



Bütz Knife Sharpening Instructions

Congratulations! You have just purchased one of the finest knives ever made for woodcarvers. This is the same knife I use everyday – you'll find it photographed in my books and see it on my television show. The precision Soligen steel blade is set deep into the cherry wood handle. A unique feature of this knife is that the blade is sharpened right up to the handle, for maximum leverage when cutting. The specially contoured handle puts your hand closer to the blade - safely. You'll find that these features will give you more power and control in both roughing out and detailing.

While this knife has already been sharpened at the factory, it still needs to be honed to a final edge. My favorite method of sharpening begins with the use of an "India" stone such as Woodcraft's. Named for its similarity to a natural stone once mined in India, this medium fine oil stone is made from fused aluminum oxide grit and has been used by carvers for decades.

Begin by placing several drops of light honing oil on the stone. Next, position the blade on the stone, at approximately a 25° angle, and slide the blade back and forth along the stone using a medium firm pressure. After 2 or 3 minutes, turn the blade over and sharpen the other side in a similar manner. This process should be repeated, working both sides of the blade evenly, until a thin burr of steel is created on the blade edge. If the burr, known as a "burr edge" or "wire edge", can be felt along the entire length of the blade you have completed the first phase of the sharpening process.

Polish the burr edge off by stroking the blade along a leather strop, always stroking away from the cutting edge. Repeat this process on both sides of the blade until the burr edge has been completely worn away, leaving a razor sharp cutting edge.

Depending on the initial condition of your blade, it may 30 minutes or more to produce a perfect cutting edge. After an initial sharpening, and with practice, this process will go much faster. It is important to keep your carving tools sharp. Sharp tools are 90% of the secret of good woodcarving, try not to become frustrated or impatient when sharpening.

The Bütz Detail Knife has a very fine pointed tip, designed for carving minute details in faces or wildlife. This knife blade is sharpened as described above, but since the fine point of the blade will perform much of the work it will need to be sharpened and stropped with greater care and attention. You must make sure that this fine point is razor sharp.

Test the cutting edge with a small piece of white pine or basswood. Try carving a small chip from the end grain, where you can see the annual growth rings. If your edge is razor sharp it will carve away a smooth chip while making a faint "whistling" sound. A dull edge will crush the wood fibers and cut with a "crunching" sound. If your cut reveals a less than razor sharp edge, try stropping the blade some more, then re-test.

Care for your Bütz Detail Knife by keeping the edge protected, preferably in a leather sheath. Don't use your knife for cutting paper or any other material that may dull the cutting edge. Occasionally, a thin coating of linseed oil may be rubbed into the handle to protect the wood from moisture.