

SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR CARVING

1. Caring for your tools

a. Keep your tools and knives sharp and free from rust and dirt

b. Wear protective gear such as safety glasses and, when appropriate, a dust mask.
2. Controlling the Work Environment

a. Use a clamp or bench stop for better control when carving small or oddly shaped objects; use a plastic mat or bench stop for extra control and safety.

b. Use a safety table with a sturdy chair and adequate lighting.

c. Keep adequate space around you with no one else close enough to bump you.

d. Keep your elbows on the table for more control so you will be less likely to get cut.
3. Handling Knives

a. Never pass a knife across other people at the table.

b. Never carve in your lap or near your face.

c. Take small, well-placed carving strokes that give you more control over your work.

d. Never “muscle” a project when carving.

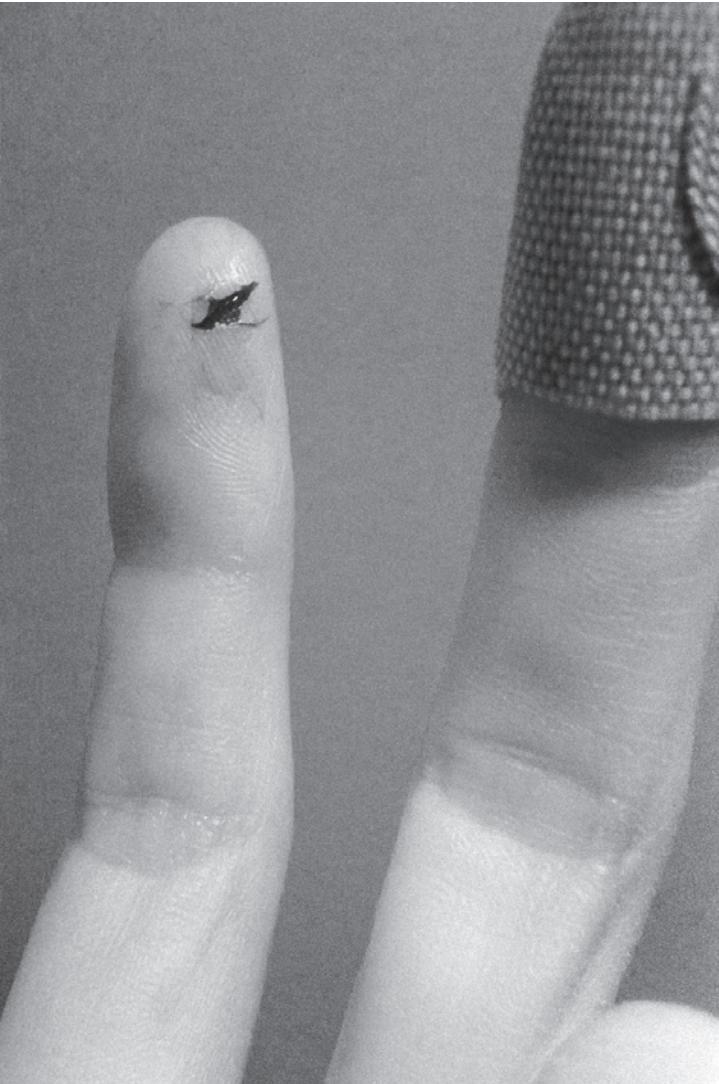
e. Always make sure your knife is sharp.

f. Never hammer the top of a knife to make a cut.
4. Making the Right Choices

a. Choose the right wood for the project.

b. Start with simple projects.

c. When laying out projects, have plenty of space for cutting them out.



These guidelines can help you care for simple wounds:

