SOFTWARE & TECH

Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String

PUBLISHED
November 25, 2026

REFERENCE
#1795582907202536

Mastering the Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String Process

Owning a **Stihl FS 38** weedeater is a point of pride for many homeowners and landscaping enthusiasts. This lightweight, reliable trimmer is known for its ease of use and durability. However, like all string trimmers, it requires regular maintenance, and the most common task you will face is replacing the cutting line. For many users, the moment comes when they must consult the **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** instructions to get the job done right. Understanding how to properly restring your trimmer head not only saves you time and money but also ensures the machine operates safely and efficiently. In this comprehensive guide, we will walk you through every step of the process, demystifying the procedure and providing you with expert tips that go beyond the basic manual.

Understanding Your Stihl FS 38 Trimmer Head

Before diving into the re-stringing process, it is essential to understand the specific type of trimmer head your Stihl FS 38 uses. The FS 38 typically comes equipped with a **Tap Action** or **AutoCut** head, depending on the model year. These heads are designed for convenience, allowing you to feed more line by tapping the head on the ground while the engine is running. However, when the spool runs completely empty or the line breaks off inside, you will need to perform a full re-string.

One of the most frequently referenced documents by owners is the **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** section, which outlines the specific line diameter and length requirements. Using the wrong line size is a common mistake that leads to poor performance or damage to the trimmer head. The manual specifies that the FS 38 typically uses a 0.080-inch (2.0 mm) diameter line, although some users prefer a slightly thicker 0.095-inch (2.4 mm) line for heavier weeds. Always check your specific manual to confirm compatibility.

Tools and Materials You Will Need

To successfully complete the re-stringing process, gather the following items before you begin:

- Replacement trimmer line: Round or twisted line works best for the FS 38. Avoid using heavy-duty square line, as it may not feed properly through the head.
- Safety gloves: The trimmer line can be sharp, and the head may have burrs from use.
- Clean work surface: A flat area prevents the spool from rolling away and keeps dirt off the line.
- Your owner’s manual: Having the Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String guide handy for reference is always a good idea.
- Small screwdriver or pick tool: Useful for removing stuck line fragments or prying off stubborn retaining caps.

Step-by-Step Guide to Re-Stringing Your Stihl FS 38

Now, let us walk through the process in detail. Follow these steps carefully to ensure your trimmer performs like

new.

Step 1: Safety First

Before any maintenance task, always ensure the engine is off and the spark plug boot is disconnected. This prevents accidental starting. Allow the engine to cool completely if it has been running. Wear your safety gloves to protect your hands from the sharp line and any debris lodged in the trimmer head.

Step 2: Remove the Trimmer Head

Most Stihl FS 38 models feature a bump head that can be removed without tools. To remove the head, locate the two small notches on the side of the head. Insert the shaft of a screwdriver or a suitable tool into one of these notches to lock the head in place. While holding it steady, turn the knob or the entire head counterclockwise to unscrew it from the drive shaft. Some older models may require you to press in the tabs on the side of the head while turning. Once loose, pull the head straight off the shaft. This step is often glossed over in a basic **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** guide, but proper removal prevents damage to the threads.

Step 3: Disassemble the Spool Housing

With the head removed, you will see the spool housing. On most FS 38 heads, you can simply pull the spool out of the housing. If the spool is stuck, gently pry it out using a flathead screwdriver. Be careful not to bend the housing tabs. Inside, you will find the spring and the spool. Take a mental note or photograph of how the line feeds through the eyelets. This is a crucial detail that many users forget.

Step 4: Prepare the New Line

Cut a length of new trimmer line. The **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** instructions typically recommend a length of about 20 to 25 feet (6 to 7.5 meters). If you are using a pre-cut line, ensure it is the correct gauge. For a standard spool rewind, you will need one continuous length of line. Do not cut the line in half, as this will make loading difficult and may result in uneven feeding.

Step 5: Wind the Line onto the Spool

Insert the middle of the line into the small notch or hole located on the center divider of the spool. This is where the line is anchored. Now, wind both ends of the line onto the spool in the direction indicated by the arrows on the spool. Usually, this is a clockwise direction when looking at the spool from the top. Wind the line neatly, keeping it tight and evenly layered. Avoid crossing the line over itself, as this will cause tangles. Leave about 6 to 7 inches (15 to 18 cm) of line unwound on each end. These ends will be fed through the eyelets of the housing.

