

Honing and Finetuning your blades.

Stropping on leather is the last stage of hand sharpening a blade, and you can feel the difference instantaneously.

No blade is truly sharpened until it has been stropped to finetune the edge for sharpness.

Stropping allows you to maintain your blade's edge for longer intervals.

Traditionally, this blade maintenance is done using a steel first, followed by stropping.

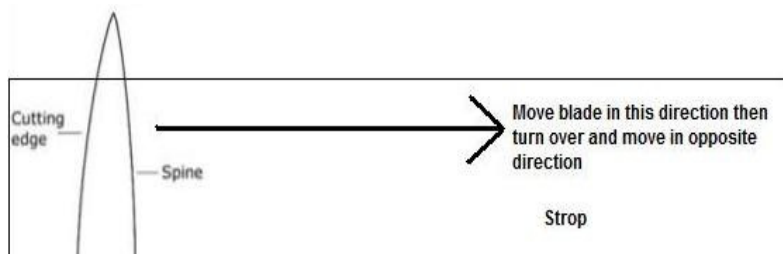
The strop does not replace the steel but enhances the work a steel does and then finishes the hand sharpening process off.

Different types of strops:

- **French strop in a paddle type with leather on two sides, one with polishing compound applied to it and the other side which is left untreated as a final strop**
- **paddle type that includes up to four sides with strop, stone, polishing compounds, and single or double sided leather**
- **belt style with and without linen or cotton backing**

Place the spine of the blade on the strop with the edge facing toward the nearest strop end.

Too much pressure may cause damage to the cutting edge. You only need enough pressure to keep the blade's edge and spine in contact with the strop at all times.



Because good quality leather is like your skin, you will need to moisturise your strop every now and then to prevent it from drying out. The best way to do that is to rub a small amount of olive oil or canola oil into your strop with your finger, over the whole surface. Let the oil soak in and dry before using your strop.

You will be moving the blade, spine first up and down the strop along the full length of the blade about ten times in both directions. This should be more than enough to give you a wickedly sharp edge. When you have reached the end of the strop with the blade, turn the blade over and move it back down the strop in the opposite direction; spine first along the full length of the blade.