1. Stop the bleeding. Minor cuts and scrapes usually stop bleeding on their own. If they don't, apply gentle pressure with a clean cloth or bandage. Hold the pressure continuously for 20 to 30 minutes and if possible elevate the wound. Don't keep checking to see if the bleeding has stopped because this may damage or dislodge the clot that's forming and cause bleeding to resume. If blood spurts or continues flowing after continuous pressure, seek medical assistance.
2. Clean the wound. Rinse out the wound with clear water. Soap can irritate the wound, so try to keep it out of the actual wound. If dirt or debris remains in the wound after washing, use tweezers cleaned with alcohol to remove the particles. If debris still remains, see your doctor. Thorough cleaning reduces the risk of infection and tetanus. To clean the area around the wound, use soap and a washcloth. There's no need to use hydrogen peroxide, iodine or an iodine-containing cleanser.
3. Apply an antibiotic. After you clean the wound, apply a thin layer of an antibiotic cream or ointment such as Neosporin or Polysporin to help keep the surface moist. The products don't make the wound heal faster, but they can discourage infection and help your body's natural healing process. Certain ingredients in some ointments can cause a mild rash in some people. If a rash appears, stop using the ointment.
4. Cover the wound. Bandages can help keep the wound clean and keep harmful bacteria out. After the wound has healed enough to make infection unlikely, exposure to the air will speed wound healing.
5. Change the dressing. Change the dressing at least daily or whenever it becomes wet or dirty.
6. Get stitches for deep wounds. A wound that is more than 1/4-inch (6 millimeters) deep or is gaping or jagged edged and has fat or muscle protruding usually requires stitches. Adhesive strips or butterfly tape may hold a minor cut together, but if you can't easily close the wound, see your doctor as soon as possible. Proper closure within a few hours reduces the risk of infection.
7. Watch for signs of infection. See your doctor if the wound isn't healing or you notice any redness, increasing pain, drainage, warmth or swelling.
8. Get a tetanus shot. Doctors recommend you get a tetanus shot every 10 years. If your wound is deep or dirty and your last shot was more than five years ago, your doctor may recommend a tetanus shot booster. Get the booster as soon as possible after the injury.

If a foreign object is projecting from the skin:

- Wash your hands and clean the area well with soap and water.
- Use tweezers to remove splinters of wood or fiberglass, small pieces of glass, or other foreign objects. A magnifying glass may help you see the object better.
- Squeeze the wound gently to allow bleeding to wash out germs.
- Wash the area again and pat dry. Apply antibiotic ointment.

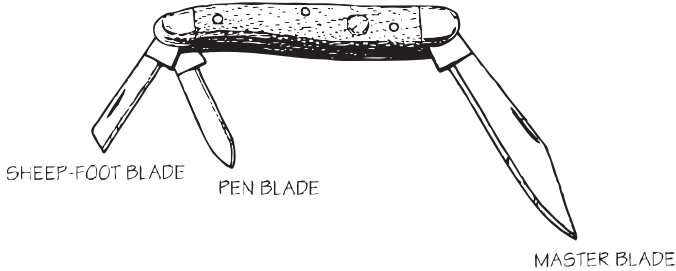
If the object is completely embedded in your skin:

- Wash your hands and clean the area well with soap and water.
- Sterilize a clean, sharp needle by wiping it with rubbing alcohol. If rubbing alcohol isn't available, clean the needle with soap and water.
- Use the needle to break the skin over the object and gently lift the tip of the object out. A magnifying glass may help you see the object better.
- Use tweezers to remove the object.
- Squeeze the wound gently to allow bleeding to wash out germs.
- Wash the area again and pat dry. Apply antibiotic ointment.

Seek medical help if:

- The particle doesn't come out easily.
- The particle is close to an eye.

Check your immunization record to be sure you're current on your tetanus shot (within 10 years unless the wound is deep or dirty). The immunization may be listed as Td, DTaP or Tdap.



MIDWAY FARE (WHITTling), 2012
HIDEOUS BEAST

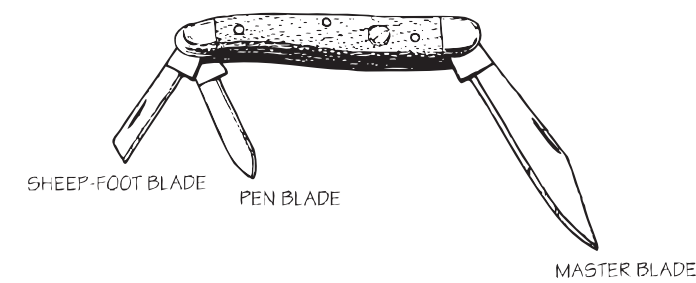


The Yankee boy, before he's sent to school,
Well knows the mysteries of that magic tool,
The pocket-knife. To that his wistful eye
Turns, while he hears his mother's lullaby;
His hoarded cents he gladly gives to get it,
Then leaves no stone unturned till he can whet it;
And in the education of the lad
No little part that implement hath had.
His pocket-knife to the young whittler brings
A growing knowledge of material things.
Projectiles, music, and the sculptor's art,
His chestnut whistle and his shingle dart,
His elder pop-gun with its hickory rod,
Its sharp explosion and rebounding wad,
His corn-stalk fiddle, and the deeper tone
That murmurs from his pumpkin-stalk trombone,
Conspire to teach the boy. To these succeed
His bow, his arrow of a feathered reed,
His wind-mill, raised the passing breeze to win,
His water-wheel, that turns upon a pin;
Or, if his father lives upon the shore,
You'll see his ship, "beam ends upon the floor,"
Full rigged, with raking masts, and timbers stanch,
And waiting, near the wash-tub, for a launch.
Thus, by his genius and his jack-knife driven,
Ere long he'll solve you any problem given;
Make any jim-crack, musical or mute,

