

KNIFE SAFETY

SCOUTS SURVIVAL SKILLS BADGE



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INTRODUCTION >>>>

THIS PACK ACTS AS A REFERENCE FOR SCOUTS AND SCOUT LEADERS ON KNIFE SAFETY, KNIFE LAW AND MAINTENANCE. SCOUTS MUST COMPLETE THE ACTIVITIES AT THE END OF THE PACK TO SHOW THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THESE AREAS. ANY PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE COMPLETED UNDER SUPERVISION FROM SCOUT LEADERS OR BUSHCRAFT EXPERTS.

The Scout Association is delighted to be working in partnership with global brand Victorinox, makers of the iconic Swiss Army Knife and suppliers of essential tools for millions of adventurers and pioneers around the world. Swiss Army Knives are essential tools in every Scout's survival kit. We are proud to have Victorinox as our partner for the Scout Survival Skills Badge, which encourages adventurous activity and educates Scouts in how to be prepared for emergency situations in the wild.

Discovering the outdoors in a safe way is an ethos shared by The Scout Association and Victorinox. The partnership aims to emphasise and educate young people on the importance of knife safety, giving them the opportunity to learn about responsible ownership when using a knife in Scouting. This new resource has been developed with Victorinox and Scout Leader bushcraft experts.

It aims to give Scouts all the information and guidance they need when working towards their Scout Survival Skills badge, including knife safety, how to build a fire and shelter from natural resources, administering emergency first aid and signalling for assistance in a survival situation. The final part of the badge requires Scouts to put together their own survival kit as well as plan and take part in an overnight survival expedition.



SCOUTS AND VICTORINOX DISCLAIMER

The Scout Association recognises that bladed and sharply pointed hand-tools are important for working on survival skills. We promote the safe use of knives used as a tool reiterating UK Law. Knives with a fixed non-folding blade, a folding knife with a blade over 3 inches in length or a folding knife which locks in place require the person carrying such a knife in public (whatever age) to have good reason for carrying the tool. It is illegal to sell such a tool to a person under 18.

The Scout Association holds no responsibility from injuries that have occurred as a result of using this resource. Whenever a knife is to be used in an activity a risk assessment must be made and suitable controls put in place.

KNIVES AND THE LAW >>>>>

IF YOU ARE USING A KNIFE OUTDOORS, IT IS ESSENTIAL YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE LEGALLY ALLOWED TO DO AND THE PENALTIES IF YOU DO NOT ADHERE TO THE LAW.

BUYING, SELLING OR CARRYING KNIVES

It is illegal to:

- sell a knife of any kind (including cutlery, kitchen knives or Swiss Army Knives) to anyone under the age of 18 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) although 16 to 18 year olds in Scotland can buy cutlery and kitchen knives
- carry a knife in a public place without good reason or lawful authority (for example, a good reason is a chef on his way to work and carrying his own knives)
- carry a foldable, non-locking knife, like a Swiss Army Knife, in a public place unless the blade is shorter than three inches (7.62cm)
- use any knife in a threatening way, even a legal knife such as a Swiss Army Knife

A lock blade knife is one where the blade stays open unless some mechanism is used to close it. These are also illegal to carry. However, from a safety point of view a lock blade knife cannot fold on to the user's fingers and may be better for use in some Scouting activities.

TIP

Although a campsite may technically be private property, even if owned by a district or a county, it's considered as public property and knife law applies to these areas law.

Make sure you do not carry a knife that is illegal and exceeds the stated size limit. The police are unlikely to accept your explanation that you are simply using the knife in the outdoors. An adult caught carrying an illegal knife in public currently faces a maximum fine of £5,000 and four years in prison. For more information go to: gov.uk/buying-carrying-knives

The main UK legislation regarding the possession of knives and other sharply pointed/bladed objects is the Criminal Justice Act 1988. This details what's generally deemed to be an 'offensive' weapon, and Section 139, in particular, describes the types of knives that are banned and those that can be carried in public (and under what circumstances).

