How to Make knife

Baba Cutlery Works

History of Sakai knife

A long time ago, more than 100 kofun, burial mounds with various shapes and sizes, were made in Sakai. Many blacksmiths were gathered from all over Japan to make tools for the construction of these kofun. More than 400 years ago, Japan started to import tobacco from Portugal. To cut tobacco leaves as finely as possible, high-quality knives became valuable and were in great demand. These tobacco knives were the beginning of knife industry in Sakai and have provided the foundation for its development and transformation that continue today.

Labour division system in knife production

Blacksmithing→Blade edging→
Handle fitting and name carving
→Done!

1. ARATOGI Rough Sharpening... The process to make the blade sufficiently thin

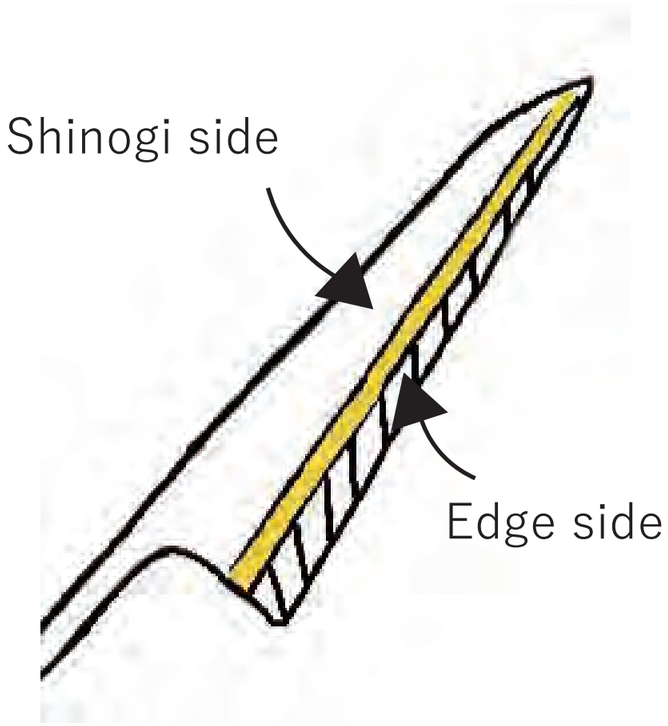
A knife forged by
a blacksmith

Place the blade
on a stick.

Sharpen it with ENTO, a big rotating whetstone,
to make the blade thin.

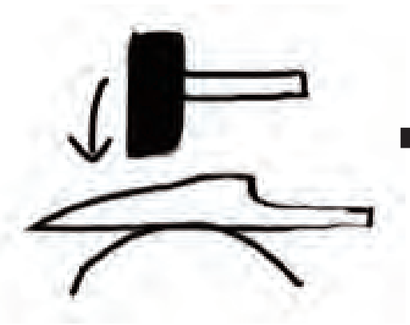
Two parts of the blade are sharpened separately.

This can prevent
the knife from becoming
too thin at this stage.

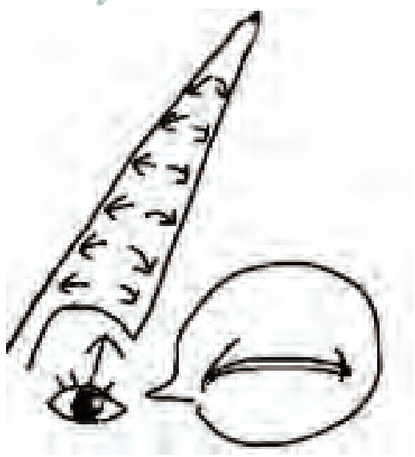


2. HIZUMITORI ... The process to repair the distortions of the blade

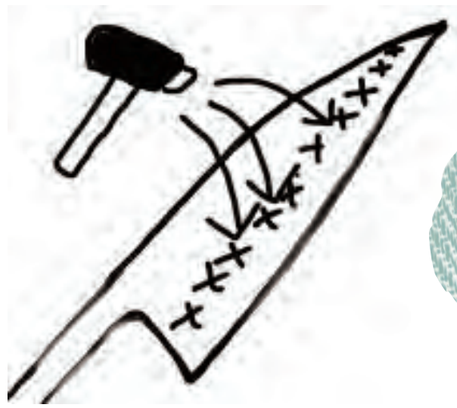
Place the blade on an anvil
with a curved surface and hammer it.



