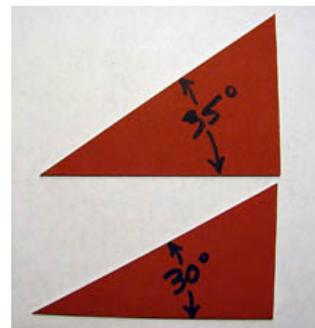


Let's Put it to the Stone – Sharpening and Stropping your Swivel Knife Blade

The Leather Wranglers Swivel Knife is extremely sharp and with a little care, it will stay that way for a long time to come, providing more hours of carving and less time sharpening. The following are seven steps covering the fundamental principles and techniques of getting a swivel knife sharpened on diamond hones.

Step 1. Make angle guides for your sharpening fixture: one at 35° for cutting angle, and one at 30° for base angle.



Step 2. Get all your blades, swivel knives, utility knives, head knives, sharpening fixtures, sharpening stones, lubricant (soapy water or oil), strop, and practice pieces (scrap leather) together. It is always best to sharpen all your cutting tools at the same time for three good reasons: 1) it saves time, 2) it yields more consistent results, and 3) it is simply more enjoyable.

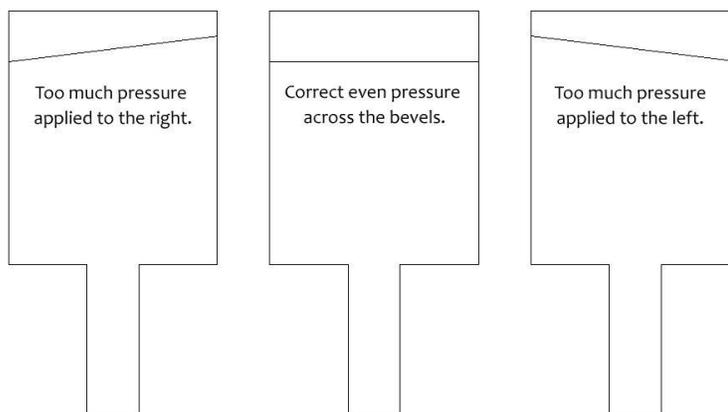
Step 3. Set up your swivel knife blade fixture at 30° first. This angle should work well for most all swivel knife blades to set the primary bevels.



Step 4. After you have your sharpening fixture set at 30°, hone all your blades using a 1200-grit diamond hone (or whichever extra fine sharpening stone you have available).

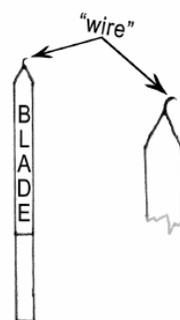


When sharpening at this stage, it is very important to keep even pressure across the bevels, otherwise, you will get uneven bevels, as illustrated below.





Hone both sides until all the old striations are gone and you have a good, clean face on both sides. Then re-do both sides at this same angle on the 8000-grit hone (or the finest polishing stone you have). This will remove the 1200-grit striations and polish the bevels close to a mirror finish.



Caution: You can feel the wire by very lightly moving your finger perpendicular to the cutting edge (NOT parallel to it, or it will cut you!)

Step 5. Now ramp up the fixture to 35° to hone the cutting edge on the 8000-grit diamond hone. You only need a few VERY SHORT strokes for the 35° micro bevel. Put the blade back into the swivel knife barrel and get it ready to strop.

Step 6. Strop – Apply fresh polishing compound (green “rouge”) to your strop. Polish each side of the blade equally by pulling the bevels of the blade on the compound *in one direction only* – drawing the blade on the strop in the direction *away* from the cutting edge, *front-to-back only* (as opposed to *into* the edge for sharpening on the stone). Keep the bevels flat on the strop at the same 30° angle. Flip the blade over and do the other side. Repeat several times. As you strop, DO NOT ROTATE, roll up, or change the angle of your stropping motion in such a way that puts the cutting edge on to the strop – this will dull your blade!



Step 7. Do some practice cuts on dampened leather. If needed, strop some more. If it's still not smooth enough, re-do the 35° angle on the finest/hardest stone you have and re-strop. Get your blade edges to perform the way you like them and you'll love using them. When not in



use store your swivel knife in such a way that the cutting edge of your blade is protected. Use a rubber cover or make a custom cover out of 2-3 oz. leather, folded over and glued on the sides. The old adage still holds true today, “Take care of your tools and they will take care of you!”

Stay sharp! –Paul Zalesak, Leather Wranglers Inc.