MORE INFORMATION

Visit the Criminal Justice Act 1988 at: <http://tinyurl.com/pju4r3a>

The following information is correct as of March 2015. It is the responsibility of the person undertaking the task to check for up to date information on knife law.

THE SAFETY BASICS

Safety First

A knife is a tool and should be treated as such. If you are going to use a knife then you should receive training from your leader or an expert on how to use it safely. Knives can be dangerous, so great care should be taken when using them.

Safety check using a knife

Only use a knife for the purpose for which it was designed, and only carry one when it's needed for a job. Make sure your knife and all its tools are in good working order before you begin using it (see cleaning and maintenance).

Work area safety

Make sure that you work within a clearly defined area. Ensure the people around you are aware of what you are doing so that no one could be accidentally hurt with the knife. Your work area should be clear from branches or undergrowth that may cause an accident. Tie back long hair and make sure any loose clothing is tucked in.

How to hold the knife

A knife should be held firmly but not too tightly. Your hand should not be too far back or too far forward. Grip the knife so that some of the handle can be seen where it meets the blade. If you are making smaller cuts or carving you can also place your thumb on the back of the blade which gives you more control.



How to sit when carving or cutting

You should sit down on a solid surface with feet slightly more than a shoulder width apart. You should carve or cut in front of you with your elbows on your knees, well away from your thighs and body or to the side well away from yourself and others. If you cannot sit on a solid surface then sit in a kneeling position and carve or cut to the side, resting the lower arm that is holding the work piece on the outside of your thigh. Make sure that you are sitting away from others or that they are at a safe distance from you.



TIP

Before you start using your knife, ensure you have a first aid kit and it is within your reach, but is not an obstruction to your working area.

How to make a cutting safely

When cutting a piece of wood with a knife you should always cut away from yourself. Think about where the knife may go if it happens to slip before you make a cut. Grip the handle correctly then holding a piece of wood out to your side (see how to sit when carving or cutting), move the blade down then out, letting your shoulder rather than your arm do the work. You will use different cutting techniques for different blades, which is covered in the next section.



Carrying or passing a knife

Always return a knife to its sheath, holder or folded position after use and when passing it to another person. Carry Swiss Army Knives with the blade folded away and never carry a fixed blade knife that isn't in a sheath.

Avoiding injury

Following safety instructions will help you to avoid injury. If you do injure yourself with a knife you will need to be aware of how to administer first aid. Refer to the First Aid information sheet for more advice.

Storage

Store your knife in a clean and dry place out of the reach of small children. When storing a Swiss Army Knife or any other tool with a folding blade, store it with the blade folded away.

Travelling with a knife

During training, knives should be taken to and from Scout meetings by an adult. When taking a knife to camp it should be put in its own protective sleeve or pouch and securely stored in the middle of a rucksack or bag.

Taking your knife abroad

If you are travelling to a Scout camp or jamboree, familiarise yourself with the local and international government laws for that country and the regulations around carrying tools with a knife on them. Do not carry tools in hand luggage when travelling on an aircraft but pack them securely in hold luggage to avoid confiscation or getting into trouble with security checks. If you are unsure whether to take a tool with you ask an adult or leader.



SAFETY

You can find up to date information on travelling abroad by plane and carrying knives in your luggage on the Government website: gov.uk/hand-luggage-restrictions/personal-items. You should also check with your travel provider on luggage restrictions.



TYPES OF KNIVES >>>>>

A knife is a tool and you should always choose the appropriate tool for the job at hand. The majority of Scout usage needs only a Swiss Army Knife for cutting string, cooking or whittling small pieces of wood. This should be a small folding knife with a cutting blade no longer than three inches (7.62cm). If you have a bigger task like whittling, carving or splitting large pieces wood, a larger fixed blade or locking blade knife should be used

If you are planning to use a knife for part of your Scouting activities, make sure you think carefully about what you will need it for, and find out about knives and the law to make sure you are fully compliant. (See knives and the law page)

THIS RESOURCE PACK REFERS TO THREE TYPES OF KNIVES THAT ARE OFTEN USED FOR SURVIVAL SKILLS

LOCK BLADE KNIFE



Description:

Similar to a Swiss Army Knife but with a locking mechanism for the main blade. The knife or saw can be used for whittling or cutting larger pieces of wood.

