

Knife Safety

It will be best if no boy even brings a pocketknife if they haven't earned their "whittlin chip". Before camping or on a campout teach the "whittlin chip" class, (this is in the Bear Book as an activity) so scouts have the opportunity to learn the safe way to open, close, sharpen and use their knife. Until this chip is earned, have them leave it at home or in the adult's care. Know also – any infraction of the rules of knife handling allows a corner of the chip to be removed. If & when the forth corner is lost – so is the use of the knife until he retakes the whittlin chip class & proves

he can handle it responsibly. He will have to take a similar class as a Boy Scout to earn his "totem chip". The same rules apply. Boy Scout rules do not encourage sheath knives. A small pocketknife (3 ½" or less) is very functional. The Boy should keep their whittling chip card on their person to be able to show to anyone who asks that they have earned it.

To Open And Close A Pocket Knife

To open a pocketknife, hold in left hand, put right thumbnail into nail slot. Pull blade out while pushing against hinge with little finger of left hand. Continue to hold on to handle and blade until blade snaps into open position. To close pocketknife, hold handle with left hand with fingers safely on the sides. Push against back of blade with fingers of right hand, swinging handle up to meet blade. Let knife snap shut; "kick" at base of blade keeps edge from touching inside of handle.

Ways to Use a Knife

For course cutting, grasp handle with whole hand. Cut at a slant. Always cut away from you. You can cut brush with a pocket knife if you bend the stem until grain is strained, then cut close to the ground with a slanting cut. Trim a branch by cutting twigs from thick end toward end. Push knife against twigs, or pull twigs against blade.

Pocket Knife Safety Circle

To establish a safety circle, grasp a closed pocketknife in your hand, extend your arm and with the closed knife straight in front of you, rotate body to either side while continuing to extend the closed knife-arm. No one or thing should be in the imaginary circle you have created. Also check your overhead clearance as this is part of your safety circle.

To Pass And Open Knife

The person handing should hold knife by the blade, passing the handle to the other person. In this way the handler has control of the edge of the knife.

Whittling Chip Card

After completing Shavings and Chips Achievement #19 in the Bear Cub Scout Book and demonstrating knowledge of and skill in the use of a personal pocket knife, a Cub Scout earns a Whittling Chip Card which states he has earned the right to carry a pocketknife at Cub Scout functions.

Care Of Your Knife

All Cub Scouts should learn that knives are valuable tools and how to take care of them.

- Knives should be kept clean, dry and sharp at all times.
- Never use it on things that will dull or break it.
- Keep it off the ground. Moisture and dirt will ruin it.
- Keep it out of fire. The heat draws the temper of the steel. The edge of the blade becomes soft and useless.
- Wipe the blade clean after using it. Then close it carefully.

Knife Sharpening

A dull knife won't do its work. And what is more, it is dangerous. More fingers are cut by dull knives than by sharp knives. A sharp knife bites into the wood while a dull one tends to slip off. A camper should always carry a little sharpening stone in his pocket along with his knife. The knife and the stone are partners and where one is the other should be also. Such stones are called whetstones or carborundum stones. One measuring ¾ of an inch by 3 inches is large enough and is a handy size to carry. A whetstone using water is more practical in camp than one requiring oil, for water is always at hand, but there never seems to be any oil when it is needed. Whetstones are made to provide a grinding surface, and come in varying degrees of coarseness. Coarse stones are used for heavy tools, like axes; fine stones for knives or for finishing the edge.

Rules for sharpening a knife

1. Place the stones on a level surface.
2. Wet the stone with a little water or oil.
3. Place the blade of the knife flat on the stone, then raise the back edge about the width of the blade itself, keeping the cutting edge on the stone.
4. Draw the knife straight back toward you, or move it straight back and forth putting pressure on it only when you pull it toward you. This is always better than moving it in a circular fashion.
5. Turn the blade over and repeat on the other side an equal number of times.
6. Finish off on the sole of your shoe.

It will take half an hour to sharpen a dull knife, but once sharp, a minute a day will keep it in perfect shape. the tinder pile for an ignition place. Now start stacking the kindling on top of the tinder.