The blade bends
along the curved
surface of the anvil.



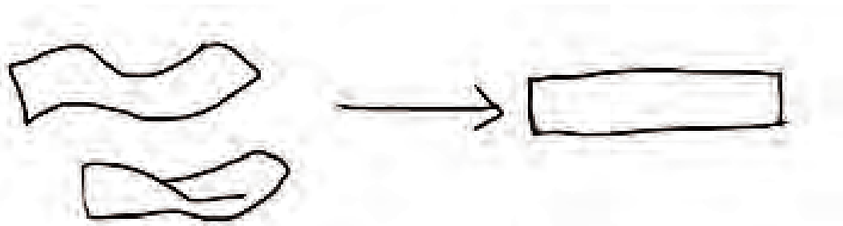
Create some grooves
by hitting it with a hammer.



The shape of the blade
changes as extra metal
is pushed into the
grooves of the cuts.

important

By following these steps,
we can remove any distortions
before sharpening with ENTO.



3. HONTOGI Fine Sharpening ... The process to sharpen the blade with ENTO until it becomes flat

This process determines the quality of the knife. If the thickness of the finished produc' s blade is uneven, you will find it harder to sharpen the knife.

A characteristic of Sakai knives

Make TATAKIME (hitting marks)

→To enhance the polishing power of the whetstone. To shape the whetstone into a perfect circle.

↓

Less heat is transferred to the knife.

↓

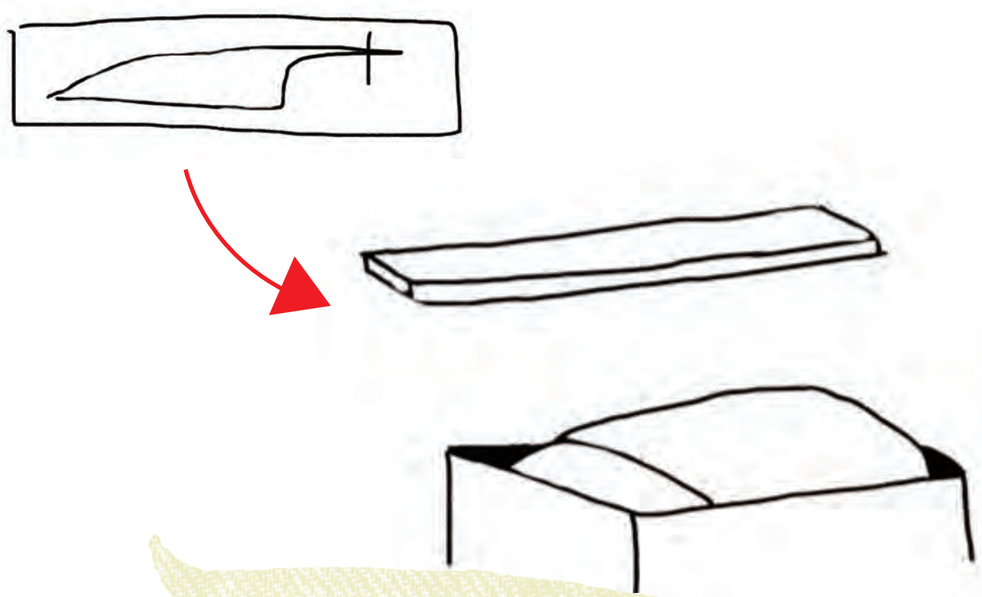
Fewer distortions are generated.

↓

The quality of the knife will be better!