The Law:

A lock blade knife is not classed as a folding knife and is illegal to carry in public without good reason.

SWISS ARMY KNIFE (OR POCKET TOOL)



Description:

A Swiss Army Knife has various tools that can be folded out but do not have a locking mechanism so extra care should be taken when using them. The knife itself can be used for small whittling and carving jobs and making small cuts.

The Law:

It is legal to carry a small folding Swiss Army Knife with a blade less than 3 inches long.

FIXED BLADE KNIFE



Description:

a single blade knife with a handle that usually comes with a protective covering for safety and storage. It can be used for most bushcraft or survival needs but is not so good for detailed whittling or carving.

The Law:

it is illegal to carry a fixed blade knife in public without good reason.

APPLIES TO ALL KNIVES:

It is illegal to sell a knife of any kind (including cutlery, kitchen knives or Swiss Army Knives) to anyone under the age of 18 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) 16 to 18 year olds in Scotland can buy cutlery and kitchen knives.

SWISS ARMY KNIFE >>>>>

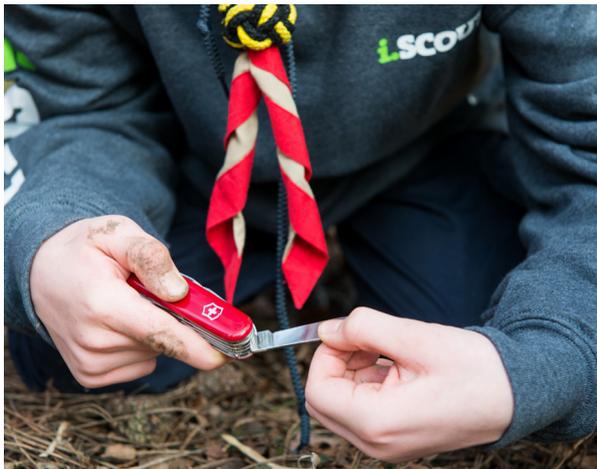
TYPES OF TOOLS ON A SWISS ARMY KNIFE AND HOW TO USE THEM

FOLDING BLADES

Anyone using a folding blade for the first time should practise unfolding and folding of the blade to reduce the danger of injury.

① Opening the blade:

Hold the knife along the thumb and thumb joint on one side and the tips of your fingers on the other side. Make sure the blade is facing upwards and in the direction so that it will unfold away from you. Using your other hand pinch the blade with your thumb and forefinger/index finger and open the blade up away from you. You can slot your finger nail into the nail groove to help you open it. You should feel the blade snap into place. If it is a locking blade then lock it in place.



② Closing the blade:

Holding the knife the same way as you do to unfold it, between the thumb and thumb joint on one side and the tips of your fingers on the other side. If it is a locking blade, take the lock off before beginning to fold away. Pinch the blade with your thumb and forefinger /index finger and slowly fold it back into place. Do not let go until the blade is back in place, which means you will have full control of the blade until it is safely back in the handle.



! SAFETY

The first time you open a blade on a new Swiss Army Knife it can be a little sticky so be extra careful.

Small Blade

The small blade is good for precision work such as fine detailed whittling and putting finishing touches to a project. The smaller blade is easier to control while the power transmission is greater as the base of the blade is closer to the handle.



Precision cutting

Hold the project you are working on with the area to be cut just a few centimetres in front of your hand. With the blade facing away from you, use the thumb of your hand that is holding the work piece to direct the back of the blade. Use a small forward motion, not sideways, as this give a precise and safer cut. Do not use this technique for a long cut as you may get a splinter in your thumb. Turn the work piece around if you need to make different cuts. Do not cut towards yourself.



SAFETY

Smaller Swiss Army Knives without a lockable blade should not be used for larger sections of wood whittling or splitting wood.

