Primary sharpening goal
Posted by Henry1 - 26 Dec 2011 17:29

I have little experience sharpening blades and that is the reason for buying the WESP. My primary goal is to sharpen my kitchen and hunting knives for efficiency. With that in mind I have several questions:

1. Is the more polished edge (presuming the sharpest too) the edge that will hold up the longest or best to, say, stop at 1200 (diamond) and then touch up by honing?
2. First time a knife (without chips/dings) is sharpened do you always start with a 100 grit and then go through all the progression?

Hopefully you can understand what I am trying to accomplish!

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Re: Primary sharpening goal
Posted by DonLlewellyn - 26 Dec 2011 18:34

I am by no means an expert but from my short experience I'd say on #1 go as high as you can with the stones you have - a polished edge is an incredible cutter. For #2 no I don't always start at 100 grit. Lately I'm sharpening Case knives that have the factory edge and I start at 400 as I'm just polishing away the grind lines Case left behind. By the time I get to 1600 and strop to 3.5 micron they are WAY sharper than when I started.

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Re: Primary sharpening goal
Posted by leomitch - 27 Dec 2011 05:52

Hi Henry

Recently I sent 4 knives to Clay to use in an experiment to compare the results from a sharpening with a full set of Chosera and Shapton stones right through from 100 grit paddles to the finest grit of those excellent Japanese stones...the highly polished edges on those 4 knives were so sharp that they seemed to literally melt the paper in the usual paper cutting test and the hair on my arm magically disappeared with no pulling as each blade moved over my arm. I have never had such sharp knives before. So I believe that probably gives you my answer to question 1.

Question 2 is easy...in my opinion, you don't have to start with the lowest grit paddles but for the very best known edge geometry, the results will be better if you start with the roughest grits first making sure that the scratches go right out to the very edge and raise a burr on each side of the blade before progressing to the finer grit paddles. The result will then be an extremely sharp edge of known values set

up on your rig. This way you can always repeat that edge by using the same settings. Once you have done this the first time, touching up the keenness of the blade is simple task requiring only a few moments.I think Clay will agree with me here but I may stand corrected if I have misinterpreted his ideas.

Sorry for the wordy response...I hope this helps.

Leo

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Re: Primary sharpening goal
Posted by Henry1 - 27 Dec 2011 09:30

Thanks Leomitch and Don for your quick response! I guess in my mind I had the idea that the super polished edge, while extremely sharp, would not hold up as well as one of lesser polish. I have (had) the belief that the scratch marks functioned in a way that helped prevent the edge from rolling over more easily. Seems like I read that somewhere and the example used was a tomato.

Again my goal is for working knives as I catch myself with the urge to learn/work towards the "ultimate polished finish" for the WOW look. Maybe Clay will jump in and tell us how far he goes with the knives he uses in the field.

Leomitch, using Don's example starting with a new knife, you would start with the 100 grit to establish a new (recordable)geometry. Is that correct?

Fwiw, I put a V edge on a couple of knives and at 1000 grit I could do the paper slice but not the hair. I think took a steel and not only could I cut hair but skin too! Don't think this is the desired results wanted!

Again, I appreciate your time and efforts working with a newbie.

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Re: Primary sharpening goal
Posted by leomitch - 27 Dec 2011 12:49

That is correct Henry, unless the edge is severely damaged and needs to be re-profiled, in which case I would get my hands on the really coarse paddles beginning with 50 grit instead of the 100's.

Cheers

Leo

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Re: Primary sharpening goal

Posted by babo - 27 Dec 2011 13:51

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Henry,

I've seen cases where at a set angle it's obvious that I need to re-profile the knife and carry it out to the edge. That can be done faster with a coarser grit; but can also be done with a finer grit it just takes more time. Depending on the steel maybe a lot more time; that's when I drop down to a coarser grit and make sure I get a wire edge on both sides. But then I make sure I spend extra time when I go up to the next finer grit to remove the deeper scratches left from the coarser grit. I'm not sure about others but I've had to re-profile almost everyone of my knives; if nothing else so that I can get them to an easily repeatable angle on the WEPS. Hope that makes sense and helps.

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