CHECKLIST OF NEEDED MATERIALS:

- ☐ A Knife
- ☐ Wood
- ☐ Knife sharpening tools (a couple suggestions):
 - Norton Consumer 85440 Crystolon Bench Combination Sharpenin Stones) – \$10
 - Smith's Pocket Pal Knife Sharpener - \$10
- ☐ Norton Sharpening Stone Oil – \$5
- ☐ Thumb pad (we suggest using duct tape).

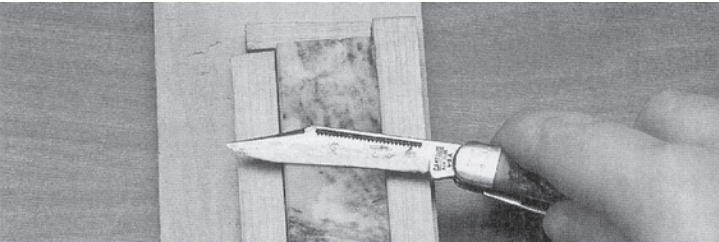
THE POCKET KNIFE.



For generations, whittlers have used nothing but their trusty pocket knife to create ruggedly handsome works of art. A benefit of pocket knives is that they provide multiple blade types in a single knife. When you need to do some more intricate carving, you can simply open up your smaller more flexible blade. Need to make bigger cuts? Use the larger knife blade.

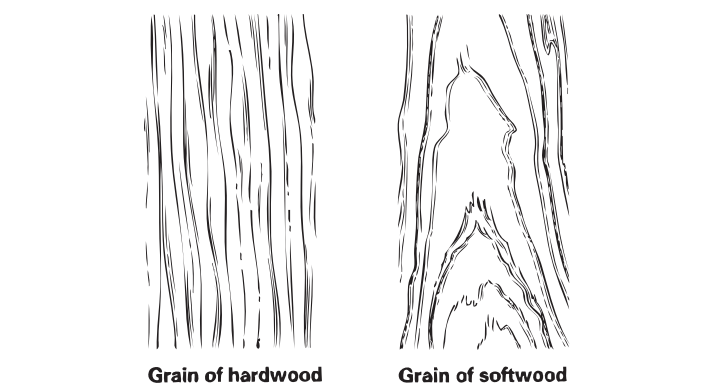
The most important step – Keeping it Sharp!

1. Start off with the rough grit. If you have a particularly dull blade, start off with the rough grit side of your sharpening stone. How do you tell which side is the rough grit? Sometimes you can tell by sight. If you can't do that, do a thumbnail test. Scratch the surface with your thumbnail and whichever side feels rougher, that's the side you want to start off with. Also, rough grits tend to be more porous than finer grits. So if you put water on one side and the stone really drinks it up, chances are it's the rough grit.
2. Prep the stone. If you're using a lubricant, get it out. Pour an ample amount of mineral oil all over the surface of the stone. You don't need to drench it, but don't be stingy either.
3. Place the knife blade flat on the stone and raise it to a 10 to 15 degree angle. The key to knife sharpening is maintaining a constant angle. Different knives require different sharpening angles. For a pocket knife, shoot for a 10 to 15 degree angle. This will give you an edge that's sharp enough for most daily needs, but not sharp enough to perform heart surgery. Keeping a constant angle by hand takes a lot of practice. If you're having difficulty, you might consider investing in a sharpening guide. It takes all the guess work out of maintaining the needed angle. They cost about \$10.
4. Start sharpening the first side of the blade. With your blade set at the prefect angle, you're ready to start sharpening. Imagine you're carving off a slim piece of the stone's surface. Personally, I bring the blade into the stone. Other people stroke the blade away from the stone. Both ways work, so just use whatever technique you prefer. If the knife blade is curved or if it's longer than the stone, you'll need to sweep the blade sideways as you work, so the entire edge is sharpened evenly. Apply moderate pressure as you sharpen. No need to bear down hard on the blade. After you make one stroke, start back at the beginning and repeat. Do this about 6-12 times.
5. Sharpen the other side of the blade. Flip the blade and do the same thing on the other side.
6. Take alternating strokes. After you've sharpened each side, make several alternating strokes- sharpening one side and then sharpening the other successively.
7. Flip the stone over on the fine grit and repeat above process.
8. That's it... for a basic sharpening.



