



## **CORE Skill Lesson Plan**

### **The American Rangers**

### **Safe Handling And Responsible Use of Knives**

### **Program (*SHARP*)**

#### **PURPOSE/OVERVIEW:**

The purpose of this program and lesson plan is to teach American Rangers (from ages 6 to 19) how to properly, safely and effectively use Knives and Multi-tools (hereafter referred to as “knives”) during outdoor and survival applications. The authorized wear, handling and use of knives during Ranger-associated events requires completion of **SHARP** training and signature of the **SHARP** Policy form. With parental permission, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Rangers who have completed the program are authorized to wear a knife (stored in sheath) with the Ranger uniform. Infractions of the **SHARP** Policy may result in the loss of “Carry and Use” privileges during Ranger events. 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Rangers may use knives during formal training and field events under the supervision of a Guide/Father.

#### **LESSON PLAN TOPICS INCLUDE:**

- How to Open a Pocket Knife or Multi-tool
- How to Close a Pocket Knife or Multi-tool
- How to Use a Knife
- Establish a Knife Safety Circle
- How to Pass an Open Knife
- Knife Sharpening
- Types of Knives Authorized for Ranger Use and Wear
- Basic Knife Types
- Types of Blades
- Caring for your knife
- Cleaning a knife
- Ranger Knife Safety Basics
- **SHARP** Challenge-Based Test (CBT) for Knives

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE:**

Upon completion of this training, Rangers will have the information and skills necessary to confidently, effectively and safely use a knife or a multi-tool with blade.

#### **REQUIRED NUMBER OF INSTRUCTORS:**

#### **METHOD OF DELIVERY:**

The lesson is delivered via \_\_\_\_\_ (face-to-face, hands-on, video, PowerPoint, etc.).

**EQUIPMENT, LOCATION AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:**

**SAFETY GUIDELINES AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

**ESTIMATED CLASS LENGTH:**

**CLASS CONTENT BEGINS ON PAGE 3.**

## CLASS CONTENT

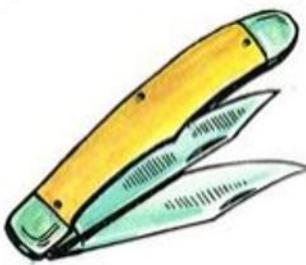
### TYPES OF KNIVES AUTHORIZED FOR RANGER USE AND WEAR

The best multi-purpose knife for outdoor use has one or two folding blades for cutting, and special blades for opening cans, driving screws, and punching holes. The following types of knives are approved for Ranger wear and use:

- **Multi-tool**
- **Pocket knife or Swiss Army-type knife**
- **Lockable blade knife**

**NOTE: Maximum blade length.** A 3" knife blade is recommended for most applications. A knife with a 4" blade is the largest knife of any kind a Ranger may carry, and will handle most needs a Ranger will have for a knife. Anything beyond 4" can be more of a hazard than serving a useful purpose.

### BASIC KNIFE TYPES



JACKKNIFE HAS BLADES  
AT ONE END ONLY, PEN-  
KNIFE AT BOTH ENDS.



"SWISS ARMY"  
TYPE KNIFE  
IS COMPLETE  
TOOL KIT.



SHEATH KNIFE  
OR HUNTING  
KNIFE IS  
DESIGNED FOR  
HEAVY DUTY.

SHARPEN KNIFE  
AS IF CUTTING  
KEEP BACK OF  
TURN BLADE AFT



WHITTLER'S KNIFE  
HAS BLADES  
FOR CARVING.

coping blade

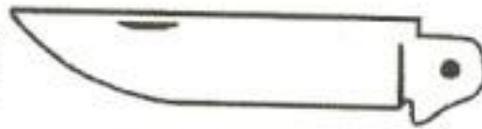
FISHERMAN'S KNIFE HAS  
SCALING BLADE AND  
HOOK DISGORGER.

