

The image features two survival knives with black handles and silver blades, positioned diagonally across a cross-section of a wooden log. A compass rose is centered at the top, with cardinal directions labeled 'N', 'S', 'E', and 'W'. The word 'SURVIVAL CODE' is printed in a metallic, blocky font across the upper middle of the log. The knife on the right has the word 'ШАЙТАН' (SHAYTAN) engraved on its blade. The overall scene is dimly lit, emphasizing the textures of the wood and metal.

**SURVIVAL CODE**

**KNIVES**

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# KNIVES

A knife is an invaluable asset in a survival situation. The serious adventurer will carry one always. They should be packed with the luggage that you are checking in when travelling by commercial aircraft, otherwise they will be confiscated. Current knife law in the UK states that knives where the blade folds into the handle are legal as long as the blade is shorter than 3in (7.62cm).

## Choosing a knife

A multi-bladed folding knife is a useful tool, but, if you carry only one knife, you need something stronger, a general-purpose blade that will do all likely tasks efficiently and comfortably, from cutting trees to skinning animals and preparing vegetables. Some have a compass built into the handle or have the handle hollowed out so that you can carry survival kit inside it. However, these features will be offset by the possibility of a hollow handle breaking and a compass may soon lose its accuracy after the knife has been used on a hardwood tree. If you lose this kind of knife you also lose your survival kit - much better to keep the kit in a separate pouch on your belt or on the sheath.

**REMEMBER:** YOU ARE ONLY AS SHARP AS YOUR KNIFE. Your knife is such an important piece of survival equipment that you must keep it sharp and ready for use. Don't misuse your knife. Never throw it into trees or onto the ground. Keep it clean and, if you don't intend to use it for a while, oiled and in its sheath.

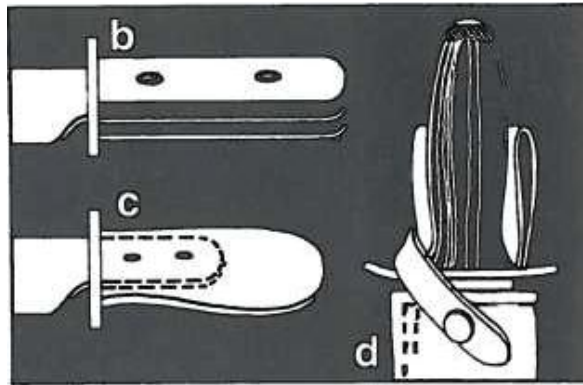
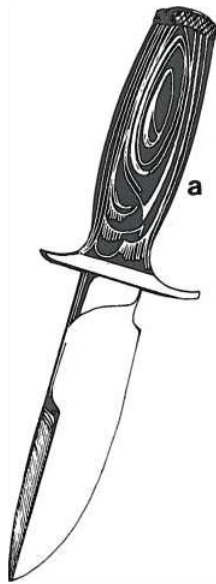
When walking through close, or difficult terrain, get in the habit of checking your knife. This should become an automatic reflex especially after negotiating difficult terrain. A check of all pockets and possessions should be second nature.

## Folding knives



A folding knife that has a serrated edge, and which can be opened one-handed is valuable, provided it has a good locked position. Always carry one. A blade in a wooden handle is usually more comfortable: it will not slip in a sweaty hand and, if the handle is made from a single piece of wood, is less likely to cause blisters.



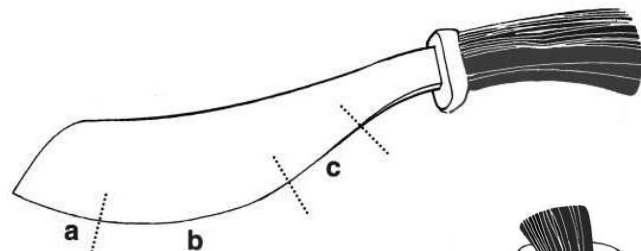


Handle (a) is ideal: a single rounded piece of wood, the knife tang passing through it and fastened at the end. If the handle breaks the tang can be wrapped with cloth or twine. Handle (b) is only riveted to the tang and would cause blisters. Handle (c) could break at the rivets if subjected to heavy work and the short tang would make it difficult to improvise a handle. The sheath (d) should have a positive fastening and a tunnel belt loop.

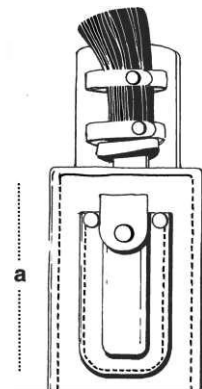
## Parang

This is the Malayan name for a type of knife with a large curved blade like a machete. It is too large to be carried in normal daily life (see *Knives* on page 35) but ideal when going out into the wild.

A parang 30cm (12in) in overall blade length and weighing no more than 750g (1½lb) is best, the blade 5cm (2in) at its widest and end-bolted into a wooden handle. The curved blade enables maximum effort to be applied when cutting timber and the blade arrives before the knuckles, so giving them protection. Even large trees can be cut down with a parang, which is especially useful for building shelters and rafts.



The parang blade has three different edges: **b** does the heavy work of chopping wood and bone, **a** is finer and used for skinning, **c** is finer still for cawing and delicate work. **a** and **c** are easily maintained and **b** is sharp but not so sharp as to chip easily.



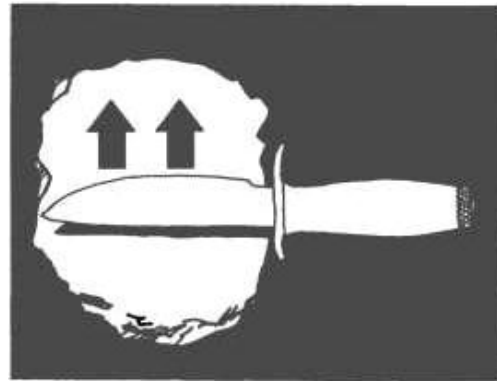
The sheath must have positive fastenings to keep the parang secure, and a loop for fixing to a belt some sheaths have a pocket on the front for a sharpening stone.

**REMEMBER:** There is a danger that the cutting edge may come through the side. To draw the parang NEVER holds the sheath on the same side as the cutting edge (a). This is dangerous. Get into the habit of gripping the side AWAY FROM THE CUTTING EDGE.

## Sharpening a knife

Any sandstone will sharpen tools - a grey, clayey sandstone being best. Quartz, though more rarely found, is good and granite can also be used. Rub two pieces together to make them smooth. A double- faced stone with a rough and a smooth surface is ideal and should be carried in the sheath pocket. Use the rough surface first to remove burrs, then the smooth one to get a fine edge. The object is to get an edge that will last and not chip.

To sharpen the blade, hold the handle in the right hand. Use a clockwise circular motion and apply a steady pressure on the blade with the fingertips of the left hand as you push away. Keep the angle constant and make sure you push the knife into the stone so that they edge is sharpened rather than rounded. Keep the stone wet. Rock particles on the blade will show the angle you are obtaining. DON'T drag the blade towards you under pressure. This will produce burrs. Reduce the pressure for a finer edge, work counter clockwise on the other side.



Blade profile: (a) is too steep and will soon wear, (b) is good and (c) is too fine and might chip.

