Jackson's



THE LEATHER BENCH STROP

Stropping is the traditional way to keep a keen edge on metal tools, think of the back and forth stropping of a cut-throat razor on a leather strap, or strop. It is the final part of the process of achieving a truly sharp edge to the metal. It is also a way of maintaining that edge and reducing the frequency you will need to sharpen on a stone.

Having a strop on the bench while you work means you can give the tool a quick strop as soon as it starts to feel dull. In keeping the tools razor sharp you will find the carving process easy and pleasurable rather than a chore.

Stropping Compound – this is a super fine abrasive mixed with a waxy substance and formed into a block. Apply to one side of the strop, just a little in a line along the length of the block. Keep the other side of the block compound free.

Stropping – begin with the side with compound on uppermost. Hold the blade with the bevel flat against the block and pull towards yourself, applying gentle but firm pressure on the blade. Only work in this direction to avoid cutting the leather. For curved gouges roll the blade from one side to other as the same time as pulling. Repeat at least a dozen times then do the same on the clean side of the block for a final polish.