

Cutting up a CHB34 fuel tank

(Nick Fletcher, Dec 2021 Rev1)

- Notes - General
 - Use a Sawzall. Occasional use of jigsaw for tricky bits (very slow)
 - Blades
 - I tried a tungsten carbide tipped blade first but did not use lubricant and destroyed the blade very quickly. I then used regular blades (Diablo bimetal 18tpi) with success. I stopped frequently and applied lubricant (used WD40 – there are probably better products, but being a spray was convenient). Took about 4 blades per tank. You can extend the shoe of the Sawzall such that a different part of the blade gets used – get double the life! Also it seemed to cut more easily with the tool at a slant. Do not put a lot of forward pressure on the blade.
 - PPE – goggles, headphone hearing protectors, skull protection, heavy gloves, heavy clothing.

- Notes – General (cont'd)
 - Starting a cut
 - Cut a slot into a corner (at an angle), then insert saw blade at 90 degrees into the tank. Much easier than drilling holes to make a slot.
 - Objects inside tank
 - Beware of the fuel pickup tubes and the baffles.
 - Cut slowly through the pickup tubes.
 - At a baffle, do like a “corner cut start”: cut at a slant to advance the face cut beyond the baffle, then stop and insert the blade the other side of the baffle.

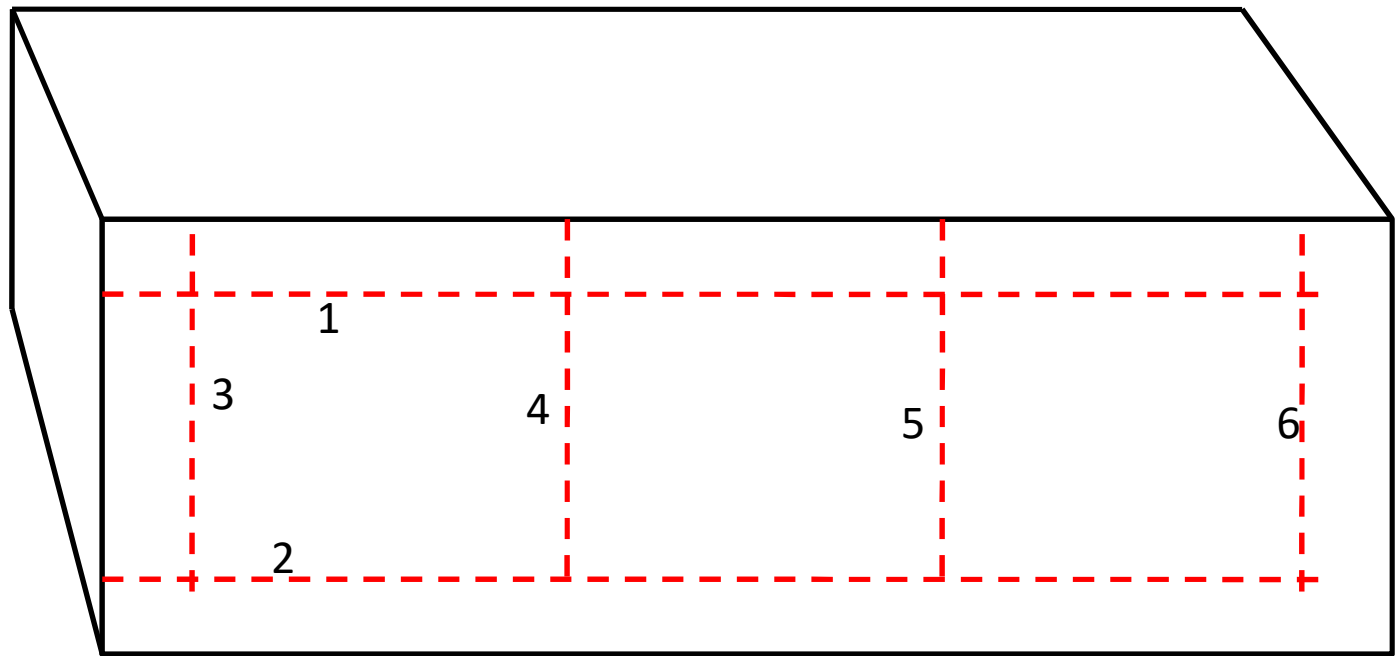
- Notes – Sketch 1
 - Make cuts 4 and 5 just to the left of the baffles
 - Pull the panel out at cut 6 and flex it until the baffle welds break. Repeat at cut 5.
 - With tank front totally open I then cleaned the inside tank bottom which had a lot of sludge
- Sketch 2
 - Cuts 7, 8 are to get the baffles out
 - On my tank the baffles were not welded to the back of the tank, which was a big help.
- Sketch 3
 - Flex the baffle halves until welds break, then remove. I used a sledge hammer to start the flexing.

