methods to protect against a door spontaneously closing:
    - Bending the track with the fork of the halligan.
    - Deforming the track with a striking tool.
    - Wedging a hook in the track under the door (don't trust a wood or fiberglass handled hook to be strong enough to hold up a door, only use a steel roof hook, and don't expect someone who "needs" that hook not to take it).
    - Placing a ladder under the door.
    - Securing vice grips or a C-clamp to the track.
    - Disengaging electric operator linkage from the door.
    - Removing power from the electric operator.
- When an overhead door is raised, the coil springs are loaded with tension. This creates an extremely dangerous projectile if they fail, which they are likely to do under high heat conditions. When the springs fail, the door will close in an uncontrolled manner, and its entire weight will have to be lifted manually to re-open it. Torsion or bar-type springs are less dangerous than coil springs, but still present the hazard of allowing the door to close.
- An open overhead door creates a void space above it, directly over the entry and egress point, which cannot be effectively hit with the hose stream. There is likely to be fire above the overhead door that is not easily recognized or extinguished.
- The ceiling above an open overhead door cannot be opened to check for extension.
- An open overhead door suspends several hundred pounds of material over the entry and egress point from weak metal tracks, held up by weaker roller wheels, installed by short (usually loose) lag bolts. This is clearly a hazard we should avoid working under or even creating in the first place.