

How to sharpen a knife

Modern stones made by compressing and bonding abrasive grit or diamonds last almost indefinitely, Tods' Stuff sharpening kits are made from real stone as they once were and will inevitably wear, but if used correctly will still last many years. They will sharpen knives, swords and axes to a razor edge with a little practice, but are not suited to removing burrs on the edges of weapons or tools. In the old days these burrs were removed with a file prior to sharpening, I suggest you do the same.

Every few times you use your knife just give it a couple of passes on the honing stone and strop and it will stay like a razor.

When sharpening a knife keep the angle of the blade constant to the stone, usually about 20-25 degrees.

Use the stone wet.

The kit consists of a strickle for putting a rough edge on a blunt knife, a honing stone for fine sharpening and a polishing strop to get a razor edge.

If the knife is really blunt start with the strickle. The strickle is a grooved piece of wood with a strap; kneel on the strap or trap it between you and a table top to hold the strickle down. Put some sand or grit into the grooves and this acts like a coarse stone. Press down firmly and move the knife across the stone so that you are sliding the blade away from the cutting edge i.e. not trying to slice the top off the block.. If the end of the knife has a rounded tip, curve the slide so that all of the blade is sharpened.

When using the honing stone keep the angle the same but slide it across the stone as if you are trying to slice off the top surface off the stone i.e. you are sliding towards the cutting edge, again taking care to sharpen any rounded end.

The final stage is the polishing of the edge (stropping). This will remove any slight burr left on the knife edge and polish the cutting edge so that with a little practice you can make a blade sharp enough to shave with. The strop comes primed with 'T Cut' a car polishing compound, but every few months (depending on use) add a bit more. Slide the already very sharp edge of the knife over the strop away from the cutting edge, just like you did with the strickle. About 10 passes will do the job.