Large blade A large blade on a Swiss Army Knife can be used to whittle away larger sections of material to give a rough shape. It is not good for fine detail as there is less control over the blade.

Always make sure you are sitting or kneeling correctly before using any blade on a work piece (see Safety Basics for more information).



Rough cut

Push the blade in a downward motion, out and away from you with the blade. The blade will cut more efficiently when it moves sideways during the cut, so start the cut near the handle and finishing towards the tip. The more steeply you angle the blade the more force is required to make the cut.

Draw cut

Moving the blade backwards and forwards in a seesaw motion while pressing the blade downwards. The blade will cut more efficiently when it slides through the work piece so starting at the handle and finishing towards the tip.



Wood Saw

The wood saw is good for cutting through moist and freshly cut solid wood. It can also be used to cut through rope.



Sawing

Before sawing, ensure the work piece is secured against a hard surface such as a wall, flat rock or tree trunk. Try to make use of natural indentations or grooves to help. At camp, you are likely to have to use your hand or foot to secure the work piece. Wear protective gloves if required. Keep your hand well away from the saw edge especially when starting off the cut as the blade may slip.

Using your foot will provide greater pressure on the work piece for holding it in place but make sure you are wearing shoes that cover and protect your toes.

Awl

The awl is an adaptable tool that can be used for drilling or punching holes, scraping or cleaning out holes or removing blockages. If your awl has an eye, use it with heavy thread for sewing or repairing canvas. An awl can be used on many different materials apart from wood such as plastic, soapstone, leather, aluminium and cardboard.



Drilling

Hold the awl between your thumb and forefinger to stop it from folding back into the Swiss Army Knife. Push the awl into the work piece turning it in a clockwise direction. If you are holding the work piece with your other hand, turn this anti clockwise at the same time. After each turn, twist the hand back to its original position and repeat the motion - do not keep continuously turning the SAK.

FIXED BLADE KNIFE

ANATOMY OF A FIXED BLADE KNIFE



A large fixed blade can be used to whittle away larger sections of material to give a rough shape. It is not good for fine detail as there is less control over the blade. A large fixed blade can also be used for splitting wood.

Always make sure you are sitting or kneeling correctly before using any blade on a work piece (see Safety Basics for more information).

Rough cut

Push the blade in a downward motion, out and away from you with the blade. The blade will cut more efficiently when it moves sideways during the cut, so start the cut near the handle and finishing towards the tip. The more steeply you angle the blade the more force is required to make the cut.

Draw cut

Moving the blade backwards and forwards in a seesaw motion while pressing the blade downwards. The blade will cut more efficiently when it slides through the work piece so starting at the handle and finishing towards the tip.

Splitting or batoning wood

Use a large fixed blade for this task. Make sure you use wood that can be easily split. Place the piece of wood to be split upright on a solid surface, position the knife blade down at a right angle and across the centre of the wood. Make sure the blade is long enough to leave some of the blade sticking out at either end. Using another piece of wood firmly tap the back of the blade into the wood, once it is fully surrounded by the wood, continue to tap at the pointed end of the knife while holding firmly onto the handle. The knife should be parallel to the ground as you hit the blade until the wood is completely split. Do not hit the blade too hard as you may damage it.

SAFETY DOS AND DON'TS >>>>>

DO:

- read the product use and care instructions supplied with a new tool
- use a knife only once you have had training or have been shown how to use it safely
- restrict the use of knives to their intended purpose only
- keep knives well maintained and sharp
- always use sharp knives as dull blades cause more accidents because they are harder to work with
- cut on a stable surface and sit or kneel down when you cut or carve
- store securely after use
- make sure you have plenty of space when cutting or carving and keep your distance from others
- handle with care when washing and cleaning after use and use protective equipment as required
- pay particular attention when putting your hand in water where knives are present
- have a first aid kit nearby when using a knife
- carry a Swiss Army Knife with the knife folded away
- carry fixed blade knives in a sheath and with the blade pointing downwards
- pay attention and concentrate when using a knife
- choose the correct size knife and appropriate blade for the job
- use a flat, secure and protected surface, for example, a cutting board
- keep fingers on top of the blade away from the sharp edge
- place your elbows on your knees when sitting down to cut or carve