pen blade

## TYPES OF BLADES



**Clip**



**Skinner**



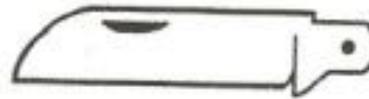
**Spear**



**Spey**



**Hawk Bill**



**Sheep Foot**



**Coping**



**Pen**



**Whittler**



**Punch**

- **Serrated edges:** Serrated edges have the benefit of usually staying sharp longer than straight blades. Having a sharp blade is important because if someone does get cut it is a cleaner cut, which heals faster. The downside is serrated edges are harder to sharpen and need to be sharpened by someone who is experienced at sharpening knives. It is recommended that Rangers do not carry serrated edge knives.
- **Double-edged blades**

### **HOW TO OPEN A POCKET KNIFE OR MULTI-TOOL**

- Hold in left hand, put right thumbnail into nail slot.
- Pull blade out while pushing against hinge with little finger of left hand.
- Continue to hold on to handle and blade until blade snaps into open position.

### **HOW TO CLOSE A POCKET KNIFE OR MULTI-TOOL**

- Hold handle with left hand with fingers safely on the sides.
- Push against back of blade with fingers of right hand, swinging handle up to meet blade.
- Let knife snap shut.
- “Kick” at base of blade keeps edge from touching inside of handle.

### **HOW TO USE A KNIFE**

- For course cutting, grasp handle with whole hand.
- Cut at a slant.
- Always cut away from you.
- You can cut brush with a pocket knife if you bend the stem until grain is strained, then cut close to the ground with a slanting cut. Trim a branch by cutting twigs from thick end toward end. Push knife against twigs, or pull twigs against blade.

### **ESTABLISH A KNIFE SAFETY CIRCLE**

- A safety circle is the area around you where no one can be cut by your blade.
- Grasp a closed pocketknife or multi-tool in your hand.
- Extend your arm and with the closed knife straight in front of you, rotate your body to either side while continuing to extend the closed knife-arm.
- Check your overhead clearance as this is part of your safety circle.
- No one or thing should be in the imaginary circle you have created.

### **HOW TO PASS AN OPEN KNIFE**

- You should ALWAYS close a pocketknife before passing it.
- If you cannot close it, then you should lay it down and let the other person pick it up.
- If you cannot lay it down, then you should hold the knife by the blade, passing the handle to the other person. In this way the handler has control of the edge of the knife.

### **KNIFE SHARPENING**

A dull knife won't do its work. And what's more – it is dangerous. More fingers are cut by dull knives than by sharp knives. A sharp knife bites into the wood while a dull one tends to slip off.

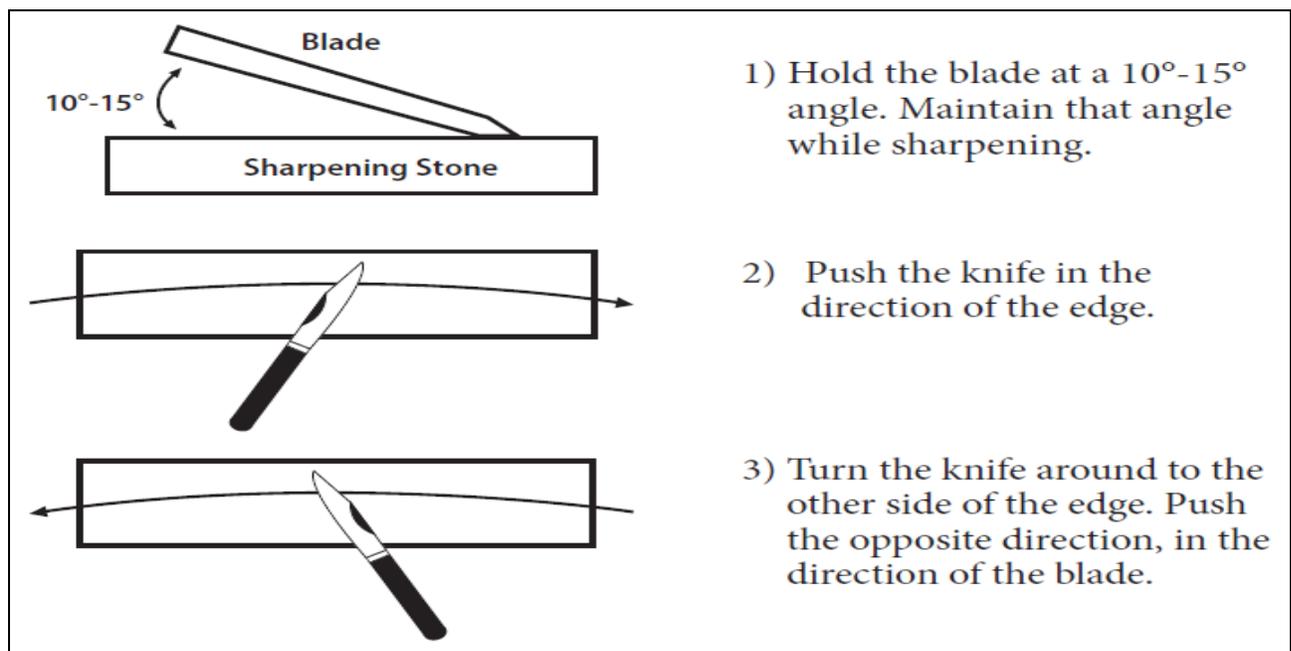
A Ranger should always carry a little sharpening stone in his backpack or with his camping equipment. The knife and the stone are partners. Such stones are called whetstones or carborundum stones. Most whetstones are made from granite and other materials harder than knife metal. Some are covered with diamond dust. One measuring 3/4 of an inch by 3 inches is large enough and is a handy size to carry.

