

ILLUSTRATED STEPS / SAVE IT. FIND IT. BUILD IT.

SHARPEN A KNIFE

No whetstone needed: grind on wet concrete, raise the burr, hone on a mug's foot ring and strop on a leather belt.



HANDS FIRST:

FULL RULES / PAGE 03

Fingers behind the edge, never along it. Strokes away from your body, slow and steady.
Strop spine first. Pushing an edge into leather cuts the belt and you.

START HERE

01

GET READY

Tools + clickable build map

02

FOLLOW THE STEPS

One clearly numbered stage at a time

03

FIND IT AGAIN

Quick reference + PDF bookmarks

For a dull carbon or stainless knife and anyone with a curb, a mug and a belt. Go slowly: a sharp knife cuts the careless first.

NUKE ON TIKTOK

MORE FREE BUILD GUIDES

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives) · Wikipedia: Sharpening stone

BUILD MAP

NEXT

YOUR BUILD MAP

Tap a step to jump there. The printed page numbers work offline too.

HAVE THESE READY

- A dull plain-edge knife
- Smooth concrete curb or flat rock
- Water to keep it wet
- Ceramic mug with an unglazed ring
- Smooth leather belt and a doorknob
- Work glove for the guiding hand
- Paper or a tomato to test

READ IN ORDER

PREP	Kit and hand safety	03
01	Grind on the curb	04
02	Raise the burr	05
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QUICK REFERENCE / PAGE 10

BEFORE YOU START

Fingers behind the edge, never along it. Strokes away from your body, slow and steady. Strop spine first, never edge first.

KEEP THIS COPY

Save the PDF with its guide ID. Use the build map, bookmarks, or your PDF reader's search to find a step later. Video and source links need internet; the instructions do not.

SETUP

Kit and hand safety

READ BEFORE STEP 01

PREP

Four free tools. One rule about fingers.



STOP / FINGERS AND STROKES

- **Keep your fingers behind the edge, and never slide a finger along it.**
- Work steady and slow, kneeling or seated, with the knife moving away from your body.
- A work glove on the guiding hand helps.
- Deep cut?
- Press hard with a clean cloth and get help.

THE KIT

- **A concrete curb or flat stone, water to keep it wet, a ceramic mug with a rough unglazed ring underneath, and a smooth leather belt.**

SOURCES / NHS: cuts and grazes (first aid) · Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives)

