

# My First Knife

## *Tips on Safety, Use, Maintenance & Sharpening*



**An educational project of the  
American Knife & Tool Institute**

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## *Message to Parents*

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We encourage you to teach your son or daughter about knife safety and care as early as possible. Begin by showing your child safe knife use in the kitchen.

It's important that your children understand that a knife can be dangerous if not properly treated or used carefully. Teach them how to sharpen a knife, cut properly, store the knives carefully, and respect knives as tools.

**We believe it's important that each child know that:**

- 1) Knives are important tools, not toys.
- 2) Sharp knives are safe tools. Dull knives can be dangerous.
- 3) The sharp edge and point of the blade should always be pointed in a safe direction.
- 4) There are places they should not take knives such as schools or school functions because they are not allowed.



To learn about the knife laws in your state or where you travel, visit our website:

**[www.usaknifelaws.com](http://www.usaknifelaws.com)**

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## *Your First Knife*

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Congratulations on owning your first knife! With it comes a feeling of pride in being considered mature enough to own and carry a knife. That ownership also brings with it a responsibility to use your knife safely and properly.

Like a hammer or saw, your new knife is a tool. It will require regular care, knowing what the knife can and cannot do, and understanding its proper uses.

Read this pamphlet carefully for valuable advice and tips on how to get the most from your knife for many years.



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## *Know Your Knife*

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Your knife is more than just a sharp blade with a handle to hold on to. Your new knife may also include a screwdriver, file, scissors, tweezers, or other specialized tools.

Your knife will either fold inside the handle or have a sheath to put it into when it is not being used. This keeps the edge from becoming nicked and dulled. It also prevents accidents.

The blade is made from a high quality alloy steel. Steel is formulated to be strong, to hold its edge well, and to retain its bright, shiny finish with proper maintenance.

You will need to clean, oil, and sharpen your knife regularly.

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## *Safety*

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### **Always keep safety in mind when using your knife.**

- Be sure to know how your knife works before using it. Practice safely opening and closing your knife.
- Always carry your knife with the blade shut or in a sheath.
- A sharp knife will always be safer and do a better job.
- Only use your knife to cut. Do not use it to hammer, pound, etc.
- Remember not to “chop” or strike objects to cut them.
- Never throw your knife (unless it’s specifically designed to do so).
- 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 somebody else’s body,” change your position.

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## *Maintenance*

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### **You’ll get the best service from your knife if it is kept in good shape.**

- If the knife gets wet, remove all water and dry thoroughly.
- 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 attempt to take your knife apart, doing so will result in an unsafe knife that may not be warranted by the manufacturer.

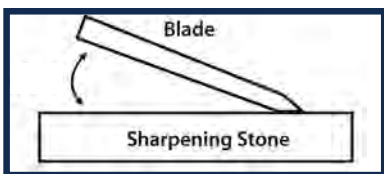
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# Sharpening

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It is easy to keep the blade sharp. Use a good sharpening stone or any commercially available sharpening system. For the best results and safety, follow the directions for whatever system you choose. If you sharpen your knife regularly, only a few strokes will be needed to keep it sharp.

- 1) Hold the blade at the angle suggested by the manufacturer. Maintain that angle while sharpening.



- 2) Push the knife in the direction of the edge.



- 3) Turn the knife around to the other side of the edge. Push the opposite direction, in the direction of the blade.



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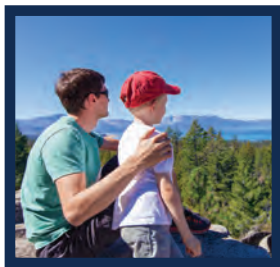
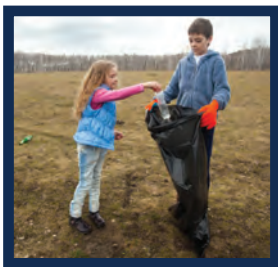
## Always sharpen your knife away from your body

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When sharpening on a sharpening stone, some steel on both sides of the blade must be removed at a precise angle. Stroking the blade over the stone at an angle will slowly remove the metal. The metal is actually scraped from the blade making it sharper with each stroke as you push it across the stone, as if you're attempting to cut a thin slice from the stone's surface.

## *Outdoor Ethics*

It is important to treat your outdoor surroundings with respect. Always leave the area the same as it was when you arrived, or in better condition. Read and abide by all rules and guidelines for any trails, lakes, or recreational areas.



With permission based on *My First Knife* written by noted outdoorsman Tom Fegeley.



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