



Risk Matrix	Slightly Harmful	Harmful	Extremely Harmful
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium
Likely	Low	Medium	High
Highly likely	Medium	High	High

Risk Assessment – Sheath Knife

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Operating Notes:

- Supervision ratio is 1 instructor to 2-4 participants (depending on age & ability) & 1 trained volunteer.
- Instructor & volunteers to be trained to in-house syllabus. Refresher training as directed by session observations.

Risk – Benefit Statement: Using a sheath knife develops motor skills, helps participants understand the safe use of sharp tools, teamwork and managing own risks.

Hazard Description and activities giving rise to risk	Who may be harmed	Control measures	Risk Rating	Responsibility
Incorrect use of tool leading to cuts.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform participants using Sheath knives of tool talk (includes how to hold knife and how to sit when using it.) • First aiders present & first aid kit close by. • One to one supervision for new/younger/vulnerable participants. • Ensure safety of site. • Keep blade cover on when not in use & store in a locked toolbox. 	Medium	Lead Instructor to do a safety talk at start of the session. Briefed participants to follow rules.
Accidental injury on unattended tool leading to cuts.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure tools are stored in a designated space. • Ensure blade covers are on when tool is not in use. • Ensure tools are stored in a locked box. 	Medium	Lead Instructor to do a safety talk at start of the session. Briefed participants to follow rules.
Trip or fall with tool leading to cuts.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure working area prepared with limited trip risks. • Ensure tool transported with cover on. • Ensure tool talk learnt including how to move safely with the tool. 	Medium	Lead Instructor to do a safety talk at start of the session. Briefed participants to follow rules.
Knives stored unsheathed leading to cuts when collecting a knife out of the box.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sheath knives to be carried in a locked metal container. • Use of tool talk. • Ensure all knives are stored with sheath securely on. • First Aiders present & first aid kit close by. 	Low	Lead Instructor to do a safety talk at start of the session. Briefed participants to follow rules.

Removing the knife from the sheath incorrectly could lead to cuts on fingers/hand.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of tool talk (includes a demonstration of how to remove the sheath correctly). • Advised that participants wear gloves on their 'helper hand'. 	Low	
Knife used in proximity of others – being too close to someone when using a knife could lead to an injury.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of tool talk (use the knife two arms & a tool length away from someone else) • First Aiders present & first aid kit close by. 	Low	Lead Instructor to do a safety talk at start of the session. Briefed participants to follow rules.
Knife being used as a weapon & hurting another.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish relationship with group/individuals before introducing the use of knives. • Emphasise that knives are tools which are used for a specific purpose. • Consider if the use of knives is appropriate - are there any indicators that this may occur? • Use of tool talk (use the knife two arms & a tool length away from someone else) • First Aiders present & first aid kit close by. 	Medium	Lead Instructor to do a safety talk at start of the session. Briefed participants to follow rules.
Weather Conditions (hot, cold, wet, windy)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lead instructor will review the risk assessment in view of the weather on the day. • The instructor will amend activity if ongoing changing weather conditions effect risk. • Ensure participants are wearing appropriate clothes. • Ensure participants have sun cream. • Ensure participants are warm enough - encourage physical activity. 	Low	Lead Instructor/adults to check participants are appropriately dressed. Adults to keep an eye on participant's condition.

- Please see attached Sheath knife safety sheet & Tool Talk sheet to support this risk assessment.

The Sheath Knife:

Use: Cutting string/rope and whittling



The Sheath Knife Tool Talk:

You need to **PASS** your tool talk:

P = Parts of the tools

A = Arriving (movement and passing of tools)

S = Safe Use of Tools

S = Storage of Tools

Parts

This is a sheath knife.

This is the handle.

This is the cover.

I take the cover off like this.

This is the blade.

This is the cutting edge.

When I have finished with the knife I put the cover back on like this. (Sheath until hearing a click)

Arriving

I stand with the knife like this (knife in sheath, holding handle with blade pointing backwards and down)

I walk with the knife like this (knife in sheath, holding handle with blade pointing backwards and down)

I pass the knife like this. (Both Hands on the sheath, passing the second person the handle)

Safe Use

When I use the knife use it two arms and a tools length away from anyone except my partner like this.

I use the knife to cut cord and to whittle.

I have bare hands on the tool.

I have a glove on my helper hand.

When I am not using the knife I put it down with the handle facing forwards and the blade facing inwards.

Storage

When I have finished with the knife I put it in the designated place or in the toolbox provided.

Well done you **PASS**ed



Care and Maintenance:

- Avoid using the blade for; battoning logs, as a pry bar, as a fire striker or for digging.
- Stainless steel blades need to be kept clean and sharpened every now and again.
- Carbon blades will need to be cleaned and oiled (with a light oil). If be stored for long periods these blades are best not left in leather sheaths.
- As a general rule, stainless steel will require a little more sharpening than that of carbon steel, and is usually best achieved with a whetstone. Don't let the knife go completely blunt as it will become harder to get a good edge back on the blade, but don't over sharpen or sharpen too frequently as this can make the knife too sharp and in turn the edge may become a little weaker.
- Ensure sheaves are kept clean and leather sheaves are maintained.

Use:

- When working with children ensure fixed blade knives are used. Folding blades present a chance of accident when folding the blade and have a weak point at the hinge making them more likely to break.
- When choosing knives for use with children, it's important to consider the size of handles, blades and the blade type. Knives with smaller handles and rounded blade ends maybe better for use with young children.
- As with most tools, the hand on the tool should not be gloved. The helper hand should have a cut resistant glove on.
- Children should initially be taught to use a knife in a sitting position. Children should ensure they are always cutting with arms over their legs and away from the body.
- Older children/ adults may progress to a standing position, however it's important to supervise to ensure the knife is still being used with the blade away from the body.