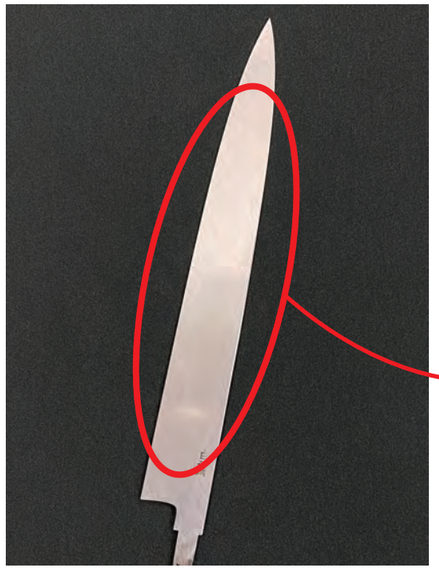
4. URATOGI ...The process to sharpen the back side of the blade

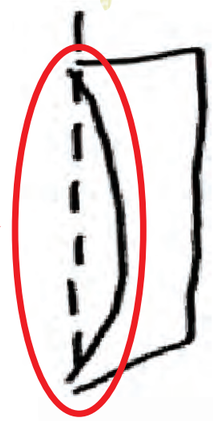
Sharpen the back side of the blade until the surface becomes concave.
Avoid creating distortions or unevenness, and excessive sharpening.
The cross section of the blade should look like a perfect arc.
Craftsmen carry out this process very carefully
as this will affect the quality of the finished product.

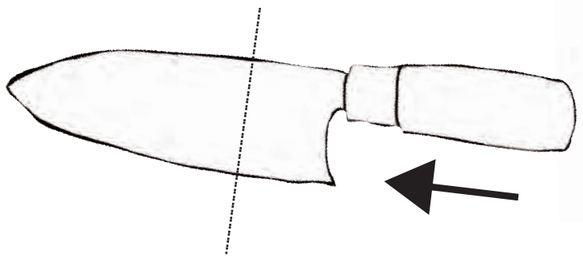


Place the blade on a stick
and sharpen its back side.

This concave surface on
the back side of the blade and
the process of sharpening
it into a concave shape
are called ‘Urasuki’ .

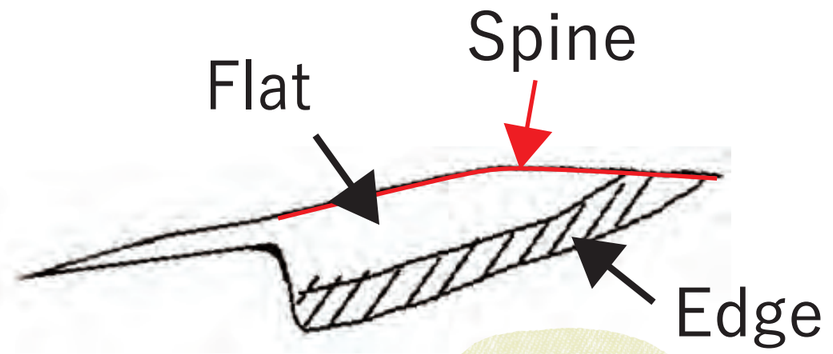






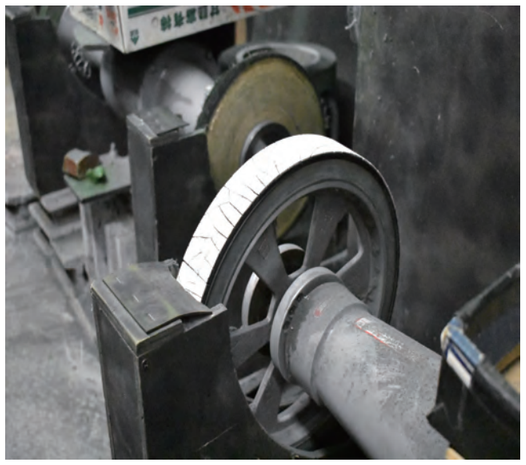
The cross section
of the blade when you look at
it from this angle.