DON'T:

- use a knife until you have had training or been shown how to use it
- point a knife at anyone or carry an exposed blade from your Swiss Army Knife in public
- throw a knife as this may cause serious injury
- hand your Swiss Army Knife to anyone without first folding all the tools away
- use more than one tool at a time on a Swiss Army Knife
- leave your knife out or unattended when not in use
- lend your knife to someone who is inexperienced or not had training in knife use
- use a knife when you are tired
- use a knife in poor light or when it is dark
- leave a knife in a washing up bowl
- cut towards your hand when using a knife
- forget to take a knife off your person when heading home
- cut through frozen foods
- pack a knife in hand luggage when travelling abroad

MORE INFORMATION

Visit: [hse.gov.uk/pubns/pps12.pdf](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/pps12.pdf) (How to reduce hand knife injuries) and visit: [hse.gov.uk/catering/knives.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/catering/knives.htm) (Safe use of knives in the kitchen)

The following information is correct as of March 2015. It is the responsibility of the person undertaking the task to check for up to date information on knife law.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE >>>>>

KEEP KNIVES CLEAN AND SHARP

SHARPENING

A sharp knife is a safer knife

A sharp blade cuts easily, is easier to manoeuvre and creates a smoother cleaner cut. Blunt blades compress and break wood fibres leaving a cut that is rough and uneven. It takes more effort to cut with a blunt blade and is difficult to manoeuvre the knife properly, so you are more likely to slip and cause an injury to yourself or others.

TIP

Never feel the blade with your thumb or finger.

How do I know if the blade is blunt?

You may notice that your knife does not cut very well and is not very smooth, or that it is getting harder to direct it when cutting. You can test your knife's sharpness by holding it up to a light and looking for a silver line along the edge (this is where the knife has rounded off) if you cannot see a line then the knife is too sharp to reflect back and is not blunt.

SWISS ARMY KNIFE CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Overview:

- keep your knife sharp as a sharp blade is safer than a blunt one
- keep the knife and any moving parts clean and dry
- clean the whole knife thoroughly after use and at regular intervals
- ensure knives are thoroughly dried after washing and try to avoid soaking in water
- oil the blade and any pivot points/moving parts regularly by lightly wiping with clean oil once every six months, or every three months if you live near water.
- ensure any knife oil is safe to use on knives that will be used in preparing foodstuffs, and that it does not prevent the knife working properly, such as causing it to stick

- discoloration of the metal could be a sign of oxidation, which can lead to rusting, and can be avoided with regular cleaning

TIP

Multi Tool Oil (Victorinox Art. No.: 4.3301)
The main features of this multi-purpose oil are: neutral odour and taste, highly resistant to ageing, good wear and corrosion protection qualities, suitable for use with foodstuffs.



Getting your knife sharpened

If you have a Swiss Army Knife, you can buy a sharp tool to run across the blade and sharpen your knife for you. You can also take your knife to a local knife sharpening service.

CLEANING AFTER PREPARING FOOD

After cutting resinous wood or fruit

When cutting some woods or fruits, sticky resin or juice can run down between the blades causing them to stick together. If this happens, open and close the blades in warm water several times. When the tool has dried you could apply a small drop of oil between the blade or tools shank and the spring.

After preparing meat

Fully immerse the knife in hot water (+60C). Do not put pocket tool or other multi-tools in the dishwasher.

Knife repair

Do not try to repair your knife yourself, as this could lead to injury to you and/or damage to the knife. Take it back to where you bought it and find out if you can get it repaired there.

TIP

For sharpening or repairs (Swiss Army Knife) visit: victorinox.com to find your local store or repair centre.

