

CERTIFICATE OF COMPETANCY IN THE USE OF

- Hand Axe
- Folding Pocket Knife (Blade 3" or less)
- Bush (Bow) Saw
- Trimming Axe
- Felling Axe

Awarded to

Of _____ Barking & Dagenham Scout Troop

On _____

Valid to _____

Signed _____

Name _____

Position _____

- Tick or Cross as appropriate*

This certificate must be re-endorsed every six months.

It may be revoked at any time, if the holder fails to observe the correct procedures and rules whilst using an axe or knife. At which time the holder must retake the full test for this certificate.

The holder of this certificate must seek the permission of the Scout Leader in charge (or their authorised deputy) before wearing/using a knife and/or using an axe at any Scout event or activity (this certificate does not give the holder automatic permission to take a knife to any Scout Event/Activity).

Under no circumstances may the holder of this certificate, allow a fellow Scout who has not passed the test for this certificate to use or handle a knife or axe in his/her possession.

Parent / Guardian _____

Signature _____

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Barking & Dagenham Scouts

Axe, Knife & Saw



Award & Handbook

Safety

Read this handbook very carefully

Used correctly, an axe, knife and saw are very useful tools and their proper use form an important part of Scouting skills

Used incorrectly they are potentially lethal

PART 1: the axe, knife & saw award

Axes, knives and saws are very useful tools. They should be kept sharp and therefore are potentially dangerous. Correct training, care and attention maximises the safety of all who work with them. Improper use, tiredness and inattention is very dangerous.

The Scout Leaders of the this Troop believe that Scouts should receive careful and regular training in the use of axes, knives and saws. If a Scout undergoes such training, can satisfy a leader that they are proficient and safe, and can obtain permission from their parent or guardian, they will be certified to use the relevant tool under supervision for a period of 6 months. After this time, the Scout must again satisfy a leader to continue with its use.

A Scout who exhibits inappropriate possession or use of an axe, knife or saw will have the tool taken from them and they will not be allowed to use that tool for a further 3 months. Illegal possession of an offensive weapon will result in the permanent confiscation of that item.

PART 2: The Law and POR

The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association Rule 10.4 b) states:

Knives may not be worn with uniform except for religious reasons.

The Criminal Justice Act 1988, Section 139 (The offence of having an article with a blade or point in a public place) states:

(1) Subject to subsections (4) and (5) below, any person who has an article to which this section applies with him in a public place shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) Subject to subsection (3) below, this section applies to any article which has a blade or is sharply pointed except a folding pocket-knife.

(3) This section applies to a folding pocket-knife if the cutting edge of its blade exceeds 3 inches.

(4) It shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under this section to prove that he had good reason or lawful authority for having the article with him in a public place.

(5) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (4) above, it shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under this section to prove that he had the article with him—

(a) for use at work;

(b) for religious reasons; or

(c) as part of any national costume.

(6) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) above shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

(7) In this section "public place" includes any place to which at the material time the public have or are permitted access, whether on payment or otherwise.

(8) This section shall not have effect in relation to anything done before it comes into force.

The above regulations mean that:

(1) A knife may not be worn on display when wearing scout uniform.

(2) An axe may not be carried in public.

(3) No knife may be carried in public, except for a folding pocket-knife with a blade of 3 inches or less.

(4) A folding pocket-knife with a blade of 3 inches or less will not result in a conviction for possession of an article with a blade or point in a public place.

(5) If used or displayed inappropriately, a folding pocket-knife with a blade of 3 inches or less may result in a conviction of another offence, such as assault or threatening behaviour.

PART 6: BUSH (BOW) SAW

Use: For cutting small timber. (Does not leave wood chips to clear away like an axe.)

Ideal Saw: The best type is the Sandvic Bush Saw. (A good alternative is available from Wilkinsons.)

Method:

- (1) Make sure the wood is held firmly. Use a saw horse whenever possible. Keep hands well away from blade.
- (2) Start slowly, pulling the blade backwards towards you until the blade is well into the wood. Then push and pull in a steady rhythm using the whole length of the blade.
- (3) Make sure the blade is sharp. Replacement blades are available.
- (4) When not in use, mask the blade with a plastic sheath, cardboard sleeve or a sacking wrap.
- (5) Keep the blade greased or oiled to prevent rust.



