

How to Keep Your Knives at the Ready

The Japanese used to say that the sword is the soul of the Samurai. Cold weapons are my preferred choice too when it comes to a survival situation and even for self defense. I always carry with me a Cold Steel Recon 1 folder, it comes handy in a variety of scenarios, ranging from opening hate-mail to making fires when trekking.

The best thing about cold weapons is that they are easy to carry around and they don't require too much effort to keep them running. Also they don't need reloading, ammo and the like. That kind of stuff can become scarce if SHTF.

But if you want your preferred cold weapons to last you for a life-time, they will require some maintenance, just like any other tool. Basically, all of our equipment needs to be frequently and properly maintained in order to preserve their qualities and serve you well for many years to come.

If you've allowed your weapons to fall into disrepair, don't despair: even a rusty knife can be restored almost completely to its initial "sharp and shiny" state with just a few simple tricks and some elbow grease.

As a general rule of thumb, all the knives and swords in your collection should be stored in a dry place when you're not using them and covered with a thin layer of oil. Even if they're made of stainless steel, keep them oiled at all times, because even stainless steel is prone to rusting under certain conditions.

Storing



Play safe, will you? Keep in mind that the best protection for your cold weapons is provided by that layer of oil. Using a high quality brand of oil is advisable.

I personally use Ballistol, but there are lots of companies with good products in the field. A good oil maintains its lubricating properties for an extended period of time.

If your cold weapons have leather/wooden grips and scabbards, you should take care of those too, by covering them with a thin layer of leather wax, so they'll be protected when exposed to moist environments/open air for extended periods of time.

Polishing

Polishing is another item on your to-do list if you care about your cold weapons. For polishing, you can use thin varieties of sand paper or steel wool. With a little bit of perseverance and skill, you can easily remove those rusty spots in no time.

If you notice slight oxidation marks on your cold weapons, you can use a soft cloth or a scouring sponge to remove them but be aware that bronze and brass parts are very sensitive and they'll get scratched when using even the finest sandpaper.

You must be extra careful when choosing the right sandpaper for polishing. If the granulation is too coarse, you will do more harm than good to your cold weapon. When you need to polish brass parts, the best thing to do is to use a rust killer.

One of the best substances to use when polishing both steel and brass is toothpaste. Yeah, you got that right: toothpaste contains hydrated silica, which is very fine textured and abrasive and works like a charm, even for polishing jewelry and silverware. All you have to do is to smear the weapon that needs polishing with toothpaste, let it dry for a while, and rub it off again with a soft cloth and water. In this way, you will avoid scratches and unevenness and the end result will be awesome!

Iron files and whetstone can be used for removing burrs and unevenness that are visible on your cold weapons due to heavy usage and/or improper storage conditions. Just like with sandpaper, you must make sure that both the whetstone and iron files are finely textured, so they won't leave marks/traces on the metal.



This method has been used for centuries and it's still the best way to remove burrs from your cold weapons. All it takes is patience and some skill that you will acquire with time and practice. Don't worry, it is perfectly normal for all heavy-duty tools to develop burrs and unevenness, but it's best to remove them as soon as possible.

Please keep in mind that someday you may need to count on your cold weapons for your survival. You must be sure that they will serve you flawlessly in such a situation and if you take your weapons maintenance seriously, they'll be there for you.

That about sums it up. Cut and dried: keep'em sharp, dry, clean and mean!

Always remember: guns for show, knives for a pro! (just kidding folks!)



**The government wants
to take all your guns.
But they can't get
THIS ONE from you.
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