How to obtain a mirror edge?

Posted by mark76 - 12 Jan 2012 18:21

I am about to buy the Wicked Edge system, probably from the German reseller. Living in Europe, that avoids me having to pay high import taxes and transport costs.

I'll buy at least the base package, with the 100/200 stones and the 400/600 stones, as well as a pre-drilled base, which the German guy seems to make himself. I'll likely also order the 800/1000 stones.

From there on, I'm so not sure. If I base myself on the grit table on this site, I could either get the strops with 5/3.5 micron stropping paste for polishing after sharpening at 1000 grid. And then even finer stropping stuff, if I wanted to.

Or instead I could get the 1200/1600 stones. If I wanted to do stropping afterwards, I'd have to start with 1 micron stropping spray (since 1600 grit translates to 2.85 microns). And again, I could go even lower if I wanted to.

My goal would be really to obtain a mirror edge. Which of the two approaches would you recommend? Start stropping after the 1000 grid stones or also use the 1200/1600 stones? Is stropping even necessary after using the 1600 stones?

In this respect I am a bit confused by the video in which Clay sharpens a knife with a somewhat convex edge (the CRK Sebenza – which I own and want to sharpen to perfection) and starts stropping already at 10 microns (presumably after finally sharpening at 800 or 1000 grid) and then moves down to "only" 5 microns. Using this he is able to get a mirror finish. But according to some other messages you need stropping at smaller micron sizes for a mirror edge.

So basically my questions boil down to: if I want to obtain a mirror edge, what would I do after having sharpened my knife on a 1000 grid diamond stone:

* Start stropping at 5 microns, then 3.5 microns and possibly even less microns, e.g. 1 micron?

* Continue sharpening at 1200 and 1600 grid, and then stop? (Not strop
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* Continue sharpening at 1200 and 1600 grid, and then strop at 1 micron or even lower?

* Or an entirely different strategy, for example what Craig showed in his Sebenza video?

And a related question: how far do you need to go with sharpening/polishing in terms of micron size in order to get a mirror edge?

I know there are also Shosera stones out, by let's leave them out of this equation, for the time being, not to make this already complex discussion overcomplicated.

Thanks a lot for your answers!

P.S. I posted a similar message in a reply in another threat. That one was quite old, so maybe that was why nobody replied. Nevertheless, sorry for posting two quite similar messages. It is just that I want to order a WE this weekend and I still need some advice.

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Re: How to obtain a mirror edge?
Posted by Salguod - 27 Mar 2012 08:01

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Of course there are a thousand ways to get a good edge. So follow this method:

You decide to go with the 1000 diamonds, followed by the 1600/1200 ceramics.

Next, you want to go to strops with 1 and .5 Micron Diamond Paste.

Given the above, would you go with leather or balsa strops?

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Re: How to obtain a mirror edge?
Posted by RobertBorowski - 27 Mar 2012 09:23

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Thanks glad to join, This could be a new obsession!

Well I guess I would be looking for all three for different knife right and at different levels of my personal skill?:
. A mixed you know Some that are functionally stronger and some that super polished. This would also justify a ever growing collection of knives:P haha

If I had to answer that question my ideal edge would be something that very polished, functionally very sharp and strong enough to use on a regular basis. The knifes mentioned above would be included in

the "user" part of my collection. So at this point I am *interested* in in having the sharpest blade in all seven dimensions but I think it will probably be a skill mastered in the next upgrade in the progression. I like leather but then again I don't have that much experience in balsa stropping. I would probably enjoy the switch.

How strong would the edge be if I used the diamond paddles up to 1000 then the 1200,1600 ceramics and used then the 1 and .5 maybe the .25 diamond spray? I am thinking they would be pretty well polished and still screaming sharp but not unworldly sharp. Is that safe to assume?

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Re: How to obtain a mirror edge?

Posted by wickededge - 27 Mar 2012 10:49

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One viable option for a fantastic edge that suits all your purposes would be to create an super polished bevel and then add in a tiny, somewhat toothier micro-bevel. In that way, you get the aesthetics, performance and durability. The exact amount of toothiness could be dictated by your cutting needs for that particular knife e.g. slice cutting=more teeth, push cutting=less teeth. You could also use the strops to build a nice convex, super polished edge and then use a waterstone to add in the micro bevel so you get a perfect set of micro-serrations, exactly the way you want them while having the durability of the convex architecture.

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