

## Keeping your knives sharp using a honing steel:

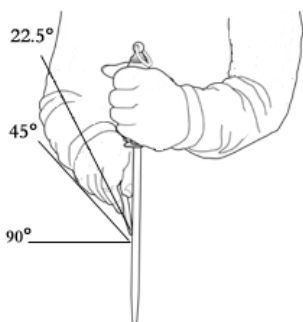
There are many ways to keep your knives sharp. Regular maintenance with a honing steel, as well as intermittent sharpening on a stone are the best. A few strokes on a steel, applied each time you use a knife, will keep the knife's edge properly aligned.

Occasionally, when steeling isn't enough and there is too much drag when cutting, sharpening on a stone is necessary. A sharpening stone provides you with total control over sharpness, and ensures a consistent edge from tip to heel. We do not recommend any of the household electric knife sharpeners on the market. The better ones do a good job of regrinding the edge, however, they take off too much of the blade, thus shortening the life of the knife. If you don't know how to use a sharpening stone, refer to [Sharpening your knives using a sharpening stone](#).

There are many ways to use a steel. You will see professional chefs use a steel with quite a bit of showmanship. Regardless of the technique you use, what is most important is that you are consistent.

### Judging 22.5°

Start with a right angle, visually cut that angle in half, and then cut it in half again.



### Maintaining Your Knife Edge

A properly maintained knife is sharp. A dull knife can be dangerous because you will apply much more pressure than you would with a sharp knife and your hand will be much more likely to slip.

A knife's edge is very delicate and with use its miniature teeth will curl over. A honing steel will realign the edge and also bring to the surface the carbon molecules that provide most of the cutting action. Frequent steeling is essential and will keep your knife cutting like new for months. Use your steel virtually every time you use your knives. For most home chefs a regular-cut steel is preferred. It will take away some metal, doing a little bit of resharpenering in addition to realigning.

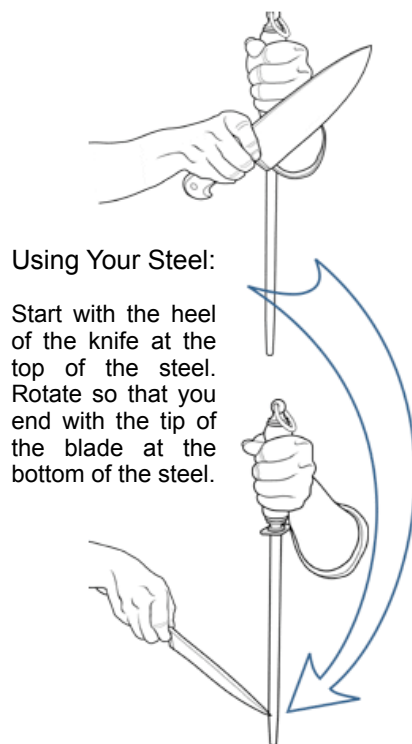
### Using a Honing Steel

It may look intimidating, but if you understand the mechanics, you can soon master the technique. There are many ways to hold a steel, but the easiest way for a beginner is to hold it vertically with the point down, resting securely on a towel. This position allows you to see the angle you are using and provides excellent control.

Keep these facts in mind:

- You must work the full length of the edge.
- You generally want an angle of about 22.5 degrees.

Start with the heel of the blade contacting the steel as close to the handle as possible with the tip pointing straight out away from you. Pull the blade back towards you and down the shaft of the steel. The motion should end with the tip of the blade in contact with the steel towards the bottom of the shaft. Switch sides and do the exact same thing on the other side. Because you are holding the steel vertically you can see that you are using the same angle on both sides. Repeat about 4 - 5 times. Gentle pressure is all that is needed. You don't want to grind your knife. If you hear an almost musical sound, the pressure is perfect.



Using Your Steel:

Start with the heel of the knife at the top of the steel. Rotate so that you end with the tip of the blade at the bottom of the steel.