FIXED BLADE KNIFE SHARPENING

Getting your knife sharpened

You can take your knife to a local knife sharpening service. If you decide to do it yourself make sure you read the instructions carefully and have all the equipment to hand.

Before you start

You will need: a combination oilstone or whetstone, an old leather belt, a flat stable surface

- ① Place your stone with the coarse side up and apply plenty of oil.
- ② Place your knife on the end of the stone nearest to you with the cutting edge facing away from you. To get the correct bevel angle, tilt the knife until the bevel is flush with the stone. Push the knife away from you along the stone, applying pressure with your fingers towards the leading edge of the knife. Be careful your fingers don't go too far towards the edge of the knife.



- ③ Draw the knife horizontally across the stone as you move it away from you, so that you cover the length of the knife. To compensate for the curvature of the blade tip, lift the handle slightly towards the end of the stroke.



- ④ Where metal has been removed from the bevel, it will show as scratches or shiny areas. Metal should be removed from the whole bevel but if it doesn't, adjust the angle of your stroke.



- ⑤ To sharpen the opposite bevel, turn the cutting edge to face you and place the knife on the furthest end of the sharpening stone.
- ⑥ Draw the knife along the stone towards you and use your thumbs to apply pressure. As you take metal off each bevel you create a thin foil or burr where the bevels meet.



SAFETY

Sharpening should only be carried out under a supervision of a leader.

Achieving the correct bevel

You need to remove metal from both bevels of a knife to form a fine edge where they meet. To get the correct bevel angle, place your knife edge on the stone tilting it until the bevel is flush with the stone.

Finish off by stropping

Strop your knife on a leather belt to smooth the edge and remove any remaining burr



- ① Attach the belt to something solid and upright. Grip your knife in one hand and the belt in the other. With the edge of the blade pointing away from you, draw the knife towards you along the unfinished (reverse) side of the leather belt. The angle should be above the angle of the bevel so that you're slightly scraping the belt with the edge of the knife..
- ② Draw the blade across the strop as you move along it, so as to cover the whole length of the blade as you did with the sharpening stone.
- ③ Alternate the strokes back and forth 10-15 times; speed is not essential but accuracy is. Your knife should now be sharp.



- ④ Check the sharpness of your blade by cutting through a sheet of paper



KNIFE SAFETY

ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1 >>>>>

REFER TO PAGE 9 AND 10 FOR INFORMATION ON A SWISS ARMY KNIFE. USING THIS INFORMATION AND ANY ADDITIONAL RESEARCH ONLINE COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY BELOW:



Name the types of tools you will find on a Swiss army Knife and what you might use each tool in a survival situation for.

① _____

② _____

③ _____

④ _____

⑤ _____

⑥ _____

⑦ _____

⑧ _____

⑧ _____

⑩ _____

⑪ _____



ACTIVITY 3: TRUE OR FALSE >>>>>

READ THE INFORMATION ON SAFETY DO'S AND DON'TS AND THE KNIFE LAW IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE TRUE OR FALSE.

- ① A blade cuts best when it is blunt.
- ② Cut on a stable surface.
- ③ Always pick the biggest blade for any job.
- ④ Always hand your fixed blade knife to someone with the sheath on and the blade pointing downwards.
- ⑤ Only use one tool at a time on a Swiss Army Knife
- ⑥ It is ok to lend your knife to someone as long as they promise to be careful with it.
- ⑦ Always hand your Swiss Army Knife to someone with the foldable blade pointing downwards.
- ⑧ Make sure you have plenty of space around you when using your knife for cutting or carving.
- ⑨ It is illegal to sell a Swiss Army Knife to anyone under the age of 18 in the UK.
- ⑩ Always store your knife in a secure and safe place.

- ① False (A sharp blade is safer, blunt blades cause more injuries)
- ② True
- ③ False (Choose the correct size knife and appropriate blade for the job.)
- ④ True
- ⑤ True
- ⑥ False (Do not lend your knife to someone who is inexperienced or not had training in knife use).
- ⑦ False (Always fold the blade away first)
- ⑧ True
- ⑨ True
- ⑩ True