- Sketch 4

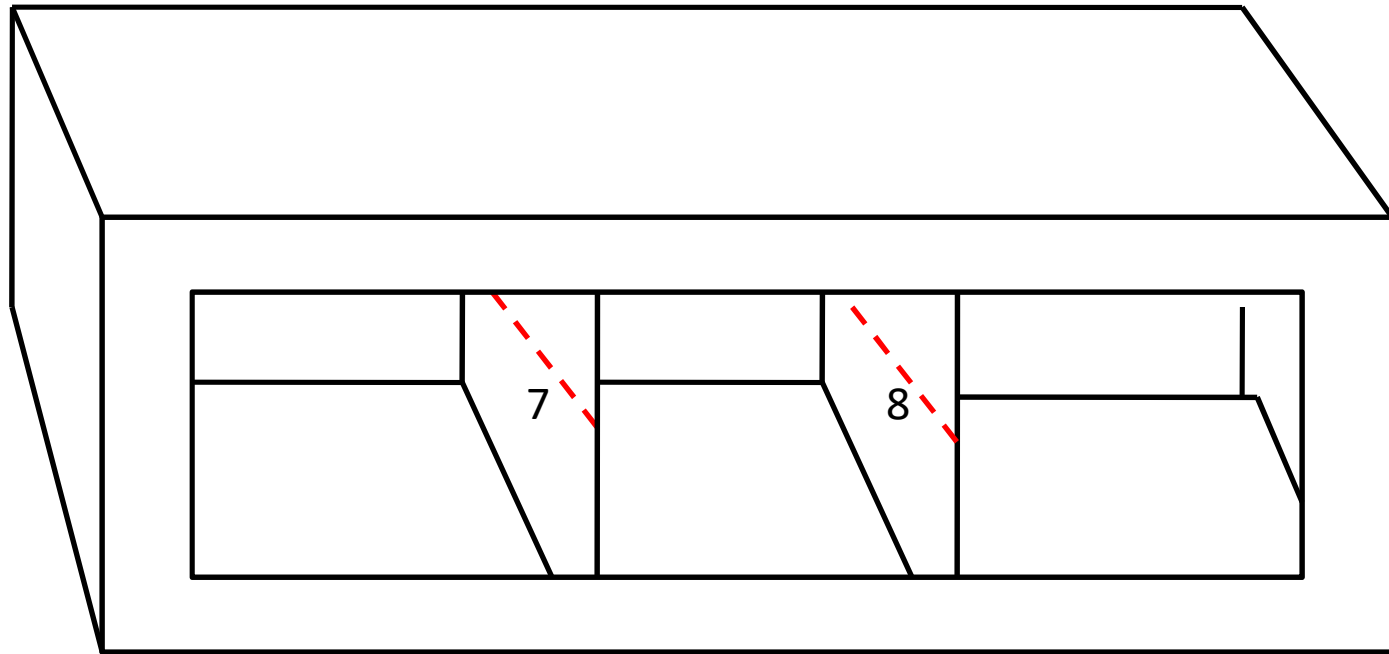
- Block the tank away from the hull so that the saw blade cannot do any damage.
- This is the worst cut - you have to lie inside the tank. Put a piece of plywood in the tank, extending out over the cut lip.
- After cutting some distance, stabilize the tank top at the start of the cut by C-clamping a piece of wood across the cut.
- Cut 9A is optional. Makes tank top come out in 2 smaller pieces.

