

Sharpening Knives with Carborundum Powder.

There are many methods to sharpening knives but this is mine -

- I use the Carborundum powder to make a sharpening strop, first you need a piece of wood approximately 15" long x 3" wide and at least ½" deep
- Preferably use a piece of russet leather at least 2mm thick, a little thicker won't matter.
- Cut the russet leather so you have a piece slightly bigger than the wooden strop, say 16" x 4"
- Not everyone bothers with this next step but I take the thread out of my sewing machine and then with the flesh side up make lots of holes in the leather by going up and down on the machine
- Using your strong adhesive put a coat on the grain side of the leather and another on one side of the wood, when dry to the touch put the two together
- When well bonded trim off the excess leather
- You now have the flesh or suede side of the leather uppermost on your wooden strop, place a piece of paper underneath to save the powder that falls off
- Sprinkle the Carborundum powder all over the leather and using your fingers try and work the powder into the holes that you made with the sewing machine
- Take some tallow and spread it like buttering bread over the powder, add more powder generously all of the time, it should end up very dark grey
- Leave this to harden for a few weeks
- Then start to use it, add more powder very regularly and persevere, for a while the tallow may lift off but keep sharpening and your knife will spread it back down
- The more use it has the better it will become and it will last forever, mine is over 30 years old and still going strong

You can use grinding paste which is grease with carborundum in it, this is instead of tallow but you will still need more powder in use

Every time you sharpen the knife finish it on a piece of suede hide to remove the burr, some people glue it on the reverse side of the strop and this will also prevent the strop moving around whilst sharpening.