HARDWOOD OR SOFTWOOD?

The terms “hardwood” and “softwood” have little to do with hardness. In fact, some softwoods are much harder than some hardwoods. Hardwood is a forester’s term for a tree with broad leaves that fall each year. Softwoods are trees that have narrow leaves or needles and bear seed cones. The many differences between hardwoods and softwoods are of relatively little importance to the wood carver.



THE WOOD

Softwoods are the best for whittling because they cut nice and easy. After you’ve learned the basics of whittling, feel free to move on to harder woods. No matter which kind of wood you use, look for wood with a straight grain as it is easier to whittle than wood that has the grain going in multiple directions. Avoid wood with lots of knots- those are a booger to whittle.

Check your local lumber yard or woodworking store for whittling wood. Craft stores, like Hobby Lobby and Blinks, often carry a variety of softwoods that are good for whittling.

Below I’ve included a short list of the most popular whittling woods.

1. BASSWOOD. Basswood has been used for millennia for woodcarving. During the Middle Ages, it was the preferred wood of German sculptors who crafted elaborate altar pieces. It's a good wood to whittle with because it's soft and doesn't have much grain. You can pick up basswood blocks in various sizes at your local craft store for a reasonable price.
2. PINE. Pine is another traditional whittling wood. It's soft, cuts easily, and is readily available. But it has its drawbacks. Some whittlers think pine doesn't hold detail very well. And if you're using a fresh pine twig or branch, you'll have to regularly clean the sticky sap off your knife while you're whittling.
3. Balsa. Balsa wood is a soft, inexpensive, lightweight wood that's perfect for beginning whittlers. You can buy it by the boatloads at craft stores like Hobby Lobby for pretty cheap. I picked up 9 blocks of balsa wood for a little under \$4.
4. Random twigs and branches. You don't need a pre-cut block of wood to whittle. Twigs and branches from most kinds of trees make for great whittling. There's nothing more enjoyable than sitting around a campfire and whittling away at a twig while you talk to your buddies. Wooden knives are a popular item to whittle from a tree branch.

WOOD GRAIN (EXTENDED)

Sometimes it's easy to tell the direction of the grain on a piece of wood simply by looking at it. But oftentimes it's not that obvious. If you're having a hard time deciphering which way the grain is going, start making some small shallow cuts in your wood. Cuts made with the grain will peel away smoothly; cuts made against the grain will give resistance and eventually split.

Generally, you want most of your cuts to go with the wood's grain. Cuts against the grain cause your wood to tear, split, and just plain look ugly. Plus, the resistance the wood gives when you cut against the grain makes whittling much more difficult.

Don't get frustrated if you lose track of which way the grain runs while you're in the middle of the project. It happens to most people when they're first getting started with woodworking of any kind. It happened to me at least. Just keep practicing, and you'll eventually get a feel for figuring out wood grain.

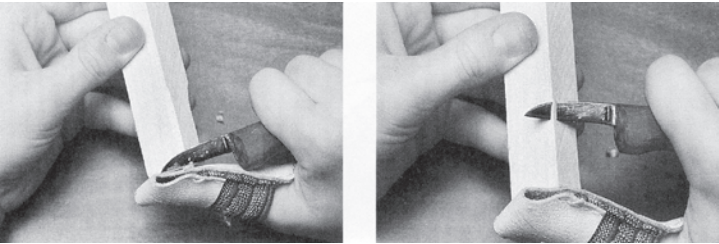
TYPES OF WHITTLING CUTS

Several cutting styles exist in whittling, but we'll just stick with the basics. The directions assume you're right-handed. Simply flip them if you're a southpaw.

Straightaway Rough Cutting

Use this cut at the very beginning of your project to carve your project's general shape. Hold the wood in your left hand and your knife firmly in your right. Make a long, sweeping cut with the grain and away from your body. Don't cut too deep or you might split the wood. Make several, thin slices to reduce the wood to the desired size and shape.