Step 6: Feed the Line Through the Housing

Take the unwound ends of the line and feed them through the two eyelets (holes) on the side of the trimmer head housing. Depending on your model, you may need to temporarily hold the spool in place while you thread the line through. Once both ends are through, pull the line taut. This ensures the spool sits flush inside the housing. If the line is not taut, it will not feed correctly during operation.

Step 7: Reassemble the Head

Place the spring back into the center of the spool if it came out. Then, press the entire assembly back into the trimmer head housing. You should hear a click or feel the spool seat properly. If your head uses a retaining cap, align the tabs and press down firmly until it locks into place.

Step 8: Reinstall the Head onto the Trimmer

Screw the assembled head back onto the drive shaft. Turn it clockwise until it is hand-tight. Do not use tools to overtighten, as this can make future removal difficult. The friction from operating the trimmer will naturally keep

the head secure.

Common Mistakes and Troubleshooting

Even with a clear **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** guide, issues can arise. Here are the most common problems and how to solve them.

Line Not Feeding Properly

This is the most frequent complaint. If the line does not advance when you tap the head, the line may be wound too tightly or crossed over itself. Remove the spool and rewind it carefully. Another cause could be that the line is too thick for the eyelet. If the line drags and does not release, try a smaller diameter line.

Line Breaks Inside the Head

If the line snaps while you are tapping, it is likely due to line fatigue or burrs on the eyelet. Inspect the eyelets for rough edges. You can smooth them with a fine file or sandpaper. Also, ensure you are using fresh, high-quality line. Old or brittle line is more prone to snapping.

Head Vibrates Excessively

Excessive vibration usually indicates that the spool is not balanced. This happens when one side of the line is longer than the other. After re-stringing, always ensure both ends of the line are the same length. Trim them evenly to about 6 inches from the head. Imbalanced line also reduces engine efficiency and wears out the drive shaft bearings faster.

Pro Tips for Optimal Performance

To get the most out of your Stihl FS 38, consider these advanced tips that go beyond the standard **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** instructions.

- Soak the line in water: Before installing a new spool, soak the trimmer line in water for 24 hours. This makes the line more flexible and less prone to breaking, especially in dry conditions.
- Use genuine Stihl line: While aftermarket line is cheaper, genuine Stihl line is formulated to work optimally with their tap action heads. It feeds more smoothly and lasts longer.
- Clean the head regularly: Grass clippings and dirt can get lodged inside the trimmer head, causing the spool to bind. After every few uses, remove the head and blow out debris with compressed air.
- Lubricate the spring: A small drop of lightweight oil on the spring inside the head keeps it functioning smoothly. This prevents the “non-tap” issue that develops over time.
- Mark your line: Use a permanent marker to put a small dot on the line at the point where it exits the eyelet. If the line slips, you will quickly see it and can adjust without fully disassembling the head.

Maintenance Beyond Re-Stringing

While the **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** process is the most frequent maintenance task, do not neglect other aspects of your trimmer. Regular maintenance ensures the machine operates safely and extends its lifespan.

Air Filter Care

The FS 38 is equipped with a simple foam air filter. Clean it every 25 hours of use or more frequently in dusty conditions. A dirty air filter restricts airflow, causing the engine to run rich and lose power. Wash the filter in warm soapy water, squeeze it dry, and re-oil it lightly with bar and chain oil before reinstalling.

Spark Plug Replacement

Replace the spark plug annually or when you notice difficulty starting. Use the exact plug specified in your

manual. Proper gap setting is critical for easy starting and efficient combustion.

Gearbox Grease

The angle drive gearbox requires periodic greasing. If the gearbox becomes dry, it will overheat and fail. Check the grease level every season and add Stihl gear grease as needed. This prevents costly repairs.

Fuel System

Use fresh, high-quality fuel mixed at the correct ratio (50:1 for most FS 38 models). Ethanol-blended fuel can attract moisture and degrade rubber components. Consider using a fuel stabilizer if you store the trimmer for extended periods.

When to Consult the Official Manual

While this guide covers the essentials, there are situations where you should consult the official **Stihl Weedeater Manual Fs 38 Re String** documentation or a qualified dealer.

- Unusual noises: Grinding or rattling sounds may indicate a damaged gearbox or loose flywheel.
- Excessive smoke: This could signal a rich fuel mixture, clogged exhaust port, or worn piston rings.
- Difficult starting: If the trimmer is hard to start even after a fresh re-string and clean air filter, there may be a carburetor issue.

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