- Sketch 5

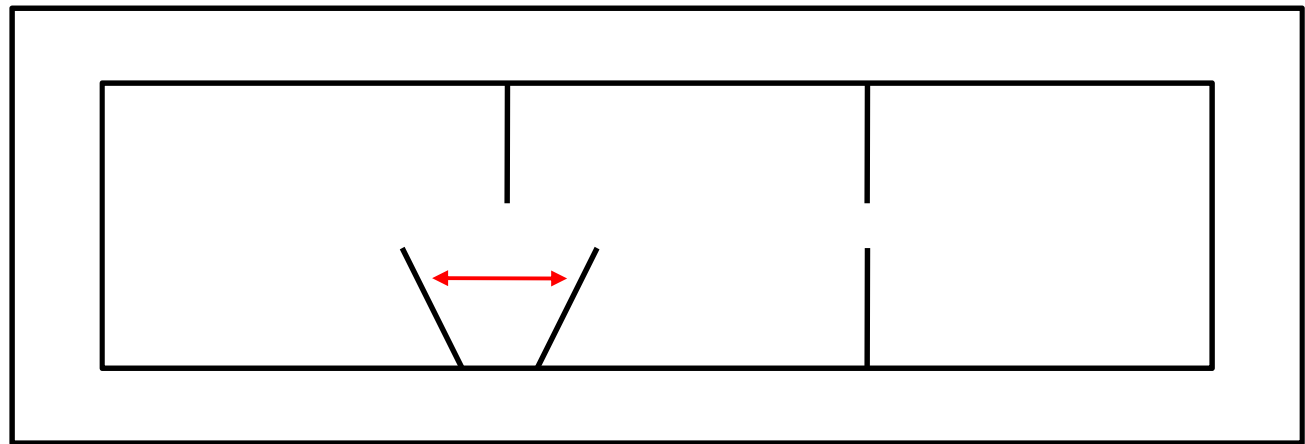
- Special care to avoid hull/rib damage
- Use C-clamps same as for cut 9



