

THE RIGHT WAY TO SHARPEN A KNIFE

Keeping your kitchen and survival knife is more than convenient. It is a safety measure. I believe I don't need to explain myself for the latter, but you might be asking yourself why having a sharp kitchen knife is safe? Why a sharp blade is safer than a dull one.

Because dull blades require extra force while cutting; sharp blades simply cut through the object. Sharp blades might slip; sharp blades cut right through it.

Now when you know that keeping the blades sharp is worth it, let's get into the nitty gritty of the how to. There are three main things that you need to learn:

#1 Recognizing a sharp blade

#2 Determining and keeping the right angles

#3 Learn how much to sharpen at each grit

Let me start by stating that I am NOT a sharpening knives professionally. I can only tell you from experience what I found works for me. The knowledge was passed from generation to generation and according to me, still stands.

If the blade is extremely dull, start with the coarsest stone. If it requires only touching up, start with a fine stone. Depending on your stone put some vegetable oil or water on the stone - [diamond sharpening stones for example](#) require only water, while most of the other stone work best with oil. Align the knife on the stone at the right angle. The right angle is different for every knife; just try to match the existing angle of the knife.

Stroke the knife along the stone as if you are trying to remove the first fine layer. Pull the knife as you go so you sharpen the entire edge. NOTE: always be careful when sharpening knives. Keep your hands off the areas where the knife blade might slip or where it is going while being sharpened.

There are a few methods of recognizing a sharp blade depending on the intended use. Usually kitchen knives don't need to be as sharp as the teeth of a Sable Tiger. I test kitchen knives either by shaving my arm hair, by running the blade across my fingernail or (when I run out of hair to shave and nails to try) by cutting a newspaper. See [in-depth description of each of the tests here](#).

Keeping the right angle can be really tricky. Kitchen knives usually have changing radius along the edge, but once you get the hold of it, it would be easy.

Now when you know how dull is the knife, and you got the appropriate grit stone, do 5 strokes at each side, then 4 strokes at each side, then 3, 2 and one. Assuming you started with the coarsest stone, now move to medium and repeat the sharpening process starting with 5 strokes. At this stage you can try how sharp the knife is and determine whether it needs additional sharpening. Repeat the process if necessary.