

Hone in on Your Honing Techniques

By Ken Fountain

Just as there are many different types of honing stones used on different knives, so too are there many methods available to remove burrs from knives after they are sharpened. In this issue of Tech Tidbit, we'll examine seven honing tips to give a good finish edge to your knives. What method you chose to use will likely depend on the number of knives you handle daily, skill of your operators, budget and the operational efficiencies you require.

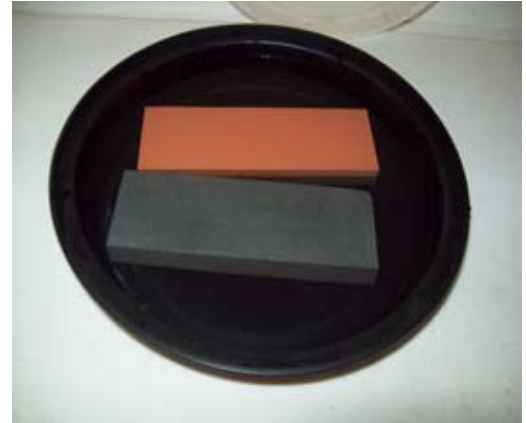
The most widely used method is honing stones. If you use honing stones to remove burrs and finish your knife's edge, you should maintain a small selection of honing stones. Some honing stones should be dual grit 180/400 and single grit 600 for example. While some shops store their stones in the tub of their knife grinder, a better storage method is the use of a clean container with honing oil. Walmart, for example, sells containers ideal for storing stones for approximately \$3.99 for ten tubs.

It is very important to keep honing stones clean to prevent damage to the next knife you hone with the stone. I recommend daily cleaning of honing stones with a small brush like the one shown in Tech Tip 2.

A palm sander is another method for honing and deburring. The sander can be fitted with a sheet of wet sand paper, bought at a automotive supply store and available in many different grits, or a dry method may be applied as seen in Tech Tip 5. In the palm sander method, just the weight of the sander is used with small strokes across the knife to knock off all the burrs. A block of wood or copper penny is another easy way to

Tech Tip 1

When not in use, store your honing stones in a clean container with honing oil to keep stone clean and clear of dust and knife particles that can build up on the stones. This can help prevent ruining the edge of the next knife you go to hone with the stone.



Tech Tip 2

Clean your honing stones on a daily basis using a brush to remove knife particles that can build up on it.



Tech Tip 3

A simple way to remove burrs from the knife is by hand with a honing stone. This an effective and widely used method although it requires skill by the person honing and requires careful attention to prevent injury.



Tech Tip 4

A block of wood can be used to remove a burr from a knife, as well as, a copper penny. This method can effectively knock off burrs though the finish will not be as fine as the honing stone method, but it may still be acceptable to some customers.





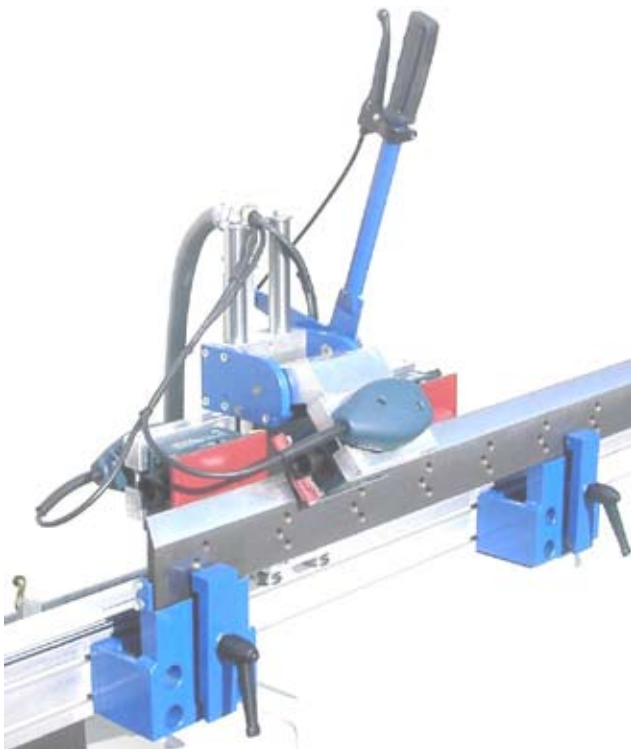
Tech Tip 5

A palm sander may be used to hone the knife instead of a honing stone. The advantage of this method over hand honing with a stone is it takes less time. Shown here is a palm sander with 1000 grit paper, dry method.



Tech Tip 6

A Knife Edge Honing Device can be used for simultaneously removing burrs and honing Veneer, Clipper, Paper Cutting and many other types of knives quickly and economically. This device creates superior finish knife edge quality and it is safer because the operator's hand is shielded from the knife edge. (Shown left is the MVM-EHD offered by Colonial Saw)



This MVM SBO Automatic Knife Edge Honing Machine comes in 79" and 118." Colonial Saw offers a 1 year full parts, labor and expenses warranty on this machine.

Tech Tip 7

An Automatic Knife Edge Honing Machine is the ultimate in honing technology and safety. It hones and deburrs steel or carbide inlaid industrial knives (especially paper and veneer knives). This MVM Model SBO offered by Colonial Saw has self adjusting floating heads that automatically adjust to any knife bevel. Other benefits include:

- Increased operator safety compared to hand honing
- Automatic setting of proper honing pressure
- Automatic feed of the honing heads over the full knife length for safe operation
- No pre-honing or knife preparation required

knock off burrs as seen in Tech Tip 4. Both the honing stone and palm sander methods are effective and economical. The stone method does provide a finer finish while the palm sander is more productive than the honing stone yet still offers an acceptable finish for many customers.

An Arkansas stone roll honing device offers superior finish knife edge quality and requires very little operator skill compared to hand honing. Colonial Saw offers the MVM-EHD (seen in Tech Tip 6) for \$2,300. Shops who hone 10 knives or more a day, should consider moving up to this device for operator skill safety reasons. It offers the same great finish but with less risk of injury compared to hand honing with stones.

At 20 knives or more a day, an Automatic Knife Edge Honing Machine should be considered. It is the safest method available. Colonial Saw offers the MVM SBO model shown left, which does not require any pre-honing or knife preparation. An Automatic Knife Edge Honing Machine requires less skill by its operator than hand and device honing, as the operator simply places the knife into the machine. The MVM SBO offers self adjusting floating heads to automatically adapt to any knife bevel angle. It also automatically sets the proper honing pressure and provides automatic feed of the honing heads over the full length of the knife. Its price tag (\$12,900 for 79" and \$15,900 for 118") is offset by the ability to hone a large volume of industrial knives safely and quickly.

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