

## Instructions for using the BMC Genuine Leather Honing Strop

The BMC Genuine Leather Honing Strop can be used daily to keep the cutting edge razor sharp.

The below instructions are intended to outline effective honing of a standard Sabre grind found on most kitchen, utility and outdoor-use knives and machetes. A Sabre ground blade is essentially one which has a main (primary) grind and a cutting edge (secondary) grind. It is the secondary grind which needs to be sharpened on both sides of the 'V'.

The Leather Honing Strop consists of a quality FSC certified wooden paddle, affixed with two 3mm thick patches of genuine leather both rough and smooth. Each Strop is delivered with a Green (fine) and Red (medium) honing paste. These can be lightly smeared onto the respective leathers to enhance the honing effect on the blades cutting edge.

A Honing Strop is intended to be used on a fairly sharp blade that needs only a minor improvement in sharpness to make it incredibly sharp. It turns a *fairly sharp edge* into a mirror polished *razor edge*. Use the rough/red side first, moving onto the fine/green side to finish

1. Holding the strop in your less dominant hand, you will need to place the blade across the strop and draw it back and forth across the leather, ensuring you're 'spreading butter' away from, not 'slicing' towards the leather as this will cut and damage the strop.
2. First establish the correct honing angle of the blade. This can be done by using a permanent marker or felt tip pen to colour the cutting edge. Draw the edge across the strop at the correct angle – confirmed by the removal of the marker from the entire surface of each side of the cutting edge. Check after each pass.

As stropping a blade can be done as regularly as desired without fear of removing too much steel each time and given the relative speed and ease with which a smaller knife especially can be stropped, you should find attaining a good angle is fairly easy when compared to sharpening on a stone. Crucially, a Machete and many utility knives will often benefit from a cutting edge which takes on a slightly convex edge. A happy coincidence of regular, free-hand honing with a strop.

3. For a longer blade start at the tip. You can hold the blade at an angle relative to the strop, so that each pass across the strop covers more cutting edge, rather than having the blade spine perpendicular to the strop. Draw the cutting edge over the rough/red leather, away from the cutting edge (imagine spreading butter on toast). Begin with 10 times away from you, 10 times spine towards you, then 9, 8, 7, 6, five, four, three, two, one each side.

\*NB – If the blade has a curved tip (as many knives do) you may find raising the handle-hand elbow upward a few inches will keep the blades tip cutting edge angle consistent with the rest of the cutting edge being honed.

Your edge should now be nice and sharp.

4. You can test the sharpness by slicing paper. A honed knife should be able to slice cleanly through a normal sheet of paper without catching or sounding 'rough' at all.

Warning! Never slide your finger/thumb along a blades edge! You can run a fingertip across a blade to get a 'feel' for the sharpness.

5. If you want a mirror finish razor sharp edge, then repeat step 3 above using the fine/green side of the leather strop. Once finished, the cutting edge should be incredibly sharp. Use with care.

If the cutting edge is still not very sharp do not panic! Take a break and come back to it. The most likely explanation is the sharpening angle wasn't quite right. Attempt the marker pen on the cutting edge and slow down the honing strokes until the marker pen is removed consistently. Keep checking, go slow and you'll start to pick up muscle memory of the correct honing angle.

After several honing sessions, you will notice the strops surface may become shiny smooth with the pastes. We find freshening up the paste layer by reapplying a layer over the old paste helps keep the honing performance high.



The topic of honing is vast! These instructions are intended as a quick intro to get the best from your new strop and return your blades to full sharpness.

Let us know if you need any more pointers and how you get on by contacting us here:  
<https://www.britishmacheteco.com/contact>