Strop micron order?

Posted by KellyCurtis - 09 Oct 2012 19:01

Is there a posting of the strops and paste in order from largest to finest? As well as paste/strop material? I know there is a lot of numbers being thrown around and I loose track of what is rougher or what is finer than the next. For instance, will you get a more polished edge with a balsa, nano fiber, kangaroo, or leather strop with the same paste? I'd love to have a visual data sheet of all of the items available from WE in order so I don't accidentally grab the wrong paddles and take a step backwards. Hey, I'm getting old and need visual info instead of numbers! ☺
For instance, I just ordered some random balsa strops and paste to add to the collection, and I'm sure I can sort out easy enough what will cut harder than the rest or what will give more of a polish, but to be able to see a list would make me have to think less. Thanks.

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Re: Strop micron order?

Posted by BobNash - 09 Oct 2012 22:49

Welcome to the forum! Great question -

Clay had a photo page showing micro photos of each grit - and they were in order. Can't find it now but I'll keep looking. Anyone else have that link? Last I had seen it, it didn't yet have comparisons of the same grit on different substrates though.

When you move into the various polishing compounds they will be measured in microns or nanometers - larger the number, coarser the grit (exactly the opposite of the stones) - so move from big numbers to smaller. In my experience the effect of the applied compound gets more pronounced in this order - balsa, leather, roo, nano (that is with leather and balsa the substrate has a larger effect on the metal and nano has the least).

I haven't compared much to determine what order gives the best polish at the same grit and this could turn into a huge debate but I think it would go balsa, nano, leather, roo - i.e. roo is the best. I'm not really committed to that order on the middle two though as I've only really used the nano at 0.25 and smaller, but since the leathers burnish much more I put them in position 3 and 4 - I don't think there is much debate about roo as the best with most folk's experience so far.

Of course generally you are going to use the nano and roo to best effect below 0.5 micron IMO and you aren't going to use balsa at those finer grits so the comparison is really just between the leathers and the nano and I'm not sure at that level of polish my old eyes can see much difference (though the microscope can).

Thoughts from others?

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Re: Strop micron order?

Posted by BobNash - 09 Oct 2012 22:52

PS - I didn't mention that you can back up in grits when stropping without noticing much detriment, in fact sometimes it give you better results even. So don't worry too much about going backwards and then working your way back down through the grits. Someone correct me if I am remembering this wrong but I think Clay has taken to going to 0.125 on the nano and them following it with 0.25 on roo when he is cleaning the edge for his studies.

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Re: Strop micron order?
Posted by Billabong - 09 Oct 2012 23:10

BobNash wrote:

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Down the bottom Bob. (Popular Links)

wickededgeusa.com/index.php?option=com_c...eneral&Itemid=46

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Re: Strop micron order?
Posted by ApexGS - 09 Oct 2012 23:43

I think you're right, Bob. It's pretty interesting to see the difference just the substrate material makes. On the topic of backing up, I end up doing it a lot on oddly shaped blades or when I'm working right next to serrations on cheap knives where the grind tends to trail off a bit. The big thing is to try and get all of the scratches from the prior grit out as best as you can. It definitely doesn't hurt to back up, just spends a little extra time if it didn't really need it

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Re: Strop micron order?
Posted by KellyCurtis - 10 Oct 2012 14:41

Thanks for the info, guys. So many stones, so many strops, so many tubes of pastes, and not enough time in the day! With just the basic pro pack 1 and one evening I am extremely impressed at my results. My other strops and paste should be here by friday giving me all weekend to mess with my WE. As a suggestion for marketing, I'd still do a list from the roughest stones to the finest paste/stop combo. Plus it would give me a clear list of where my money will be going!

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Re: Strop micron order?
Posted by BobNash - 10 Oct 2012 23:00

Check out that link in Billabong's post and see if it helps some - that is the one I was thinking of - Thanks Billabong!

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Re: Strop micron order?
Posted by KellyCurtis - 12 Oct 2012 14:54

That list really helps. I just got in a few more strops today, they balsa 14 and 10 micron as well as the 1 and .05 leather. These will go with my pro pack 1. I think I'm going to order the fine ceramic stones as a last "stone" before stropping, being I think the ceramic will give it finer scratches to remove with the strops. Or am I headed in the wrong direction? The 800 and the 1000 do a good job, but I can still see some scratches after stropping like a mad man with the 5 and the 3.5 leather. I think the balsa strops will remove those last deep scratches I'm talking about, but you can never have enough parts for you kit! On that note, I'm going to need more knives! Anyone have a Kershaw Tilt they want to sell, cheap?!?

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Re: Strop micron order?
Posted by BobNash - 12 Oct 2012 15:07

KellyCurtis wrote:

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KellyCurtis wrote:

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You are heading the right way with what you are thinking. Until your diamonds really get broken in, it is hard to get out those scratches with just the strops. Having the extra steps, including the balsa, will definitely help some, as will spending plenty of time at each grit to make sure you have obliterated the scratches from the previous grit (of course even when you think you have done this, the strops often have the effect of uncovering scratches that have just been buried). Having ceramics is a big help - the 1200/1600 and/or Micro fines - to help get those scratches out. But even then you'll sometimes notice that your strops uncover things.

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Re: Strop micron order?

Posted by KellyCurtis - 13 Oct 2012 10:22

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The balsa strops work awesome! Wow! They really take down the surface profile! I shaved last night with my ZT/Hinderer, and that is a thick blade! I also went to Walmart and got a cheap set of knifes to work on to break in the stones a bit. For the life of me I can't figure out why trying to get a perfect edge get's so addicting, but it is!

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