Steeling and Stropping Finished Edges

Posted by Geocyclist - 02 Nov 2012 20:03

I am curious about who steels or strops finished edges. By finished I mean an edge that is completely finished off a WEPS, then used, slightly dulled but not trashed, then using steels or strops to touch it up, mainly to straighten the edge as opposed to "sharpening" where sharpening means to remove material by abrasive action and reform the edge. By my definition a slightly dull knife can be brought back almost to the level of sharpness by steeling or stropping. A truly dull knife must be "sharpened" with stones to become sharp again.

I steel my kitchen knives. I steel every time I use a kitchen knife. I can feel the slightly deformed/rolled edge after use, it feels like a burr. After steeling I can tell it's gone.

My EDC pocket knives I stropp after use. This has the same affect for me as steeling and also touches the edge up a bit from the abrasive action.

I don't claim that steeling or stropping gets the edge back 100% as good as it was. I compare it to car maintenance. If you spend a little care often the engine lasts a long time (it still degrades a little bit over time), compared to doing no maintenance then replacing the entire engine later on after it dies. So I would rather spend a little time steeling/stropping and get the edge to 99% rather than letting it go and having to spend a lot of time sharpening it back into shape.

@ Clay, have you thought about making steels for the WEPS? You could have 1 side smooth steel and the other with fine ribs. Do think anyone would use them or do people just strop for small touch ups?

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Re: Steeling and Stropping Finished Edges

Posted by Razoredge - 04 Nov 2012 22:57

My take is pretty much the same as Geocyclist. Except that when working on the line your steel was chained around your waist so I do it horizontally. Using almost zero pressure you can feel the rolled edge. When I see people steeling with a big show of flair and the clickity-clack noise I just cringe. If you can hear the blade making contact with the steel you're doing it wrong.

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