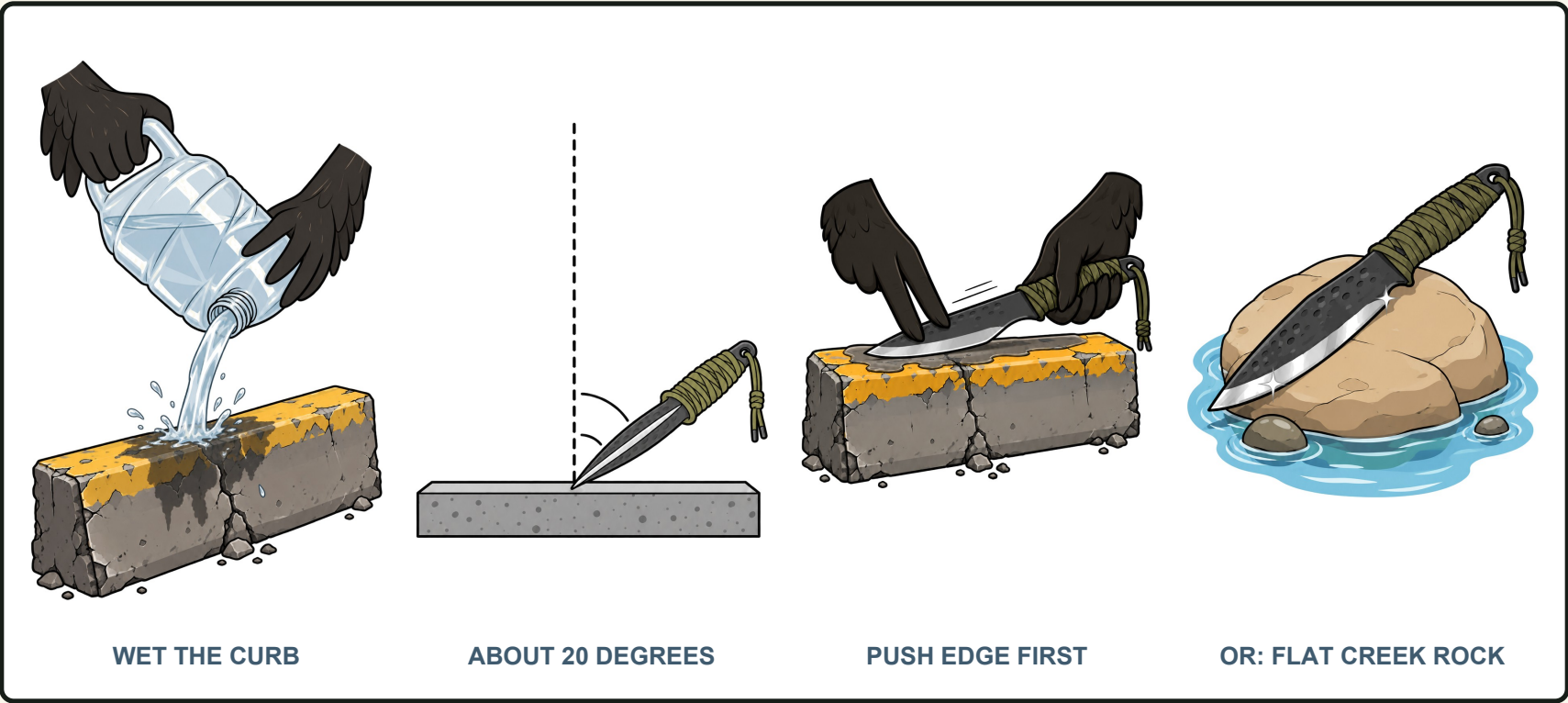
STEP

Grind on the curb

1 OF 4 / READ IN ORDER

01

Wet concrete is a coarse stone. Set the angle and push.



ANGLE AND PUSH

- **Pick a smooth, flat stretch of curb and wet it.**
- Lay the blade flat, then lift the spine to about 20 degrees: picture a right angle, halve it, then halve it again.
- Push the blade edge first along the curb, keeping that angle, heel to tip in one sweep.
- No curb?
- A flat creek rock or sandstone works.

WHY IT WORKS

- **Concrete holds hard sand grains that cut steel like a coarse stone.**
- Water carries the grit away so it keeps cutting.
- A steady angle makes one clean bevel instead of a rounded edge.

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives) · Wikipedia: Sharpening stone

