



01 Sharpening your Knife

Sharpening japanese knives

Knowing how to effectively sharpen your knives is essential if you wish to use them to their full potential. According to Japanese traditions, sharpening the knives with whetstones is crucial for maintaining a good edge geometry.

Whetstones

Whetstones are also known as waterstones. The digits on the sides indicate the size of the abrasive grits. The digits usually come in number form. A lower number indicates lower density. A general rule is the more the blade is damaged the lower the grit should be. The higher the grit number, the finer and more detailed the sharpening. In other words you begin with the rougher 1000# (blue) grit to remove any rough damage and chips in the blade and finish with the higher 6000# (white) grit to polish and remove finer scratches.

The sharpening process:

Before using your whetstone, you need to soak it in water in order to remove any air pockets. Right after laying it in a water bath, you will see air bubbles appear. Once the bubbles stop rising, you can start using the whetstone. Place a cloth below the whetstone to prevent the stone from slipping.

To sharpen the knife, start out by establishing a good angle. For this you can use an angle guide. To prevent the guide from scratching your knife, you can protect the blade with some scotch tape. If you feel more confident, place 3 pennies in between the knife and the stone to establish a 30 degree angle. First use the rough side of the stone (**#1000**). Now in a smooth motion, run the knife up and down the stone while casing all parts of the blade. Apply long and straight strokes instead of circular motions. When you notice the ridges and chips disappearing, you're ready for the finishing and polishing process. turn the stone around to the fine side (**#6000**) and repeat the procedure. Test the sharpness on a piece of paper. Wash and pat dry the knives.

General tips to remember:

- Make sure to wet the stone before sharpening.
- Never store the stones while they are wet as it might cause molding.

