





Wood Craft Skills Training Resource: Safe use and storage of tools

These instructions have been adapted from the usual wood craft practice for use in Forest School settings in line with current good Forest School practice as advocated on all Forest School training courses.

Note: *The key to safe use of tools is building an awareness and respect for how they work. Practitioners need be aware of their personal space and how their activity affects those around them.*

	Rasps	Bow saw	Panel saw	Woodlander/Pull saw
Always use tools 2 arms length and a tool away from other people				
How	Hold handle and use sawing motion forwards and backwards.	With a partner, saying to me to , to you to get a rhythm of of forwards and backward motion, then allowing the other to pull. Can be used individually with someone supporting the log so it stays firm. Cuts on the push and pull.	To start, hold the handle and pull blade toward you creating groove. Push and pull the whole length of the blade. Cuts on the push.	To start, hold the handle and pull blade toward you creating groove. Push and pull the whole length of the blade. Cuts mainly on the pull and a little on the push.
Walk	Hold handle beside leg with tool pointing to the ground.	Hold like a handbag with blade facing downwards	Place into cover, hold covered part with handle facing downwards and blade facing backwards	Fold blade away from you until 90 degrees, rest, then make sure fingers away from the groove in handle and close blade into handle.
Pass	Offer handle toward other	Keep blade facing down, turn the	Keep blade facing down, hold	Keep blade facing down, hold







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	person	handle to offer to the other person	top of the tool and turn handle towards other person	top of the tool and turn handle towards other person
Placed	On a clear surface such as wooden block.	Beside you: On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects with blade facing in and handle facing out or leaning against a nearby tree	On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects with handle facing forwards and the blade facing inwards or return to the designated place	After closed, place in pocket or return to the tool box
What for	Making grooves in wood or smoothing rough edges	Cutting anything bigger than a 2 pence piece – small serrated edge for seasoned wood, spaced serrated edge for green wood	Cutting seasoned wood. Generally wood like ply board or square timber.	Cutting anything up to approx 4 inches max.
Glove?	No gloves on tool holding hand, glove on other hand	No gloves on tool, glove on non-saw hand	No gloves on tool, glove on non-saw hand	No gloves on tool, glove on non-saw hand
Maintenance	Keep dry and protected from banging into other hard objects	Keep blade covered when in storage. Keep spare blades in container to replace when necessary.	Keep blade covered when in storage.	Keep blade in handle when in storage Oil blade and hinges
Cleaning	Brush with soft metal brush	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.
Storage	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container

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	Japanese pull saw (large toothed version).	Secateurs	Butter knife and fixed blade potato peeler	Fixed blade Knives
Always use tools 2 arms length and a tool away from other people				
How	To start, hold the handle and pull blade toward you creating groove. Push and pull the whole length of the blade. Cuts on the pull only.	Open safety catch and use like scissors, using gloved hand to keep wood/vine/small branch sturdy	Blade facing away from you on the outside of your wood.	Blade facing away from you on the outside of your body. Keeping wood between you and the knife.
Walk	Hold next to leg with blade facing backwards	Close and lock safety catch, hold blades in gloved hand next to leg with handles facing downwards	Hold blades in gloved hand next to leg with handles facing downwards	Sheath until hearing a click, place in pocket
Pass	Keep blade facing down, hold top of the tool and turn handle towards other person	Hold blades in gloved hand and offer handles to other person	Hold blades in gloved hand and offer handles to other person	Holding sheathed part, offer handle to person passing to
Placed	On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects with handle facing forwards and the blade facing inwards or return to tool box	Close and lock safety catch and place in pocket or return to the or designated place	On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects with handles facing forwards and the blade facing behind	In pocket or designated place
What for	Cutting anything smaller than a 50 pence piece. For fine and clean cuts. To use on seasoned wood.	Cutting anything smaller than a 2 pence piece	Whittling small soft sticks, peeling bark or cut string	Whittling, peeling bark or cut string