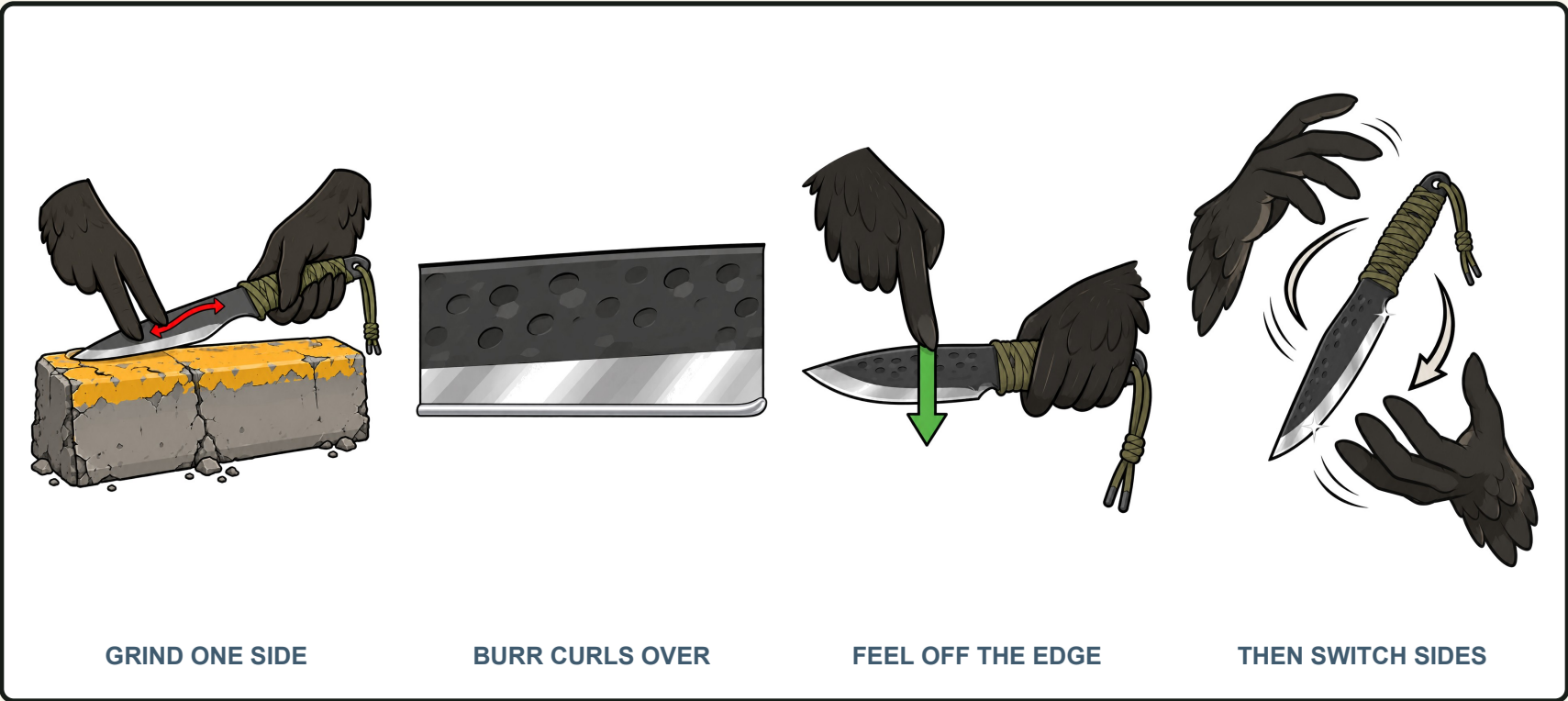
STEP

Raise the burr

2 OF 4 / READ IN ORDER

02

The burr is your proof that you have ground all the way to the edge.



GRIND, FEEL, SWITCH

- **Keep grinding one side until a thin wire of steel curls over onto the other side.**
- That's the burr.
- Feel for it on the side you are not grinding: slide your finger from the spine straight off the edge, never along it.
- When it catches your finger along the whole edge, switch sides and grind until the burr flips back.

WHY IT WORKS

- **Steel only folds over once the two bevels meet, so a burr along the whole edge means there is no dull flat left.**

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Burr (edge) · Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives)

STEP

Hone on a mug

3 OF 4 / READ IN ORDER

03

The mug's rough foot ring is a fine stone that shrinks the burr.



ALTERNATE, LIGHTER

- Turn a ceramic mug upside down on a steady surface.
- Use the rough, unglazed ring on the bottom at the same angle.
- Alternate strokes, one per side, lighter on each pass.
- No mug?
- The rough top edge of a rolled-down car window works the same way.

WHY IT WORKS

- Unglazed ceramic is harder than steel and finer than concrete, so it smooths the coarse scratches and wears the burr down.

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Honing (metalworking) · Wikipedia: Sharpening stone

STEP

Strop it off

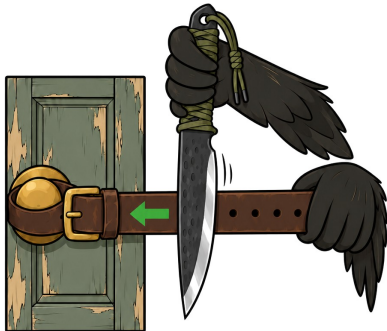
4 OF 4 / READ IN ORDER

04

Leather pulls off the last of the burr.