PART 3: the axe, knife & saw rules of the Troop

- (1) Only Scouts, who have obtained the appropriate certification as part of the Axe, Knife & Saw Awards, may use or carry such a tool. Scouts must inform a scout leader and ask permission at each event.
- (2) Uncertified Scouts (without special permission and supervision) will have axes, knives and saws confiscated, and the use of such tools denied, for a period of 3 months.
- (3) Blades that are illegal to carry in public will be permanently confiscated.
- (4) Scouts in full uniform must not wear knives or axes in full view. A folding pocket knife should be completely out of sight in a knife belt wallet or in a pocket.

PART 4: folding pocket knives

The ideal folding pocket knife for a Scout might have the following properties:

- (1) Good quality, hard stainless steel construction.
- (2) A locking, hollow ground, partially serrated blade of 3 inches length or less.
- (3) An attachment loop for a lanyard.
- (4) A marlin spike for splicing rope.
- (5) A bottle opener.
- (6) A can opener.
- (7) A selection of screwdrivers (flat and cross head).

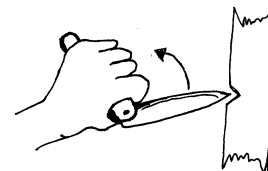
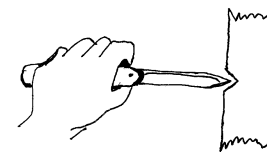
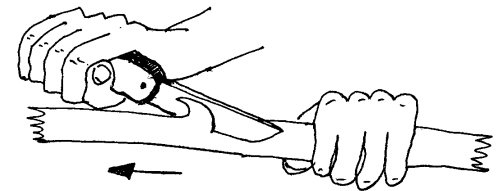
Other possible features:

- (1) Pliers.
- (2) Scissors.
- (3) File.
- (4) Saw.
- (5) Holster.

Swiss Army styles or multi-tools are sensible choices.

Knife Rules:

- (1) Never play with a knife.
- (2) Never throw a knife.
- (3) Keep your knife with the blades folded away unless you are using it.



- (4) Do not leave knives lying around. When a pocket knife is not in use, be sure it is closed and in your pocket or back in its wallet.
- (5) Keep your knife clean, sharp and lightly oiled.
- (6) When whittling or cutting, always cut away from yourself, to prevent accident.
- (7) Non locking knives must be used with caution when gouging with the knife point. The blade can easily start to close into the handle. The most common cause of accidents with a non-locking folding blade is the blade accidentally closing onto a finger causing a cut.
- (8) Never split a piece of wood with your knife by hammering it on the back of the blade. This will ruin the blade and will weaken the hinge.
- (9) Always keep the blade away from fire. If it is over-

heated, the temper of the steel will be affected, the knife will become soft, and will never hold an edge again, also the handle will probably go up in smoke.

(10) Never run with your knife open.

Cleaning your knife:

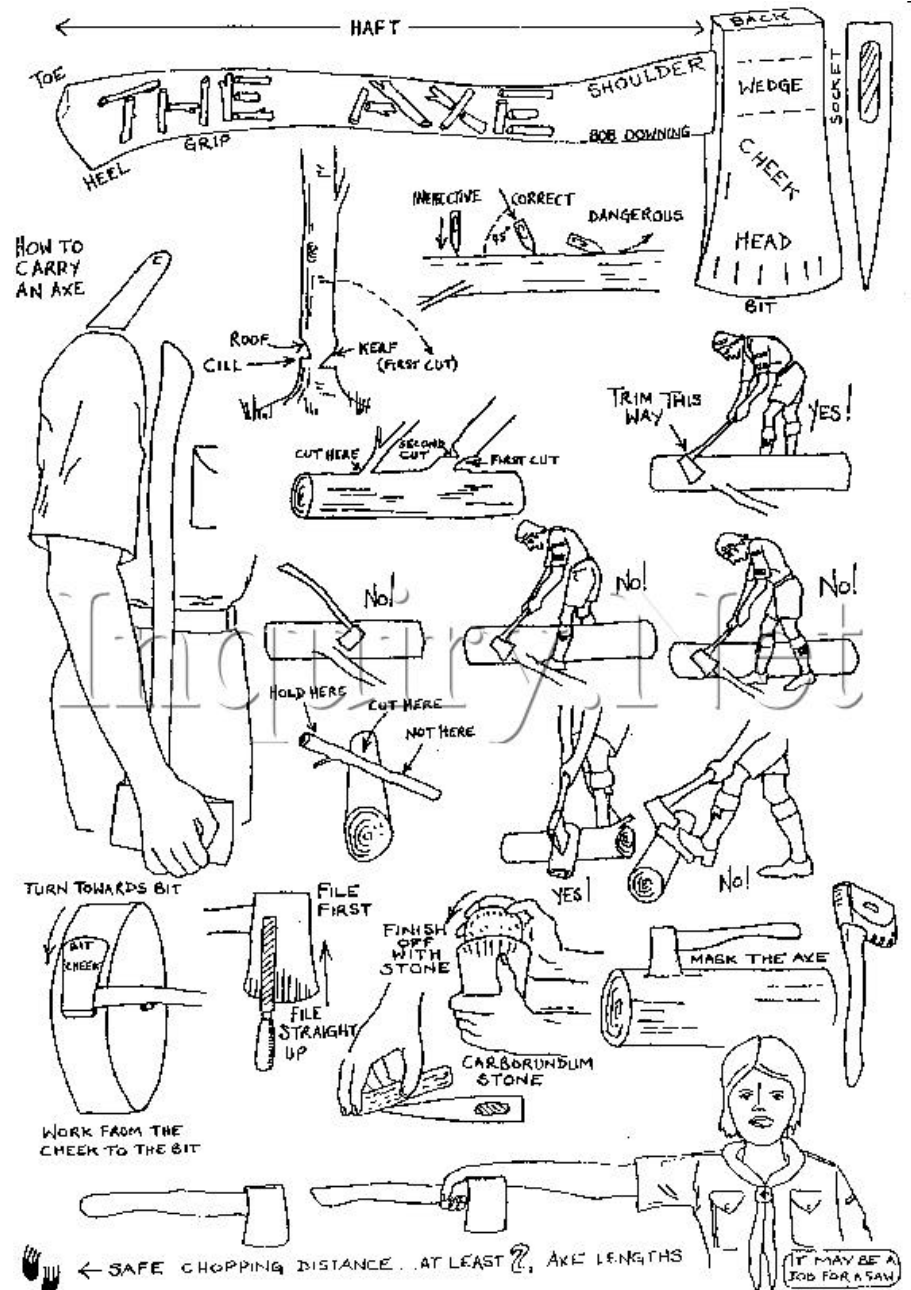
- (1) High quality stainless steel knives can be cleaned periodically by opening out the blades and placing in a dishwasher.
- (2) An alternative method is to soak the knife over night in a sealed jar of methylated spirit to remove oil and grease.
- (3) After cleaning, the hinges should be oiled and the blades wiped with a light oil (e.g. WD40 or 3-in-1 oil).

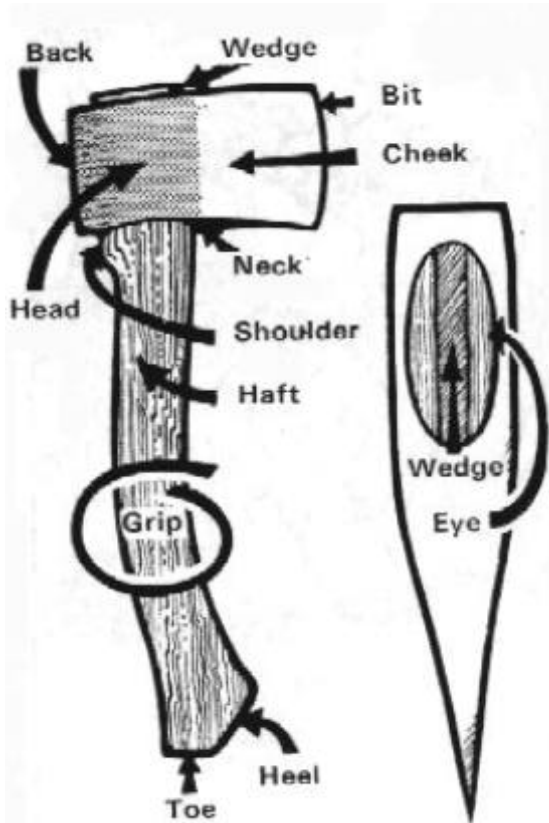
Sharpening blades:

