Question re; breaking in stones...

Posted by Scott Sherman - 19 Oct 2012 12:37

Okay, this may be the dumb question of the day, but I figure what the H... I am a new, first time owner of the WEPS and have read a lot of posts saying how much better the stones will work after they have been broken in. So, the first thing I did was to get a throw away knife about the size and shape of my good knives and just sharpened it..... A LOT! I over sharpened it to the point that my burrs were very pronounceable on each level.

Now, this is less about achieving the perfect edge although it is a great way to experiment, that is by making intentional mistakes and over sharpening, but it is also a good way to "break in" my stones. As I used each new stone in turn, I flipped it over top to bottom so that the diamond crystals were going one way and then the other. I could see little tiny crystals of shiny material falling off the stones and knife blade as I dragged the stone over the blade.

So here is my question...

Should the stone develop a direction? In other words if you orient the stone so you are dragging it in one direction, is it better to continuously use that direction and never deviate or is it of no consequence? I am not sure if the stones begin to take on a slant or wear pattern that makes them smoother if always used in one direction or is it better to just make them even all the way across the surface by going in different directions frequently? I see some people making up and down filing motions and others just going in one direction forward or backward front to back of the knife and some making little circles.

I think the pattern of scratches is easier to reduce and eventually polish if they are in one direction, say back to front than if they are criss crossed or circular.

I guess in a world of OCD, this hopefully makes sense and is not too nit picky.

Thanks

Scott

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Re: Question re; breaking in stones...

Posted by wickededge - 19 Oct 2012 14:32

Good question. I never pay attention to the orientation of my stones from one session to the next. Under the microscope you can see that the crystals on a used stone are worn flat across the top which makes me think that the direction doesn't matter, at least not after a certain point of wear.

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Re: Question re; breaking in stones...

Posted by Scott Sherman - 19 Oct 2012 14:47

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Thanks Clay, I am trying not to over think this whole thing. The beauty of it is in part, it's simplicity. I guess, I just want to get the most out of it and this forum makes it so easy to get answers.

It looks like you are really getting your moneys worth out of those microscopes you have invested in.

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Re: Question re; breaking in stones...

Posted by cbwx34 - 19 Oct 2012 15:02

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Scott Sherman wrote:

Okay, this may be the dumb question of the day, but I figure what the H...

So here is my question...

Should the stone develop a direction?

I don't think it's a dumb question at all. I've used diamonds in sharpening for a while, I've never noticed that they develop a direction. On the WE, I actually try and rotate them, because I found that if used one way, I tend to get closer to one end than the other, and I want to break in as much of the stone that I can.

Scott Sherman wrote:

I think the pattern of scratches is easier to reduce and eventually polish if they are in one direction, say back to front than if they are criss crossed or circular.

Isn't the opposite true? In polishing or sanding a finish, I thought it's taught to go one direction, than change for a smoother finish. (I don't know much about this, so I could be wrong... maybe someone else knows?)

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Re: Question re; breaking in stones...

Posted by Scott Sherman - 19 Oct 2012 15:07

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Glad you underlined that question for me. I was just assuming it was better to use a single direction since it puts teeth into the apex more than a scrubbing or criss cross pattern. When we polish these things down to mirrors, we all but eliminate the teeth. So, since I am just guessing on that based on my own logic, it might be good to get some insight from someone with real experience. In the Chosera links, the guy who did the demonstration, used a sawing motion back and forth at first and then finished with a forward sweeping motion on each stone. I think that was what made me wonder about the scratch pattern and polishing.

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