GENERAL

stihl weedeater manual fs 38 re string

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When it comes to tackling stubborn weeds, uneven grass, and hard to reach corners, the **Stihl FS 38 RE** weed eater is a trusted companion for both homeowners and professional landscapers. Its powerful 38 /cc engine, ergonomic design, and durable cutting line make it a versatile tool for any yard. Yet, as with any high performance equipment, understanding its **manual** and learning how to properly replace the string are essential for safe, efficient, and long lasting use.

This article offers a comprehensive, step by step walk through the Stihl weedeater manual, focusing on the FS 38 RE model and its string replacement. We'll cover everything from the basics of the tool's design, to the intricacies of string installation, maintenance routines, safety precautions, common troubleshooting tips, and frequently asked questions. Whether you're a seasoned user or a first time buyer, this guide will help you unlock the full potential of your Stihl FS 38 RE and keep your lawn looking pristine.

1. Getting Started: Familiarizing Yourself with the Stihl FS 38 RE

1.1. Overview of the FS 38 RE Features

The Stihl FS 38 RE is a lightweight, gas powered weed eater designed for precision cutting. Key features include:

- 38 /cc 4 stroke engine – delivers consistent power for cutting through thick vegetation.
- Ergonomic handle – reduces user fatigue during extended use.
- Quick change string system – allows for rapid line replacement without tools.
- Dual speed gearbox – offers low and high speed settings for varied cutting tasks.
- Safety lock – prevents accidental start and enhances user safety.

1.2. Reading the Stihl Weedeater Manual

Before you start, it's crucial to read the **Stihl FS 38 RE manual** thoroughly. The manual is organized into clear sections: safety, assembly, operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting. Pay particular attention to the safety guidelines and the string replacement chapter, as these are directly relevant to everyday use.

While the manual's printed version is handy, many users prefer a digital copy. Stihl offers downloadable PDFs on their official website. Keep a copy on your phone or tablet for quick reference while working in the yard.

2. The String Replacement Process: Step by Step Guide

2.1. Why String Replacement Matters

The cutting line is the heart of any weed eater. Over time, it frays, bends, or breaks, reducing cutting efficiency and potentially damaging the cutting head. Replacing the string promptly ensures:

- Consistent cutting performance.
- Prevention of line tangles and snags.
- Extended lifespan of the cutting head.

2.2. Tools and Materials Needed

Replacing the string on the Stihl FS 38 RE is a tool free process, but you'll need:

- Stihl FS 38 RE replacement line (recommended 0.75 /mm or 0.85 /mm diameter).

- Clean cloth or rag.
- Optional: a small pair of pliers (for stubborn line ends).

2.3. Step by Step String Replacement

1. Turn Off the Engine: Ensure the weed eater is completely off. Remove the spark plug wire for added safety.
2. Locate the Cutting Head: The FS 38 RE features a quick release collar. Slide the collar forward until it clicks into the “open” position.
3. Remove the Old Line: Grip the worn line with your fingers or pliers and pull it out of the cutting head. Dispose of the frayed line responsibly.
4. Insert the New Line:

   Feed the new line through the feed slot.
5. Pull the line until it reaches the rear of the cutting head.
6. Cut the line to the correct length (usually about 15 /cm beyond the rear of the head).

2.4. Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Using the wrong line diameter: Stihl recommends 0.75 /mm or 0.85 /mm for the FS 38 RE. Using a thinner line can cause excessive wear.
- Over tightening the line: This can lead to line breakage and uneven cutting.
- Neglecting to secure the cutting head: An unsecured head can detach during use, posing a safety hazard.

3. Routine Maintenance for Optimal Performance

3.1. Engine Care

Even though the Stihl FS 38 RE is a relatively simple engine, proper care extends its life:

- Fuel Mixture: Use fresh gasoline mixed with the recommended oil ratio (usually 50:1 for 4 stroke engines).
- Spark Plug Inspection: Check the spark plug every 50 /hours of use. Clean or replace it if it shows signs of wear.
- Air Filter Cleaning: Clean the air filter every 100 /hours or as needed to prevent clogging.

3.2. Cutting Head Maintenance

In addition to string replacement, keep the cutting head free of debris:

- After each use, wipe the cutting head with a damp cloth to remove grass clippings.
- Inspect the feed mechanism for damage or wear. Replace if necessary.
- Check for any foreign objects lodged in the head that could damage the line.

3.3. Storage Guidelines

Proper storage preserves your tool’s condition:

- Store the FS 38 RE in a dry, ventilated area.
- Keep the fuel tank partially filled to prevent moisture buildup.
- Use a protective cover to shield the cutting head from dust.

4. Safety First: Essential Precautions

4.1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Always wear the following when operating a weed eater:

- Eye protection (goggles or safety glasses).

- Hearing protection (earplugs or earmuffs).
- Long sleeves and pants to protect from flying debris.
- Closed toe shoes for foot safety.

4.2. Operating Environment

Choose a safe area:

- Clear the work zone of pets, children, and loose objects.
- Avoid windy conditions that can carry debris.
- Ensure the ground is stable to prevent tipping.

4.3. Common Safety Hazards

Be mindful of these risks:

- Line Breakage: A snapped line can fly toward the operator. Keep the cutting head at a safe distance.
- Engine Start Up: Always engage the safety lock before starting the engine.
- Fuel Spills: Keep the fuel tank capped and avoid overfilling.

5. Troubleshooting Common Issues

5.1. Engine Won’t Start

Check the following:

- Fuel mixture ratio and fuel freshness.
- Spark plug condition and connection.
- Air filter cleanliness.
- Correct engagement of the safety lock.

5.2. Cutting Head Stops Rotating

Possible causes:

- Worn or damaged gear teeth.
- Blocked feed mechanism.
- Loose or broken tension screw.

5.3. Uneven Cutting or Vibration

Solutions include:

- Replacing the cutting line with the correct diameter.
- Ensuring the line is properly tensioned.
- Checking for debris lodged in the cutting head.

6. Frequently Asked Questions

6.1. What is the recommended line diameter for the FS 38 RE?

Stihl recommends 0.75 mm or 0.85 mm cutting line for the FS 38 RE. Using a thinner line can compromise performance.

6.2. How often should I replace the cutting line?

Replace the line whenever it shows signs of wear, fraying, or breaks. In heavy use, this may be every 30–50 hours of operation.

6.3. Can I use a different brand of cutting line?

While Stihl's own line is optimized for the FS 38 RE, third party lines that match the recommended diameter can work. Always test for compatibility before widespread use.

6.4. Does the FS 38 RE require a choke?

No, the FS 38 RE features a self starting engine with no choke. The safety lock prevents accidental starts.

6.5. How do I store the FS 38 RE during winter?

Drain the fuel tank, clean the cutting head, and store the tool in a dry, covered area. This prevents corrosion and extends the engine

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