



## A Guide to Honing and Sharpening

### Conclusion



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This concludes our honing lesson. It's really the first step. Practice is the key, and with time you will become fast and steady in your sharpening. With sharp tools accuracy and control of cut becomes easier. Plus, you eliminate the very real danger of dull blades, which won't cut wood but easily cut flesh. Once you become comfortable sharpening chisels, try sharpening a plane blade. The sequence and technique are identical although the thinner blade makes it a little harder to keep the bevel flat on the stone.

As you repeatedly sharpen a hollow-ground tool, the hollow will disappear and you will eventually have a flat bevel. While it is marginally easier to sharpen a hollow-ground tool, there being less metal to remove, the technique will continue to work very well. It's tempting to conclude that if a well honed tool never got nicked or damaged, and the secondary bevel were not allowed to grow, there would be no reason to ever grind the bevel. But the sad reality is that wood is hard and long hours of digging and slicing it take their toll (even without nicking and edge on a vise or clamp). The edges of plane blades do dull and thicken beyond the capacity continued honing to correct. It's a bummer, but in the middle to long run, the abrasive quality of wood upon steel will require even the reflattening of the rounded backs of blades, as well as the heavy metal removal needed to bring back thin contours to obtuse edges. This can be slow and laborious even with water or diamond stones, or that old standby of professional woodworkers, the grinding wheel.

Nevertheless, you can postpone the eventual need to do wheel grinding by frequent honings with the tried and tested methods described in this lesson. Strop blades often. When that fails, use the Arkansas stone until the medium stone is needed to get the edge back to honeable thinness.

The following links point to sharpening supplies listed in the lesson that we carry in our store.

- [Arkansas and India Stones](#)
- [Waterstones](#)
- [3M Micro Abrasive Film for Scary Sharpening](#)
- [Diamond Stones](#)
- [The entire sharpening department](#)
- [The main entrance to our store](#)

### A Summary of the Honing Sequence for Oilstones

#### Refining the Edge

- 1. Rub bevel on India stone.
- 2. Rub bevel on Arkansas stone.

- 3. Rub back on Arkansas stone.

#### Chasing the Burr

- 4. Rub bevel on Arkansas stone.
- 5. Rub back on Arkansas stone.
- 6. Alternate #4 and #5, as needed.

#### Forming the Micro Bevel and chasing its Burr

- 7. Rub bevel, raised 5 degrees on the Arkansas stone.
- 8. Rub back, flat, on Arkansas stone.
- 9. Alternate #7 and #8, as needed.

#### Stropping

- 10. Strop bevel and back on leather.



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