5. 4 processes to clean the blade



Rough

Fine

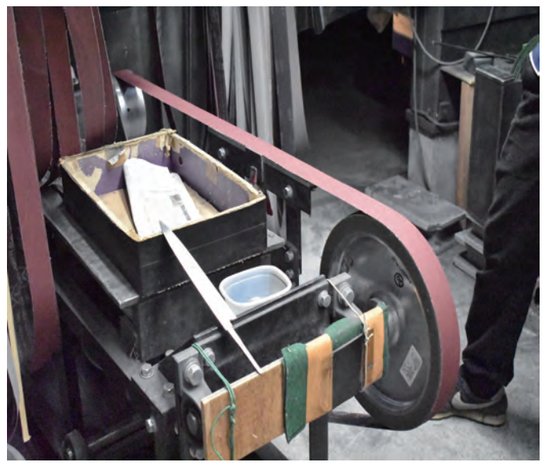


Stone fabric

Polish the flat part with a rough fabric. An important preparatory process to determine the quality of the finish.

Iron fabric

Carefully polish the surface of the flat and the back parts.



Paper

Polish the flat and the back parts, as well as the edge, and also round off the corners on the spine of the knife until it feels smoth with paper.

*Use 2 types of paper 1. red rough paper
2. white fine paper

Thread fabric

Polish the flat and the back parts as well as the edge finely until the entire blade shines.

6. KIDO

... The process to create a hairline finish on the flat and the back parts as well as the edge

Apply Kongosha (abrasive).

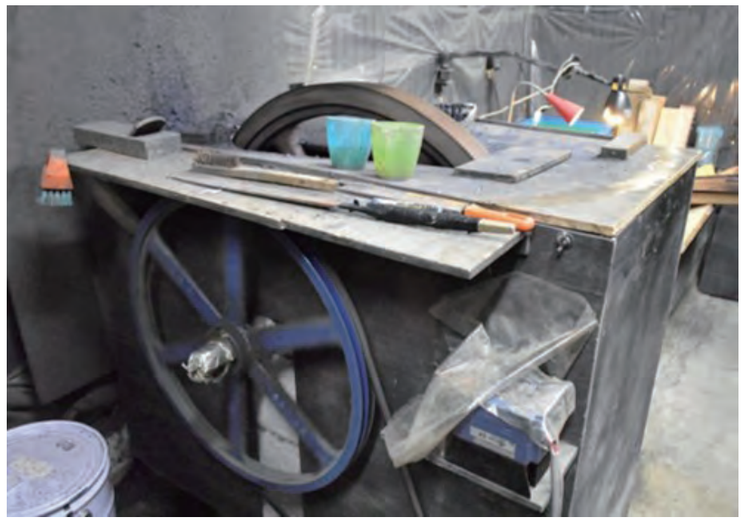
Sharpen it with Kido.

A hairline finish is achieved.

SAKAI ORIGINAL

KIDO

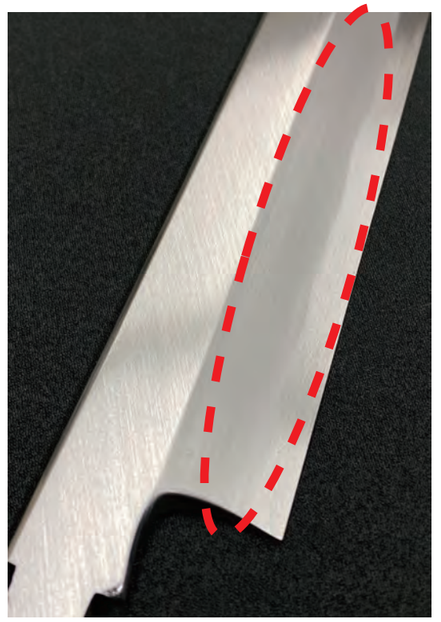
Kido is a traditional tool unique to Sakai.
It is made of carefully selected soft cedar,
which allows even a stronger knife
to be sharpened effectively.



7. KIWADATE, KASUMIGAKE ... The process to create a haze pattern on the edge

Apply clay.

Scrape the edge with
bamboo, cedar, and rubber.



A haze pattern will appear.

Clay made from natural whetstones

Clay applied to the blade is created by
mixing natural whetstones mined from mountains.
Since each knife maker has its own way of blending
different whetstones to create their original clay,
this information is classified as strictly confidential!