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Cabinet Scrapers

Scrapers come in several basic styles. Properly set, carefully sharpened and used, they will leave a smooth, polished surface. They are especially helpful when working difficult-to-plane woods such as highly resinous and hard exotics, highly figured boards with frequent grain changes, thin veneered surfaces, and woods left with rippled thickness planer marks.

Cabinet Scraper Blade

The simplest cabinet scraper blade is made from a flat steel blank. The scraper blade is primarily a finishing tool used for smoothing bare wood or for leveling a surface between finish coats. They are hardened to hold a fine cutting burr, come with straight or curved edges, and can be reground into a variety of shapes to suit the job at hand.



Shavehooks

Shavehooks are handled scrapers used for coarse wood removal. The blades are attached to a handle at a 90° angle and ground with a 45° bevel in a variety of shapes to conform to flat, concave, convex, and shaped surfaces such as moldings. Shavehooks are extremely useful for removing finishes from wood with or without chemical stripper.



No. 80 Wing Scraper

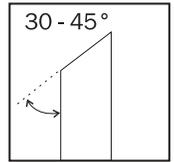
In contrast to the delicate smoothing work done with a cabinet scraper blade is the heavy cutting for which the No. 80 is designed. The blade of the No. 80 is much thicker and held at an angle in a heavy cast iron body. A thumbscrew located at the center of the blade forces it to bend slightly and protrude through the base of the scraper body. This adjustment changes the cut from coarse to fine.



Sharpening Scrapers

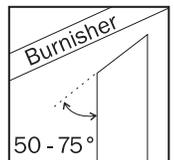
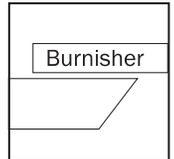
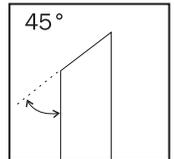
There are essentially three types of cutting edges for scrapers:

1. Bevels - for Shavehooks. The simple ground bevel such as the one found on shavehooks is the easiest to maintain. For coarse work where speed is a priority it can be used straight from the grind stone or file. For a finer edge and one less likely to dig in when scraping furniture surfaces, the bevel must be honed on stones similar to those used for chisels and plane irons. A bevel angle of between 35° and 45° will be strong enough for heavy work and acute enough for a sharp edge. It is a good idea to hold these blades with a pair of vise grips while grinding for both safety and efficiency.



2. Bevel Edges with Burrs - No. 80 Scraper.

The blades for this scraper is ground at a 45° angle and honed smooth. The wire edge formed while grinding must be removed completely. The next step is to form an even finer cutting edge called a burr on the ground edge. The first step in forming a burr is to draw out the sharpened edge with a burnisher which is made of highly polished steel. Burnishers are available with round, triangular, and oval blades. In an emergency, the flat smooth side of a bench chisel can be used for burnishing. After the edge has been drawn out with the burnisher, it is turned or rolled over to form the actual cutting hook. To form the hook, hold the blade in a vise with the bevel on top and facing you. Draw the burnisher along the entire edge, beginning at an angle of around 50° and ending after a series of strokes at an angle of around 75°. You should now be able to feel the formed hook. If the final burnishing angle is greater than 75°, the hook will be weaker and more difficult to set for optimum cutting in the scraper. To reduce the size of the hook, use the pointed end of a triangular burnisher or a chisel edge under the hook and draw it along the length of the edge. This will lift the hook up into a better position.



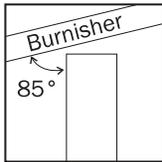
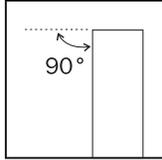


Cabinet Scrapers

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3. Burr Edges - for Cabinet Scraper Blades.

The cutting burr formed on a simple cabinet scraper is similar to the one formed on the beveled blades mentioned above. The difference is that the blade edge is not beveled but square. The polished squareness is important and any extra time polishing all three sides will be repaid in a finer burr edge. The finest scraper blades, such as the Sandvik Swedish Cabinet Scraper, have lapped edges smoothed with the finest abrasives, so no initial squaring is necessary. After squaring and honing the sides and edge, the burr can be drawn with a burnisher and turned over to form a hook. The final stroke in burnishing will be at an angle of around 5°. If the hook is too great, it can be lifted with a sharp pointed tool as mentioned earlier. To resharpen a burr, it is usually necessary to remove it completely and hone the edge absolutely square before burnishing. Burnishing will be easier if you use oil along the edge you are drawing or turning over. A rectangular cabinet scraper blade has four possible burr edges and it is a good idea to sharpen them all at the same time. Sharpen each burr completely before proceeding on to the next and take care of each already sharpened edge by using padded vise jaws or wrapping the burnished edges in a cloth before clamping. A useful tool for rolling a burr is the Veritas Adjustable Burnisher. The scraper is held securely in a vise and the carbide rod of the burnisher passed over the scraper edge at the predetermined angle. No more than five strokes are needed to roll the edge and form the proper hook. A precise hook angle may be achieved and easily repeated on straight or convex scraper edges with the use of this jig. For concave edges, a burnishing rod such as the Woodcraft Burnisher or the Three Cornered Burnisher should be used.



Using Scrapers

Cabinet Scraper Blades. There are two distinctly different ways to use scraper blades. The first is a relatively rough cut with the blade pushed away from you and the center of the blade bowed by thumb pressure. The angle that the blade is held relative to the surface of the work can be modified for the hook that is formed. The shavings formed will be in the center of the blade. The second method creates a shaving along the entire length of the edge. The blade again is held at the best cutting angle to the surface of the wood and drawn toward you without bowing the blade. This method is especially effective between coats when finishing a wood surface.

Shavehooks. The beveled edge of the shavehook works best when the blade is held perpendicular to the surface of the wood and drawn toward you. To prevent the possibility of digging in, it is a good idea to round over sharp corners.

No. 80 Scraper. The critical adjustment for the No. 80 Scraper is provided by the thumb screw behind the blade. Begin the adjustment by laying the base of the tool flat on a table top. Allow the beveled edge to sit on the same plane as the base before tightening the two knurled screws. You can then use the thumb screw to "spring" the center of the blade for a coarse or fine cut. Trial and error on wood itself will tell you when you have the proper setting. Most handled scrapers work best when pushed rather than pulled. By pushing you make use of your entire body. The work is easier and you have more control.