

## USING A STEEL

The difference between honing and sharpening your knife depends on whether your knife needs regular maintenance or if you need to reset a dull edge. A honing steel will re-align the microscopic teeth and can be used frequently- even after each use. A sharpening steel will actually take a small amount of steel off the blade, creating a new edge. When using a steel, you want to make sure the steel is at least as long as the blade you are either honing or sharpening.

### How to use a Steel

The safest way to use a sharpening or honing steel is through a supported method.

- 1. With your non-dominant hand, place the honing or sharpening steel point-down, with the tip of the steel resting on a dry firm surface such as a cutting board.
- 2. In your dominant hand, hold the knife to the steel. You should begin honing/sharpening with the heel of the knife towards the top of the steel. You will be pulling towards you and downwards simultaneously, as if you were going to gently slice into something.
- 3. Tilt the knife so that there is a 14 degree angle between the knife and the steel. If you are honing or sharpening an Asian styled knife, tilt the knife to a 10 degree angle.
- 4. Gently pull the blade toward you while gliding it downward, ending with the top of the knife at the bottom of the steel. Be sure to maintain the correct angle as you go. A fairly sharp knife may only need 2-3 repetitions, while a dull knife will need more.
- 5. Place the knife on the other side of the steel so you can sharpen the other side of the knife and repeat the process.
- 6. It is important to clean your knife after honing or sharpening so that you remove any excess steel.

### Honing Steel

To ensure that your knives stay beautifully sharp, a honing steel should be used regularly. Over time, knives will deteriorate and lose their edge. Honing re-aligns the microscopic teeth in the blade that can't be seen with the naked eye. By regularly honing your knives, you will maximize the time in between sharpening.

WÜSTHOF honing steels are made from hard chromium plated steel with a hardness of 65 Rockwell. All honing steels are produced from an alloy tool steel (material no. 2210) with 1.15%C (carbon) content, .6% chromium and .03% vanadium.

### Sharpening Steel

When a knife's edge becomes dull, you can reset the edge with a diamond steel or ceramic steel. The difference between a diamond steel or ceramic steel and honing steel, is that a diamond steel and ceramic steel will actually grind away material from the knife, allowing it to reset the edge.

The shape of a diamond sharpening steel produces an optimum edge when sharpening knives. The diamond sharpening steels have a solid stainless steel core and the surface is covered in diamond grains. Depending on the size of the sharpening steel, up to 2 million diamond grains are applied to the surface. Diamond sharpening steels have an extremely fine grit that guarantees a smooth, sharp finished edge.

A ceramic sharpening steel, much like a diamond sharpening steel, will reset the edge of a dull knife. Ceramic sharpening steels are slightly less abrasive and will gently sharpen knives in comparison to a diamond sharpening steel resulting in a finer edge. Ceramic knives are offered in two different grits, 300 or 1,000. Although ceramic is harder than steel, it is brittle and will break if it is dropped.