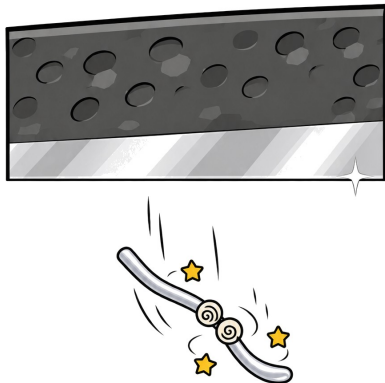
BELT ON A DOORKNOB



SPINE FIRST



20 STROKES A SIDE



BURR COMES OFF

SPINE FIRST

- **Buckle the belt around a doorknob and hold the free end tight, smooth side up.**
- Lay the blade almost flat on the leather and draw it spine first, edge trailing, away from the knob.
- Never push edge first into leather.
- Do about 20 strokes a side.

WHY IT WORKS

- **Edge-trailing strokes bend the last wire of the burr off and line the edge up, leaving a clean, keen apex.**

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Strop · Wikipedia: Burr (edge)

BUILD MAP

PREVIOUS

NEXT

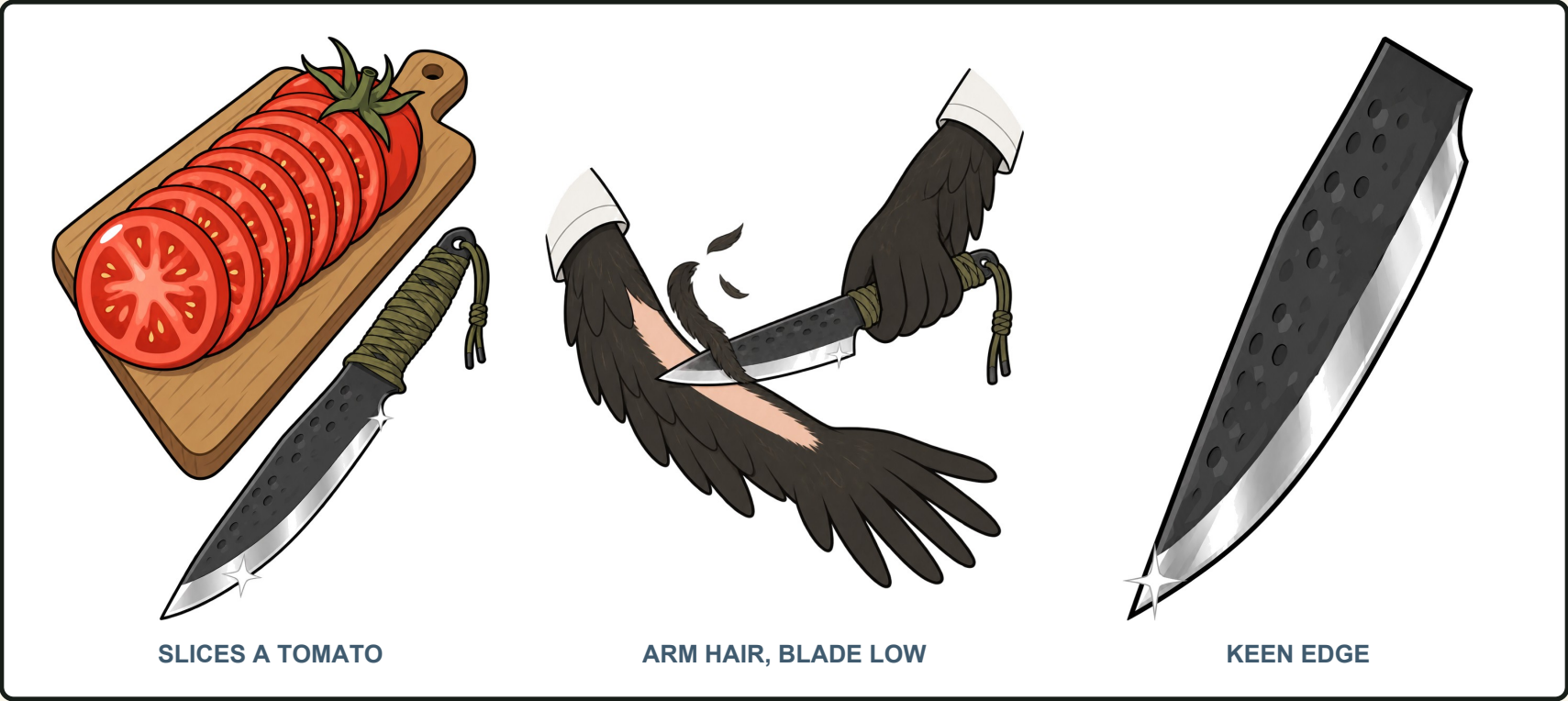
NOTE

Test it and keep it sharp

KEEP THESE LIMITS WITH THE STEPS

REF

Test on paper or food, then touch it up often.



TEST

- **A sharp edge slices hanging paper cleanly and bites into a tomato skin without sliding.**
- The video's arm-hair test works too: blade nearly flat, stroke away from you, one light pass.

KEEP IT SHARP

- **Strop before each use and hone on the mug when it drags.**
- Go back to the curb only when it is truly dull.
- Wipe and dry the blade after use.

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives) · Wikipedia: Strop

NOTE

Sources and limits

KEEP THESE LIMITS WITH THE STEPS

REF

Checked October 3, 2026. Tap a source in the box to open it.

SOURCES / TAP A TITLE TO OPEN IT

Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharpening>

Wikipedia: Burr (edge)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burr_\(edge\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burr_(edge))

Wikipedia: Honing (metalworking)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honing_\(metalworking\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honing_(metalworking))

Wikipedia: Sharpening stone

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharpening_stone

Wikipedia: Strop

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strop>

NHS: cuts and grazes (first aid)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cuts-and-grazes/>