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Glove?	No gloves on tool, glove on non-saw hand	No gloves on tool, glove on non-saw hand	No gloves on tool	No glove on tool, glove on non-knife hand
Maintenance	Keep blade covered when in storage.	Sharpen using diamond sharpening kit or similar.	Use stick to clear out any wood in the blade of the peeler	Sharpen using sharpening stone and water/oil after each session. Ensure blade is sheathed when not in use.
Cleaning	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade. Use long stick with cloth and WD-40 to wipe out any debris inside the sheath
Storage	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in small water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover

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	Rounder/ tennon cutter	Spoke shave	Draw knife	Gauge
Always use tools 2 arms length and a tool away from other people				
How	Have wood gripped in a work bench/shave horse/vice. Place the widest part of the tool over the top of the wood, making sure the wood is not greater than the entry size of the tenon cutter and that the top of the tenon is cut squarely. Twist handles in a clockwise direction using both hands with even pressure.	Hold handles in either hand with blade facing towards you and pull along surface of secured wood.	Hold handles and cut whilst pulling towards the body. Wood to be held securely in shave horse or vice.	Blade moving away from the body, bevel facing downwards
Walk	Hold one handle next to leg	Hold handle facing downwards.	Hold handle hanging down with blade covered.	Hold next to leg with blade facing downwards.
Pass	Offer other handle to other person	Keep blade facing down, turn the handle to offer to the other person	Keep blade facing down, turn handles and offer them toward person	Keep blade facing down, hold top of the tool and turn handle towards other person
Placed	On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects with widest part facing downwards	On the shave horse in front of you	On a clear space/ tool matt where it will not hit other hard objects.	On a cover/sheath/tool mat with the hook facing inwards and the handle facing forwards
What for	Cutting tenons or dowelling.	Shaving, smoothing small areas of wood.	Shaving rough wood down to shape and size	Gauging, scalloping and carving.







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Glove?	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool
Maintenance	Use stick to clear out any wood in the blade of the peeler	Use stick to clear out any wood in the blade of the peeler	Keep blade covered when in storage.	Keep blade covered when in storage.
Cleaning	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.
Storage	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover

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	Hand drill	Brace and bit	Auger	Power drill
Always use tools 2 arms length and a tool away from other people				
How	Secure wood. Choose appropriate sized bit. Place bit into wood, apply pressure onto top handle and rotate moving handle of drill clockwise. Using lip and spur bits	Place bit into wood, apply pressure onto handle and rotate arm of brace clockwise. Avoid bending lead screw, Using auger bits with a lead screw.	With a partner, or in a group, place lead screw onto wood and move in a clockwise direction. Avoid bending lead screw. Can be used on your own with someone supporting the work piece so it stays firm	Clamp wood down. Choose appropriate sized bit. Place bit into wood, ensure appropriate speed is chosen, apply pressure onto top drill as it bores into wood
Walk	Hold handle next to leg with bit facing backwards	If using a seasoned wood cover, twist into cover and hold handle next to leg. If not, then hold handle with bit facing downwards	If using a seasoned wood cover, twist into cover and hold handle next to leg. If not, then hold handle with bit facing downwards	Lock drill. Hold next to leg with bit facing down
Pass	Hold the wheel and offer the handle to other person	Hold just above the bit and offer the handle to other person	Hold just below the handle and offer the handle to other person	Hold top of drill with bit facing down wards and offer the handle to other person
Placed	On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects/surface with handle facing forwards or return to designated place	On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects/surface with handle facing forwards or return to designated place	On a clear space/tool mat where it will not hit other hard objects/surface with handle facing forwards or return to designated place	Standing up on flat surface
What for	Drilling through discs, drift wood and other thin pieces of wood	Drilling holes through logs of 0.3-2 inches wide	Drilling holes through logs of .75-3 inches wide	Drilling pilot holes, mortises, holes through discs, driftwood;







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				screwing in screws; boring shallow holes
Glove?	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool
Maintenance	Oil cogs with WD-40 weekly	Keep bit covered when not in use. Suggestion: use a seasoned wood cover. Always protect the lead screw and cutters well.	Some augers will already have a plastic cover for the end of the bit. Alternatively use a seasoned wood cover. Always protect the lead screw and cutters well.	Do not use in wet weather. Charge batteries regularly. Remove bits after use.
Cleaning	Remove bit and blow out any dust caught in bit holder. Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the tool.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the tool.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the tool.	Remove bit and blow out any dust caught in bit chuck. Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the tool.
Storage	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container

