

Choosing a Knife (Knife and Axes)

During my 25 years of study I have had the pleasure in using nearly every type of knife available to civilians and many used by the British Army. Over the years gear has changed but the essentials remain much the same. The following information is designed to help you choose the correct tool for the job after all, your knife is the most important tool in your kit.

Carry a knife or multi-use tool with you whenever you camp. Sooner or later you'll need one - whether it's to slice food, make emergency repairs or cut some moleskin to protect a blister.

Consider Your Options:

Straight knives - Knives with straight blades that don't fold away can be hard to pack and dangerous to carry. They can also damage your gear if stored improperly. If you must carry a straight knife, make sure you carry it in a protective sheath.

Folding knives - These work like straight knives but they're safer and easier to pack. The blades simply tuck away into the handle for compact, easy storage. Look for smooth movement between the blade and handle, and for blades that lock in place for maximum safety.

Utility knives - These compact, lightweight Swiss Army-style knives are built to handle a variety of tasks. Different models have different assortments of lightweight tools from knife blades to can openers to screwdrivers and more.

Multi-use tools - These hard-core utility-style knives are built to handle tough jobs and complex repairs. In addition to standard blades, most have heavyweight tool accessories like pliers, screwdrivers and small saws.

Decide How Much Knife You Really Need - For basic trips, a folding knife or a utility knife with simple accessories should be more than enough. But for longer, more difficult journeys, carry a more advanced tool system (with tools like pliers, screwdrivers, a small saw) that can handle more demanding repairs.

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BGMA TIP!

When comparing models, consider both weight and size. Stick to the smallest and lightest option that will meet your needs. Also consider how easy each model is to use. Take a few minutes to try each tool feature so you know how easy they are to deal with and how well they work.

**These are a few of BGMA'S favourite knives as used by the instructors.
Frost "Mora" Knives**



This is a great knife for the price! Suitable for carving, general or an all-purpose knife.

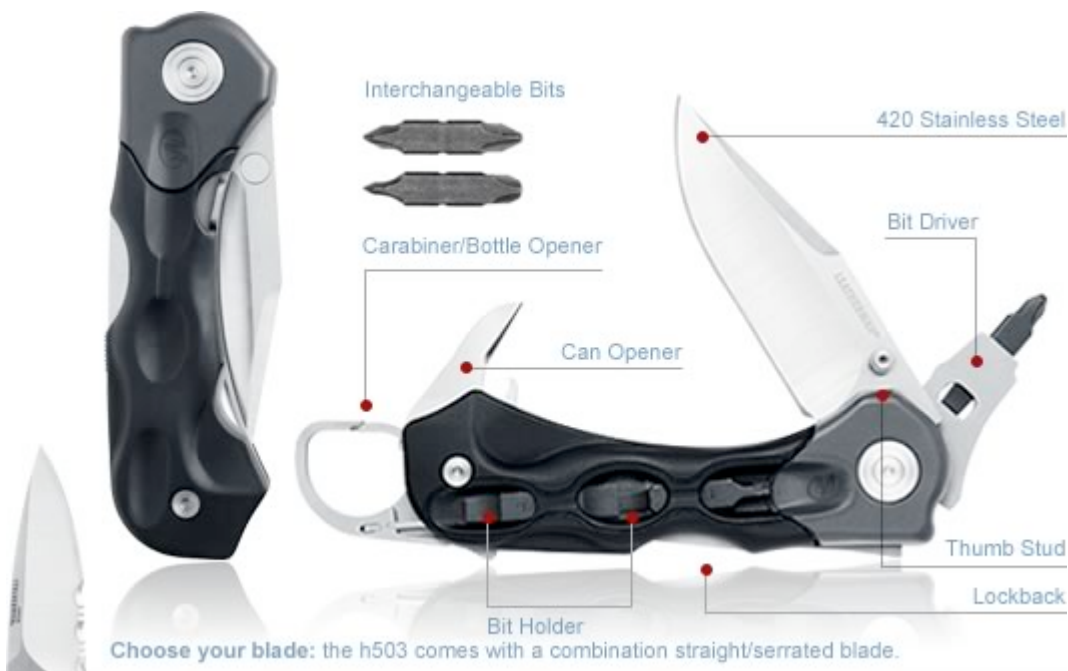
A new generation of knives from Frosts has handles covered with a layer of thermoplastic rubber for superior grip as well as a new modern shape.

The all purpose carbon blade knife and the stainless steel bladed knife both come with black sheaths, the OD Green comes with an OD green sheath. All plastic sheaths have both belt and button clip and a bottom drain hole.

The knives traditional high quality 4" (100 mm) blades which give these knives extreme strength, long life and high resistance to moisture

Weight - Knife 2.7 oz
Sheath 1.0 oz.

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The streamlined design of a traditional lockback folder meets the functionality of a multi-tool, without additional bulk. It has a quality 420 HC stainless steel blade and plenty of additional features-bit driver (with six screw bit tips), bottle opener and folding carabineer clip-all neatly tucked into a comfortable handle with rubber inserts for maximum portability. BGMA instructors use this for all expedition requirements. This is a very strong reliable tool which has proved its self on many occasions.



Marttiini Condor Std. Filleting Knife

This budget knife from Marttiini comes with their very sharp, high quality blade and a comfortable, non-slip rubber handle.

The main difference between this and their high end filleting knives is the plastic finger guard and the composite sheath.

6" blade length - Coupled with a good quality sheath knife this is a great tool to have at your disposal.

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Axes

Axes make a great addition to your toolbox as they are capable of carryout the heavy tasks that a smaller knife finds difficult.

In the Opinion of BGMA there are no better axes than those manufactured by Gransfors Bruks of Sweden.



The Small Forest Axe, is a very nice looking axe. The head is forged (hand forged), and the handle is some nicely grained American hickory wood. The poll can be used as a hammer. The Small Forest Axe (SFA) is really targeted at nordic forests, so its head is very thin and concave after the bevel, excellent for limbing and cutting in soft green woods. It is very well balanced, and handling it is a pleasure. It comes with a sturdy leather head protection.

Length: 50 centimetre. Useable handle length 45 cm. Total weight with sheath is 1000 grams.