PULL STROKE (PARE CUT)



If you've ever seen an old-timer whittle, chances are you saw him using the pull stroke. It's the most used cut in whittling. To perform this cut, imagine you're paring an apple. Hold the wood in your left hand, the knife in your right with the blade facing towards you. Brace your right thumb against the wood, and squeeze your right fingers in order to draw the blade to your right thumb. Make your stroke short and controlled. Keep your right thumb out of the path of the blade. For added safety, wear a thumb pad.

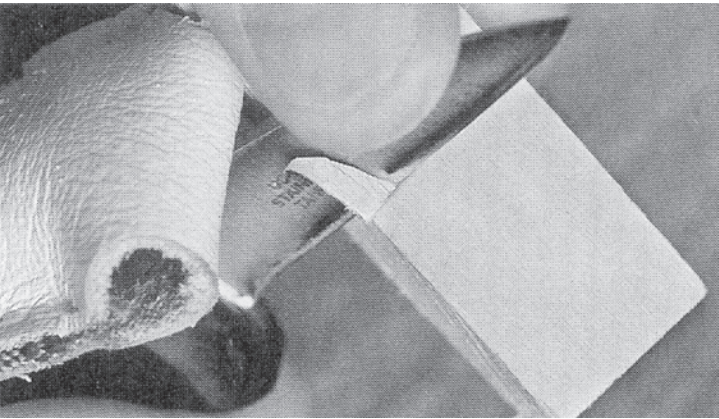
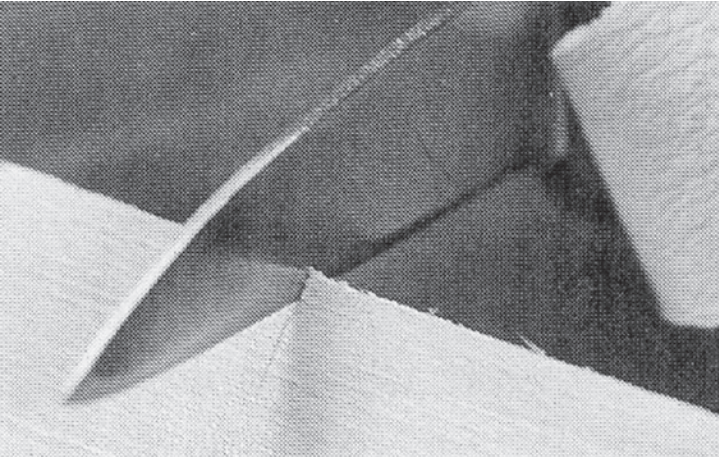
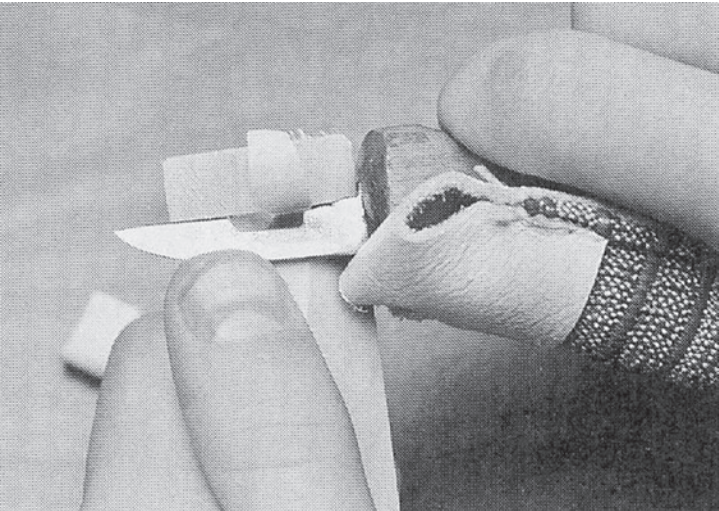
The pull stroke gives you lots of control over your blade and is best for detailed cuts.



PUSH STROKE (THUMB PUSHING)

Sometimes where you want to cut won't allow you to do the pull stroke. That's when it's time to bust out the push stroke. Hold the wood in your left hand and the knife firmly in your right hand with the blade facing away from you. Place both your right and left thumbs on the back of the knife blade. Push the blade forward with your left thumb while your right thumb and fingers guide the blade through the wood.

The push stroke, like the pull stroke, gives you greater control over your knife for detailed cuts.



A good portion of this short guide was sourced from online resources: <http://artofmanliness.com/2011/12/12/a-beginners-guide-to-whittling/>