Stones are used dry or with a few drops of water or honing oil. A whetstone using water is more practical in camp than one that requires oil, for water is always at hand, but there never seems to be any oil when it is needed.

Whetstones are made to provide a grinding surface, and come in varying degrees of coarseness. Coarse stones are used for heavy tools, like axes; fine stones for knives or for finishing the edge.

### To sharpen your knife with a whetstone:

- It will take about half an hour to sharpen a dull knife. However, once the knife is sharp, a minute a day will keep it in perfect shape.
- Place the stone on a level surface.
- Wet the stone with a little water or oil.
- Hold the blade against the stone at an angle of about 10-15 degrees (raise the back edge up slightly less than the width of the blade itself, keeping the cutting edge on the stone).
- Push the blade along the stone as though you were slicing a layer off the top. The stone's gritty surface will sharpen, or hone, the blade much the same way sandpaper smoothes wood.
- Draw the knife straight back toward you, or move it straight back and forth putting pressure on it only when you pull it toward you. This is always better than moving it in a circular fashion.
- To sharpen the other side, turn the blade over and pull it along the stone toward you. Repeat on this side an equal number of times.
- Clean tiny bits of metal off the stone by slapping it on your hand or pants leg.
- Work the blade back and forth across the stone several more times. Wipe the knife with a clean cloth and look directly down at the edge of the blade in the sun or under a bright light. A dull cutting edge reflects light and looks shiny. A sharp edge is so thin that it has no shine at all.



## **CARING FOR YOUR KNIFE**

All Rangers must understand that knives are valuable tools and must learn how to take care of them. You'll get the best service from your knife if it is kept in good shape. Most knives are made of a strong steel alloy that won't rust. However, dirt and lint can collect inside, and ordinary use will dull the blades.

- Knives should be kept clean, dry and sharp at all times.
- Keep your knife off the ground. Moisture and dirt will ruin it.
- Wipe the blade clean after using it. Then close it carefully.
- Remove all water and dry thoroughly if the knife gets wet.
- Use light oil to cover the blade and hinged parts. Wipe off all excess oil. Whenever the knife is not going to be used for a long period of time, make sure that the blades and working parts have a protective covering of oil. This will keep it from rusting.
- Never use a knife on objects that will dull or break it.
- Keep your knife out of fire. The heat draws the temper of the steel. The edge of the blade becomes soft and useless.
- Never attempt to take your knife apart. Doing so will leave you with an unsafe knife and will probably void the manufacturer's warranty.
- Keep track of your knife (don't lose it – you're going to need it!). All Rangers should wear their knife in a sheath on their belt. You can also add a 3-foot cord or line to the knife (through the ring in the handle) and tie the other end to a belt loop of your pants. Or you can thread a brightly colored shoestring through the ring and tie the ends in a square knot. That splash of color will help you find your knife if you drop it in grass, leaves or snow.