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	Bill hook	Axe	Froe	Wedges
Always use tools 2 arms length and a tool away from other people				
How	Blade moving away from the body, hook facing downwards	Blade moving away from the body, facing downwards. Keep wood between you and the axe at all times. If used for splitting hold parallel to front of the body, use mallet to drive blade into wood	Hold blunt blade parallel to front of the body and use mallet to drive into wood. As it splits, use handle as a lever to split wood further. Hold in a cleaving break if large log.	Place into a log that has already been split slightly. Use maul to drive into log. Add another wedge to the split that appears further down the log – continue until log is completely split
Walk	Hold next to leg with hook facing backwards	Place cover on or hold handle just below blade next to leg with blade facing backwards	Hold handle just below blade next to leg with blade facing backwards	Hold top of wedge with blade facing downwards
Pass	Keep blade facing down, hold top of the tool and turn handle towards other person	Keep blade facing down, hold top of the tool and turn handle towards other person	Keep blade facing down, hold top of the tool and turn handle towards other person	Hold side of wedge and offer flat end to other person
Placed	On a cover/sheath/tool mat with the hook facing inwards and the handle facing forwards	On a cover/sheath/tool mat with the blade facing inwards and the handle facing forwards	On surface with the blade facing inwards and the handle facing forwards, or return to designated place	On a cover/sheath/tool mat with the blade facing backwards
What for	Snedding or splitting wood or brash small twigs of branches	Cleave (split) wood or cutting , shaving or hewing rough wood.	Splitting/ cleaving wood	Splitting logs
Glove?	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool
Maintenance	Sharpen using sharpening stone and water after each session.	Sharpen using sharpening stone and water after each session.	Ensure handle is tightly fitted to blade	Sharpen using sharpening stone and water. (The tools







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	Ensure blade is covered when in storage.	Ensure blade is covered when in storage.		aim is to split and not to cut wood).
Cleaning	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.	Use cloth and gun oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off the blade.
Storage	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container With a protective sheath/ cover	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container

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	Hammer	Mallet	Maul	Clamps
Always use tools 2 arms length and a tool away from other people				
How	Hold at bottom of handle, tap nail until secured, then hit with flat surface of hammer on nail. Use back of claw hammer to pull bent nails out.	Hold handle and hit froes, axes or gauges into wood.	Hold with two hands and lift above head bringing heavy top down onto wedge	G Clamp: turn anti-clockwise to open, fit over wood and work bench, turn clockwise to tighten. Quick clamp: Squeeze trigger to release, fit onto wood and work bench, squeeze handle to tighten
Walk	Hold top of tool next to leg with handle facing downwards	Hold handle of tool next to leg with head facing downwards	Hold handle of tool near the head with the head facing downwards	Hold top of tool with tool lengthways next to leg
Pass	Hold top of tool and offer the handle to the other person	Hold top of tool and offer the handle to the other person	Hold top of tool and offer the handle to the other person	Hold movable parts and offer stable parts to other person
Placed	On surface with handle facing back wards. Or return to designated place.	On ground or surface with handle facing back wards. Or return to designated place.	On ground surface with handle facing back wards or leaning against a tree/stump. Or return to designated place.	On flat surface or return to designated place
What for	Hammering nails into wood	To provide a force to tools that split wood. To hammer wooden pegs into ground.	To drive wedges into logs for splitting	Clamping wood to stabilise or secure it.
Glove?	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool	No gloves on tool



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Maintenance	Keep returning to designated place	Remove any loose bits of wood	Place wedges of wood into any gaps that appear between the handle and the head to secure it	Spray moveable parts with WD-40 once a month
Cleaning	Wipe with gun oil and cloth once a month to keep from rusting	No need to clean	No need to clean	Wipe with gun oil and cloth once a month to keep from rusting
Storage	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container	Store in large water proof and air tight container

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