# Hair Whittling and Atom Splitting
Posted by wickededge - 10 Dec 2012 15:38

---

Please give your tips for how to make your blades Tree-Topping sharp.

==========

# Re: Hair Whittling and Atom Splitting
Posted by Geocyclist - 10 Dec 2012 21:04

---

Related question.  Can the WE get cheap steel tree topping, atom splitting sharp?  By cheap I mean a steel that has no stamp on the blade or even spec on the supplier web site.  It is very stainless, so it must be packed with 13+% Cr.  Or does cheap steel have it's limits?

I guess my question is do super steels get sharper or just hold an edge better/longer?

==========

# Re: Hair Whittling and Atom Splitting
Posted by wickededge - 10 Dec 2012 21:40

---

I've found a definite limit with how keen I can make a knife with poor steel. I think I know just the kind of blade your talking about and my experience has been that once you get the edge fine enough, it basically becomes a permanent wire edge.

==========

# Re: Hair Whittling and Atom Splitting
Posted by nicholas6225 - 09 Mar 2013 16:09

---

My "tricks" for getting and keeping a hair whittling edge is consistency. I cook for a living and the knives i'm referring to are for that purpose. They take a beating during everyday use, but they are cared for and respected as extensions of my hand. I track detailed accounts of my sharpening in terms of mounting settings, angle degree, grit progression, lowest grit ever used, and 400x pictures of the heel, belly, and tip of each knife before and after each sharpening.

When sharpening I test the sharpness of an edge after .4 micron ceramic stones with a hair at several places along the edge to determine if its hair whittling from there I progress to 14um balsa where I stay till the entire edge is hair whittling sharp from heel to tip from left side to ride side. Then I progress to leather, nano cloth strops to .25 micron. I determine when to change grits using a microscope, making sure the scratch patterns are consistent and testing the edge with a hair.

Then on a daily basis with general use I strop my knives on a blank leather strop or blank balsa strop at work depending on the condition of the knife. I have a two sided free hand strop that I've made which has cow leather on one side and balsa wood on the other side (basically a fine and course side). I found a huge change in the quality of an edge i could maintain this way.

This works great for me, the effort I put in maintain my knives is minimum but I get the results I really don't need in a kitchen environment. lets just say a few people have cut themselves by just "looking" at my knives:P I have mirrored bevels, insane edges, and it makes work so much more enjoyable.

==========

## Re: Hair Whittling and Atom Splitting

Posted by cbwx34 - 10 Mar 2013 09:23

_____

**nicholas6225 wrote:**

My "**tricks**" for getting and keeping a hair whittling edge is **consistency**.

Well said!!!

==========