# Getting Started
Posted by wickededge - 10 Dec 2012 15:32

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Straight Razor guys please jump in and teach us a little about technique, finish, pressure etc... Do the same principles carry over to shaving with a regular knife?

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by KenBuzbee - 10 Dec 2012 18:08

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It does. But the thin edge that makes a great razor is lousy for most knife jobs.

Ken

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by wickededge - 10 Dec 2012 18:28

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**KenBuzbee wrote:**

It does. But the thin edge that makes a great razor is lousy for most knife jobs.

Ken

Thanks for jumping in Ken. Can you give us a little primer for sharpening for razors?

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by Mikedoh - 10 Dec 2012 19:39

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I'd appreciate that too. There are a couple of old razors stashed someplace that I've been wondering about their potential usefulness.

I cringe every time I buy new blades, and end up using them far too long. I have been doing some surfing on straight razors including reconditioning them.

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# Re: Getting Started

Posted by KenBuzbee - 11 Dec 2012 09:22

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**wickededge wrote:**

**KenBuzbee wrote:**

It does. But the thin edge that makes a great razor is lousy for most knife jobs.

Ken

Thanks for jumping in Ken. Can you give us a little primer for sharpening for razors?

I can tell you what I do, Clay,

Mechanically razors are trivial. They have the angle "baked" into the design. You lay it flat on the stone (a bit of tape on the spine if you're worried about wear) and lightly draw it across (into the edge) in a bit of an X pattern until you establish the bevel. Generally around 1k works well for this.

Since shaving is a push cut, a high polish is best. For me, at least an 8k minimum.

I've used everything from Arkansas bench stones to DMT plates. It doesn't seem to matter until you get down to the last couple grits. I like finishing on PSA diamond sheets (drawn, like a strop, not pushed) down to .1µ followed by leather. Seems to leave a nice smooth edge.

While this gives me a great edge, I'd love to see what a 30k water stone would add to the mix. A lot of guys like to use coticules at this point but I haven't and don't feel the need to.

I watch my edges with a loop along the way to make sure my technique stays clean.

Strop 20-30 light strokes between shaves and touch up the edge on the PSA sheets every 6-8 shaves and I can go a year between sharpening on a 4 razor rotation.

Side note - like knives, you'll find every kind of steel out there. I prefer the edges I get on Thiers Issard's regular carbon steel to anything else I've tried, but that's a personal preference thing. Just be prepared to try a few different steels to find "yours". TI's higher carbon Silverwing sounds great and I think I'd like it but haven't tried it. Those things aren't cheap, and I really don't mind touching up my edges.

Side note 2 - if you go carbon, make sure you dry it well. They will stain in a heartbeat and those thin edges can pit very easily (ouch )

Hope this s helpful?

Ken

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by wickededge - 11 Dec 2012 11:01

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Ken, that was tremendously helpful, thank you!

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by KenBuzbee - 11 Dec 2012 13:08

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**wickededge wrote:**

Ken, that was tremendously helpful, thank you!

No worries, Clay. Razors are easy. All they take are patience and a light touch.

Ken

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by Mikedoh - 11 Dec 2012 13:31

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Any particular tips for using the WE?

Edge leading with 1k to establish bevel (assuming it's not there already)

Edge trailing near 8k and for stropping.

Only full size stones I have are either very coarse, or a small hard Arkansas , and maybe the old hones that came with the razors.

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by KenBuzbee - 11 Dec 2012 16:16

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**Mikedoh wrote:**

Any particular tips for using the WE?

Edge leading with 1k to establish bevel (assuming it's not there already)

Edge trailing near 8k and for stropping.

Only full size stones I have are either very coarse, or a small hard Arkansas , and maybe the old hones that came with the razors.

Because razors have their angle built into their design (you lay the spine and the edge on the stone) you'll never get the right angle with a WEPS. Even taping the pine will change that angle a bit. There is no room to add the vise jaws. As much as I like the system, it just isn't a good tool for this task. Get a full sized Norton 1k/8k and you'll be well on your way (or any stone equivalent ) I like a stone to be wider (say 3 inches) The Spyderco bench stone do a fine job as well. As are the DMT plates -> 8000

Go diagonal left to right, then flip the blade and go diagonal right to left (the X pattern I referenced)

I do edge leading through all the stones but you can see what works best for you. I don't do edge trailing until the films & strops.

Ken

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# Re: Getting Started
Posted by wickededge - 11 Dec 2012 17:31

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**KenBuzbee wrote:**

**Mikedoh wrote:**

Any particular tips for using the WE?

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Ken

Ken,

Have you looked at doing this with the new upgraded arms rotated forward? I think it works really well but would love your feedback.

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