

Bushfire Preparedness & Firebreaks

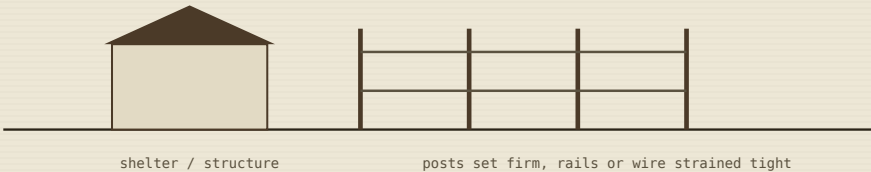
DIFFICULTY Moderate
TYPE Ongoing property management
TIME Ongoing seasonal maintenance

Reduce risk and improve defensibility around the property

 DIFFICULTY Moderate	 TIME Ongoing	 COST Low–moderate	 BEST SEASON Before fire season, region-dependent	 FREQUENCY Seasonal, before and during fire season
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01 Defensible space around structures

Defensible space works in zones — cleared, well-maintained ground immediately around buildings, with progressively more natural (but still managed) vegetation further out — rather than a single firebreak line alone.



02 What you'll need

- A property fire management plan, ideally referencing your local fire authority's guidance
- Firebreak/access tracks maintained clear of vegetation
- Appropriate tools for vegetation clearing and maintenance
- Water access points identified and accessible for firefighting use

03 Method

1. Consult your local fire authority for region-specific guidance — requirements and risk profiles vary considerably across Australia.
2. Establish and maintain defensible space immediately around structures, clearing flammable vegetation and debris.
3. Maintain firebreak/access tracks clear enough for vehicle access, both for your own use and emergency services.
4. Identify and maintain accessible water points for firefighting use, separate from your normal supply if possible.
5. Review and update your plan each season, particularly before the fire danger period for your region.

04 Troubleshooting

- **Uncertain what level of clearing is required/appropriate** — consult your local fire authority directly; requirements and recommendations are genuinely region-specific.
- **Firebreaks becoming overgrown between maintenance** — schedule regular maintenance rather than a single annual clear, particularly in fast-growing seasons.
- **Balancing land management goals with clearing requirements** — defensible space doesn't require bare earth everywhere; work with your fire authority's guidance on appropriate vegetation management versus over-clearing.
- **Water access not actually usable in an emergency** — test that pumps, hydrants, or draft points are genuinely accessible and functional, not just present.

05 Timing & maintenance

BEST TIME	Establish and refresh defensible space before your region's fire danger period each year.
DURATION	An ongoing, seasonal management task rather than a one-off project.
MAINTENANCE	Regular vegetation management around structures and along access tracks throughout the growing season.
SIGNS OF SUCCESS	Clear, accessible tracks and defensible space around structures, reviewed and current going into fire season.

06 Tips & variations

PAIRS WELL WITH

Windbreaks & Shelterbelts

Non-Chemical Weed Control

COMMON MISTAKES

Treating firebreak establishment as a one-off task rather than ongoing seasonal maintenance

Not testing that emergency water access points are genuinely functional

PRO TIP

Your local fire authority typically offers property-specific advice and sometimes assessment visits — genuinely worth engaging directly rather than relying on generic guidance alone.