## **CLEANING A KNIFE**

- Open all of the blades, taking care not to cut your fingers.
- Twirl a small bit of cloth or paper towel onto the end of a toothpick or use a cotton swab. Moisten it with oil and wipe the inside of the knife.
- Be sure to clean the joint at the base of each blade. Swab out excess oil with a clean cloth.
- If you've used your knife to cut food or spread peanut butter and jelly, wash it in hot soapy water along with your dishes.

## Ranger Knife Safety Basics

- Knives are tools, not toys.
- Always keep safety in mind when using your knife.
- Sharp knives are safe tools. Dull knives can be dangerous.
- Be sure to know how your knife works before using it. Practice safely opening and closing your knife.
- The sharp edge and point of the blade should always be pointed in a safe direction.
- Do not take knives anywhere they are prohibited such as schools, school functions, or anywhere else they might not be allowed.
- Never run with a knife.
- Never point a knife at anyone.
- Keep your knife folded or sheathed when carrying or storing.
- Use your knife in a well-lit area so you can see what you're doing.
- Do not use a knife on "live" electrical items like appliances.
- Cut away from your body. Don't cut toward yourself. If the blade slips, you may be injured.
- If you drop your knife, let it fall. Don't attempt to catch it.
- Don't throw a knife to anyone. Hand it to them, handle first.
- Do not use a locking blade if the lock will not lock open. Make sure the lock is working before using it.
- Always close the blade before you pass a knife to someone else. If the blade does not close - hand it to the person with blade pointing down handle side up.
- Don't carry a knife with the blade open.
- If the blade of your knife does not lock in the open position, do not put pressure on the blade in a direction that might cause it to close on your fingers.
- Always ask yourself "If my knife accidentally slips, where will it go?" If the answer is "towards me or someone else's body," change your position.
- Always keep your knife sharp. A sharp blade is safer and easier to control than a dull one.
- Always keep your knife clean, particularly the locking mechanism. A clean blade will last longer.
- Never throw your knife (unless it's specifically designed to do so).
- Don't put a knife in a fire. New knife blades are hardened, or tempered, with just the right amount of heat. Reheating them may ruin the temper and weaken the knife.
- Use a sharpening stone, not a power grinder to sharpen your knife. A power grinder can make the edge brittle.
- Don't use a knife for prying. It can cause the tip to break, possibly causing injury.
- Keep your knife oiled and sharp. A sharp knife is safer than a dull one.
- Only use your knife to cut. Do not use it to hammer, etc. Don't pound on a knife handle or blade with another tool. The knife may break.
- Don't "chop" or strike objects to cut them.

## SHARP Challenge-Based Test (CBT) for Knives

### **MAKE A FUZZ STICK**

A good sharp knife and skill in handling it will make a camper's life easier – and more fun. Making shavings and fuzz sticks for starting fires is a test of both skill and knife care. Shavings may be made from any stick picked up at the cook-out site to make the simplest, most effective tinder. When shavings are left on the stick the product is called a fuzz stick.

Small fuzz sticks are made from a short stick, with five to ten shavings made on one side; the small fuzz sticks are piled one on top of another to make the base of a fire. A craftsman's fuzz stick will be larger, with shavings on the stick all around and a pointed end to stand the fuzz stick in the ground. With kindling piled around the fuzz stick, fire building is simple. Fuzz sticks are especially good to make when wood is damp or wet, as the inside of the stick is always drier than the outside.

You will need: Piece of soft wood (pine kindling, etc.) about 10 inches long, one inch diameter and without knots.

- Hold top of stick with one hand and brace it against a bench, stump, or whittling board.
- Cut long, slim shavings down the length of the stick (avoid short, thick ones). Cut into wood at bottom, to keep from cutting shavings off, and draw knife out at bottom of stroke.
- Turn stick as work progresses, making shavings evenly on all sides.
- Point end of top of stick so it will stand in the ground.