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

- **This is an editorial source review, not a tested sharpening plan.**
- Angles and counts stay approximate: about 20 degrees, about 20 strokes a side.

STOP / WHERE THIS GUIDE ENDS

- **Serrated knives and very hard steels need different tools.**
- Concrete takes off a lot of steel quickly, so use it only on truly dull blades.

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives) · Wikipedia: Burr (edge) · Wikipedia: Honing (metalworking) · Wikipedia: Sharpening stone · Wikipedia: Strop · NHS: cuts and grazes (first aid)

BUILD MAP

PREVIOUS

NEXT

QUICK REFERENCE

Read the full steps first. Tap any row to return to its instructions.

BEFORE STEP 01

Fingers behind the edge, never along it. Strokes away from your body, slow and steady. Strop spine first, never edge first.

01	Grind on the curb Wet the curb. Spine up about 20° (half a right angle, halved again). Push edge first, heel to tip.	P04
02	Raise the burr Grind one side until a wire curls over. Feel by sliding off the edge, never along it. Then switch sides.	P05
03	Hone on a mug Upturned mug's unglazed ring, same angle. Alternate one stroke per side, lighter each pass.	P06
04	Strop it off Belt on a doorknob, held tight. Blade nearly flat, spine first, about 20 strokes a side.	P07

NUKE SAYS

Curb, mug, belt. The whole knife shop fits in a parking lot.

STOP / HAND SAFETY

FULL RULES / PAGE 03

- Fingers behind the edge
 - Never slide along the edge
 - Strokes away from your body
 - Glove on the guiding hand
- Kneel or sit, steady
 - Mug on a steady surface
 - Strop spine first only
 - Test on paper or food

Deep cut: press hard with a clean cloth and get medical help. A sharp knife needs less force, which makes it the safer knife.

SOURCES / Wikipedia: Sharpening (angles and abrasives) · Wikipedia: Burr (edge) · Wikipedia: Honing (metalworking) · Wikipedia: Sharpening stone · Wikipedia: Strop · NHS: cuts and grazes (first aid)