Next Step

Posted by cds43016 - 03 Feb 2013 14:40

I've had my WE for a just few months. I have used a GATCO system and have freehand sharpened. I've been able to achieve much better consistency with the WE than I could with these systems.

My goal in sharping is to get a durable workable edge on most of my knives. Sharping is also a relaxing hobby and for some knives you **have** to go the extra mile. I enjoy trying to get that visible mirrored edge.

I have the Pro Pack 1 and the 1200/1600 ceramic stones. I'm debating my next steps to go to the next level while keeping costs low (I still need money for more knives!). This setup gets me close but there is always better. The Chosera stones are out for now. I don't doubt the superb results they can achieve, but the finer stones are pretty expensive. They will have to wait until my obsessive-compulsive disorder for sharping perfection progresses to the next level.

Some of the alternatives I'm considering are:

Option 1

Get a blank handle and use the 1 and .3 micron 3M lapping sheets.I often tape 2500 grit sandpaper (a pain!) to the ceramics after the 1600 stone. This seems to give a nice polish to the edge even though I understand the 1600 grit stone is actually a finer grit than the sandpaper (different grit scale). Maybe the 3M tape will give even a better result (I haven't tried them) and they will have their own dedicated handle and are pre –pasted (no tape!).

I will continue using the 5 and 3.5 stropping pastes on leather since that is what I have now. I gather from some of the threads that unless you want to show your knife blades to friends using an electron microscope, there isn't much practical visual difference between the results from the various grits of the pastes.

Option 2

Get the micro fine ceramics. I have the Spyderco ultrafine bench ceramic stone for freehand sharping. It is super smooth, flat and will probably last longer than I will. It produces a nice polished edge. I really

like this stone.

I've read a lot in the forum about some issues with the Wicked Edge ceramics, specifically the need to lap them (especially the micro fine) and issues with chipping and pitting. Even the ceramics I have now have small pits and chips. This doesn't seem to affect performance but it is surprising nevertheless considering my experience with the Spyderco ceramics. This is a more expensive solution (at least in the short term) than Option 1, but generally ceramics are convenient to use and last a very long time.

Option 3

Change to a different stropping medium. I have the standard leather strops but some of the pictures I've seen from Clay show something much more dramatic using kangaroo strops. This is interesting. Can this (or something other than the leather) be used with the stones I have or should these be an addition to Option 1 or 2? Also what stropping grit should I use? Paste or Spray? (I still haven't figured out how much paste to put on a strop and the best way to apply it without wasting the paste).

Option 4

Something I haven't thought of.

I'm really interested in the forums thoughts. I'm pretty new to the WE and I know I still have a lot to learn. But that's part of the fun isn't it ?

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Re: Next Step

Posted by mark76 - 03 Feb 2013 15:57

Hi Cds,

Welcome to the forum! And thanks for your post.

To jump right into your question: how about option 4, the Chosera's 5K/10K? If you measure edge width it's probably a little bit, but in practice you go from proper copy paper cutting to very easy copy paper

cutting/shaving. And you get a nice mirror edge as a bonus. And it lasts a lot longer than films or stropping compounds.

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Re: Next Step
Posted by blacksheep25 - 03 Feb 2013 17:10

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Option 5: Just use the system you have now until you can reach its maximum capability, then expand. For about 6 months, I had the basic set up to only 600 grit. The added on the 800/1000. Then a few months later finally started into the ceramics and strops. For a usable edge, you really don't need more than 600; everything above that, especially all the mirror edges is just for show! j/k, not really!

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Re: Next Step
Posted by NicholasAngeja1 - 03 Feb 2013 18:12

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Hey there,

I have used a GATCO system and have freehand sharpened.

You still got your old stones kicking around? you think you'll ever freehand sharpen or use them again? if not.... I suggest option 4 and purchase blank wicked edge handles and have your old stones cut to fit the wicked edge handles.

Just a thought 😀

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Re: Next Step
Posted by cds43016 - 03 Feb 2013 18:21

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Interesting thought! However, even though I have the WE I still like to freehand.

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Re: Next Step
Posted by cbwx34 - 03 Feb 2013 21:01

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My .02... Option 2. If you like the Spyderco ceramics, I think you'll like the Micro Fine ceramics. You can always test 3M sheets etc. on top of what you have now (Option 1), and I don't think you'd benefit from the Kangaroo strops, (Option 3), unless you had a more refined edge first... that the MicroFine ceramics would give you.... especially since you already have a fine strop. I think you'd see the greatest improvement adding the MicroFines next. Plus, they leave a great edge if you end a sharpening with them. Very versatile.

As for lapping them, only the coarse side needs it, or I should say benefits from it... they work pretty good without lapping, but do work better lapped. But it's not hard to do, and I don't think should be a major factor in the decision.

That's my .02... hopefully others will chime in!

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Re: Next Step

Posted by Geocyclist - 03 Feb 2013 21:41

Welcome to the forum. My 2 cents. The 2k/3k Choseras would also be good and less expensive than the 5k/10k.

I don't have any ceramics, I have a set of super fine on order. I have read many times that some consider the coarse ultra fine coarser than the 1200 super fine. This would mean when you buy the micro fine you only actually get 1 stone that is finer (and a "coarser" stone for what its worth). Something to think about. Don't take my word on this though, I am sure others will comment.

Also on order, don't have them yet are some diamond sprays. I have read they are more aggressive, cut more than the pastes. Even with the pastes you can do a lot if you strop long enough.

Based on your stated goal you can get a great workable edge with with you have. You can get a mirrored edge with a lot of stropping, but the Choseras make getting the mirrored edge feel almost like cheating.

I also have to agree with Blacksheep. My technique is still improving.

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