What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?

Posted by BUCKrub91 - 16 Mar 2013 22:51

Well I ordered a set of balsa strops and I also ordered the .25 and .125 micron sprays.. but before I get them and apply the sprays id just like your opinions if this is the best set up for these strops? and if not what would you recomend?

And since I already ordered the sprays what would you recommend I put those on

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Re: What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?

Posted by jendeindustries - 17 Mar 2013 06:50

Hi Buck!

The balsa is a very good medium for both of these grits, IMO.

There is no "bad" medium here - Balsa is flat and hard, so more precise in terms of being flat with no compression. Leather strops have more give to them, but are also more forgiving because of it. Kangaroo has almost no compression and nanocloth is the "cleanest" medium.

Just be very sure that you use these strops in an UPWARD fashion so you don't cut into them!

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Re: What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?

Posted by cbwx34 - 17 Mar 2013 09:45

I'd say just give it a try... it's such a fine abrasive that if you don't like it, you can always move "up" in abrasive size to something else without much effort (you can't go the other way without cleaning them off somehow).

It might take a couple of coats... I'd do a coat, then let it dry a bit and apply another. (I'm not sure what happens if you get the balsa too wet?, so that's how I'd do it.)

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Re: What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?
Posted by nicholas6225 - 17 Mar 2013 12:40

Worth a try for sure. I don't for see any issues. In my own stropping kit I reserved 14/10 micron paste for balsa, 5/3.5 paste for leather, and 1/0.25 spray on nano cloth. I really like my balsa strops and the edge I'm able to get with them, totally worthwhile.

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Re: What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?
Posted by razoredgeknives - 19 Mar 2013 07:51

I bought my balsa strops with the intention of using the .125 cbn spray on it.... Found out that it doesn't work very well. After I applied it and tried to use it there was absolutely no metal coming off (ie. A black residue) on the strops. After researching it more, I found that the pores in the balsa strops are semi large and the abrasives will go into them too far and not work properly if you use one that is too fine. I would suggest not going lower than your 3.5 paste on them, but I haven't actually experimented with this yet.

Can't hurt to give it a try, but you will see what I mean. At least that's been my experience. Let us know how it works out!

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Re: What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?
Posted by cbwx34 - 19 Mar 2013 08:28

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razoredgeknives wrote:

I would suggest not going lower than your 3.5 paste on them, but I haven't actually experimented with this yet.

The 5/3.5 paste does work well on the balsa. (It's all I've tried on balsa).

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Re: What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?
Posted by BUCKrub91 - 19 Mar 2013 08:50

I decided to get some 5/3.5 micron paste for the balsa.. seems people really like that set up and also really like the 5/3.5 micron strops so I decided I should add that to my kit... Decided to get some kangaroo leather to try with the finer stuff

The description on wicked edge for the kangaroo leather says "These are my first choice when using compounds between .5 microns and .125 microns."

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Re: What paste/spray to use with balsa strops?

Posted by jendeindustries - 19 Mar 2013 18:21

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razoredgeknives wrote:

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Can't hurt to give it a try, but you will see what I mean. At least that's been my experience. Let us know how it works out!

I don't think there should be any black streaks or residue by the time you progress to the 0.125 micron CBN, unless you leap there from a much coarser level...

I agree that the pores/grain can be a little big for compounds finer than 1 micron - I prepped my balsa by sanding it up to 3K wet/dry first, and it makes a big difference.

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