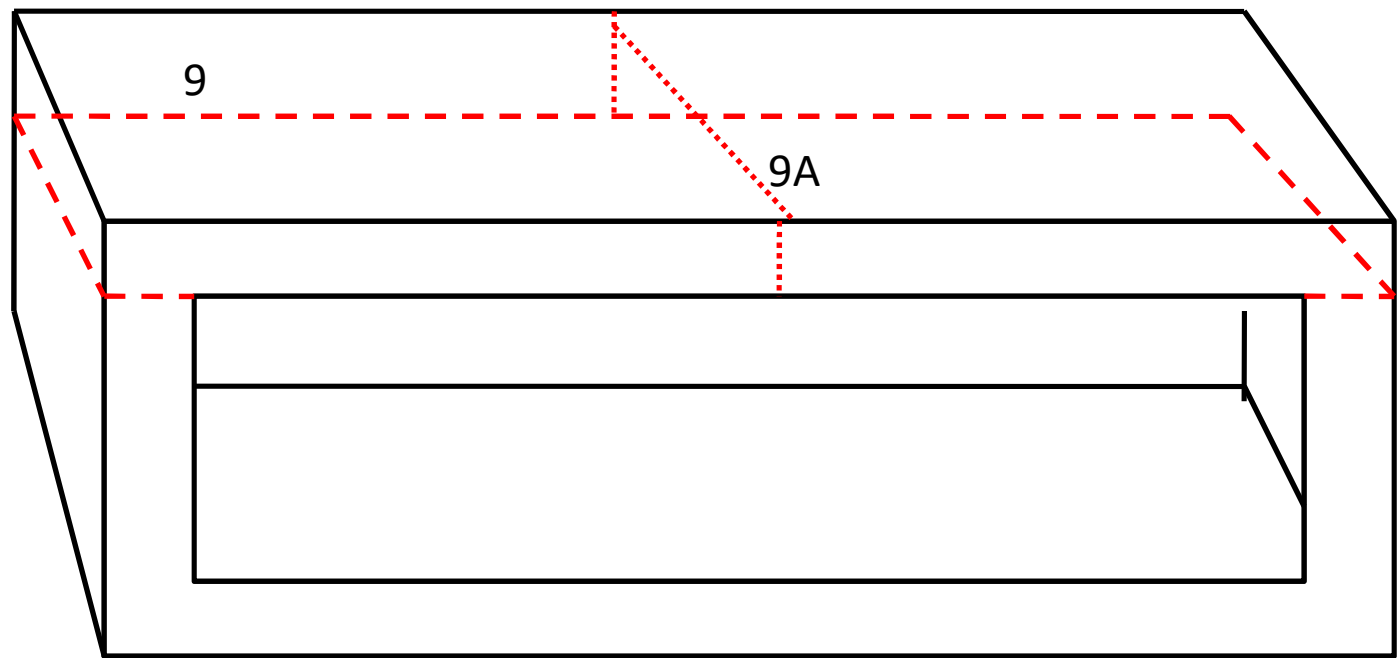
Sketch 1



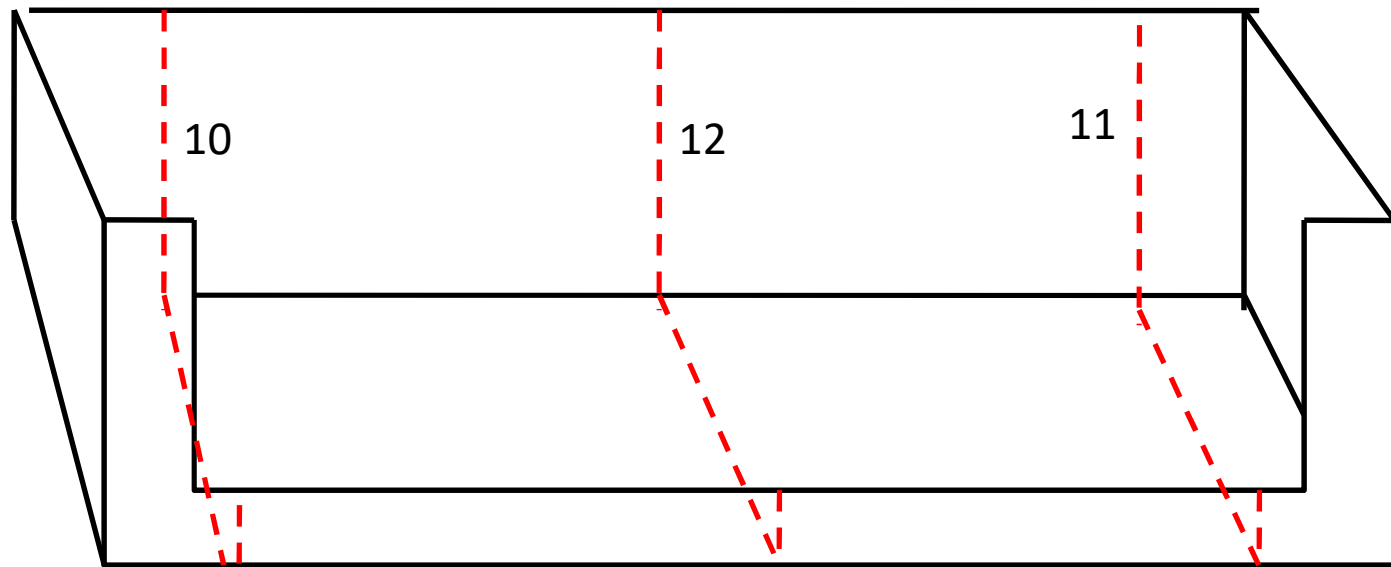
Sketch 2



Sketch 3



Sketch 4



Sketch 5