- (1) Removing large notches: Clamp the blade in a vice with the blade uppermost, and file along the original bevel using a bastard file. Use long, broad downward strokes. Examine the edge and follow the original bevel. Next, flip the blade around in the vice and file the other side. You must maintain the edge in the exact centre of the blade.
- (2) Sharpening materials: Use a special sharpening stone (with a coarse and fine side) or 'wet and dry' abrasive paper with some fine oil or water as lubricant. In the wilderness, sandstone, quartz and granite will sharpen tools. Rub two pieces together to make them smooth. A double faced stone with a rough and a smooth surface is ideal. Use the rough surface first to remove burrs, then the smooth one to get a fine edge.
- (3) Sharpening method - 'wet and dry' paper: Use 150 then 300 grade abrasive. Lay the paper on a flat surface and wet it with a little water or fine oil. Hold the handle of the blade in your best hand and angle it against the paper along the original bevel. Use a circular clockwise motion and apply steady pressure on the blade as you push away. Keep the angle constant and the paper wet. Do not drag the blade towards you under pressure; this produces burrs. Reduce the pressure for a finer edge. Work counter clockwise on the other side.

Sharpening stone:

Wet the stone with oil. Hold the handle of the blade in your best hand and the stone in your other hand. Use a circular clockwise motion and apply steady pressure on the blade with the fingertips of the stone-holding hand as you push away. Keep the angle constant and the stone wet. Do not drag the blade towards you under pressure; this produces burrs. Reduce the pressure for a finer edge. Work counter clockwise on the other side.





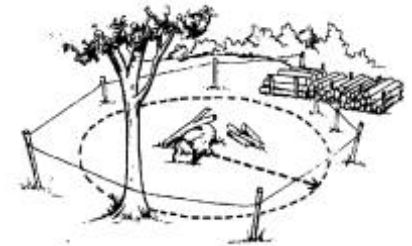
PART 5: Axes

Types of axe:

- (1) **Hand axe:** used with one hand and designed for splitting wood into small pieces of fire wood or cutting small twigs. Any piece of wood a greater diameter than your wrist is better cut with a Bush (Bow) Saw.
- (2) **Trimming axe:** a larger axe for removing branches. Used with both hands.
- (3) **Felling axe:** a very large axe for felling trees. Only to be used by adults.

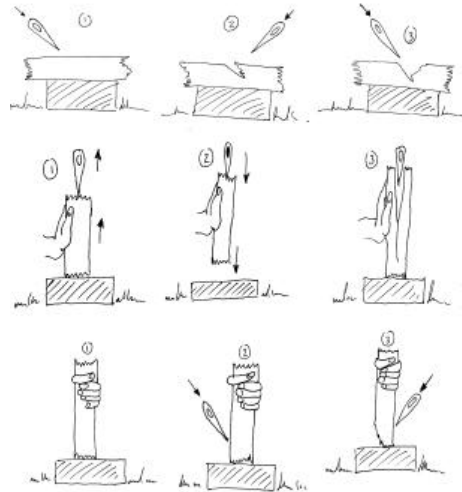
Safety Rules for Axes :

