

# Toolbox Talk

## Sharpening of Slashers



“Sharp tools are kinder to you, kinder to the tools and kinder to the materials being cut.”

The sharpening tools in the kit have been provided only to keep the tools sharp during the camps. If a tool is badly damaged, such as hitting a stone, which happens from time to time during normal use, it needs more extensive sharpening and should be marked as needing repair both on the tool itself and the Kit List Paperwork so we can repair or replace it. Do not try to use the sharpening stones to restore badly damaged tools, as you could damage both the tools and the stones further.



### Key Notes:

- ◆ **Before sharpening, check that the tool is safe to use.** Check that the handle is firmly attached and undamaged; and that there are no cracks or chips in the blade. Look along the blade to see if there are any obvious small nicks or dents that need extra work.
- ◆ Remember, **you are not sharpening a samurai sword**, so spending hours sharpening to a razor edge will be quickly wasted the first time you cut a piece of wood!

### How to sharpen them ...

- ◆ Sit in a comfortable position; hold the slasher with the sharp edge away from you and rest the top of the blade on something solid. You will need a small pot of water to dip the stones in. This helps wash away small pieces of metal and dirt as you sharpen.
- ◆ Use the coarsest, yellow stone to rub in small, firm circular motions along the blade. Try to hold the stone at the same angle as the edge. You can measure the angle with the gauge provided by placing the blade into the appropriate slot and running the gauge along the blade.
- ◆ The slashers have been sharpened to an **angle of 18°**. An angle much larger than this would mean that the blade would get stuck in the wood. A thinner angle would mean that the edge would go wavy and parts of it could turn over.
- ◆ Start at the back of the sharp edge and work gradually towards the front. You need to remove more material on the shoulders of the blade than on the edge. A tool with broad shoulders will be get stuck in the wood.
- ◆ As you work you will hear the sound change from a rough grating noise, to a smoother sound. Pay particular attention to the crook or bent part of the blade as this is the most difficult part to sharpen. Make sure that you sharpen the whole length of the tool. **Don't forget to turn the tool over and sharpen both sides!** Avoid the temptation to run your finger along the blade to see how sharp it is, if you must, gently brush your thumb across the blade.
- ◆ The **medium** (red) and **fine** (green) stones are provided for honing the blade after the main sharpening has taken place. To use them repeat the procedure as above.



Hold the tool with the blade away from you; try to hold the sharpening stone at the same angle as the blade.



Use the gauge provided to check the blade angle.