- (1) The Scout who has the axe is responsible for it.
- (2) Always mark out an axe cutting area and use a central chopping block when appropriate.
- (3) The area should be clear around you and overhead. Be sure there is nothing the axe will catch on as you swing it (e.g. overhanging branches). Everything must be more than two axe lengths away. This means two times the combined length of your arm and your axe.
- (4) Only one person is allowed in the chopping area at one time. The person using the axe should remove loose clothing (e.g. scarf) and wear stout boots or shoes.
- (5) Before use, always check the axe is in good order. The bit should be sharp (dull edges cause the axe to bounce), the head should be tight (soak in water or linseed oil to tighten), the handle should be intact (replace if damaged).
- (6) Never throw an axe.
- (7) Never allow the axe to lie on the ground. Never chop on or into the ground. When using it, cut in such a way that the blows will never end up in the sand or dirt, or your feet.
- (8) Keep all axes, knives and saws dry. Never leave them out overnight. Keep them in a store tent or in the patrol box.
- (9) Never cut live trees without good reason. Always try to use dead wood for firewood.
- (10) An axe is not a hammer, a mallet, or a wedge; do not use it as such unless it is designed for this purpose (e.g. a Kelly axe).
- (11) An onlooker should stay at least two axe lengths away, for not only is the axe itself dangerous but flying chips can strike one in the eye.
- (12) It is dangerous to work with an axe when one is tired, for it is easy to lose control. Always rest when tired.
- (13) Mask the axe when not in use i.e. keep it in its sheath. If the axe is to be used again soon, strike it into the chopping block (or log) so that the blade is covered. Make sure that the blade follows the grain of the wood, is secure in the wood, and that the haft is not overhanging and can not trip anyone.
- (14) When carrying an axe it is best to keep it sheathed. Carry the axe cradled upside down in your hand with your arm by your side. Make sure the axe is facing forward with your fingers out of the way so that if you fall the axe would go into the ground.
- (15) When handing a hand axe to someone else, always hand it handle first and head down. Large heavy axes need to be passed to someone by standing side by side, facing the same direction. Pass the head first.

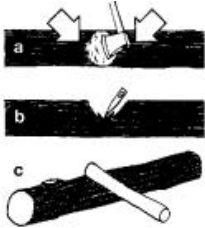


Rules For Chopping:

- (1) Hand axes are designed for splitting wood into small pieces of fire wood or cutting small twigs. Any piece of diameter greater than your wrist is better cut with a Bush (Bow) Saw.
- (2) When you cut a limb or a stick in two using a hand axe, hold the stick with one hand so that it rests directly horizontal on a chopping log, then cut down on an angle of 45° through the stick and into the chopping log.



Chop directly over a chopping block. Do not chop unsupported wood. If the chopping block is a log, secure each corner with a peg. Place sacking or a sheet under chopping block to collect chippings for kindling.



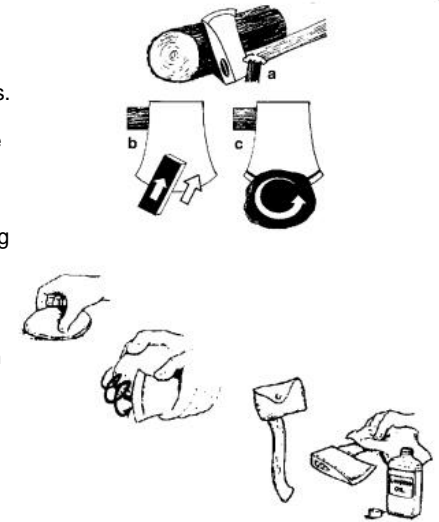
- (3) Always chop downwards and away from your body. Aim where the stick you are chopping is directly supported by the chopping block.
- (4) Keep your eyes on the place you are chopping. STOP if you become tired or the axe head becomes loose.
- (5) To split a small log with a hand axe, place the edge of the hand axe in a crack, then lift the hand axe and the stick together, bringing them both down together on the chopping block. (You may be lucky and this idea work. Don't get too upset if it doesn't.)
- (6) To cut a green sapling, bend the sapling over with one hand, creating a strain on the grain. Then cut with a slanting blow close to the ground and toward the ground.
- (7) When using a felling axe grasp the handle with both hands together near the butt end. Touch the axe head to the log to get the proper distance, then following all the safety rules, raise the axe sliding the right hand up about three quarters of the way toward the axe head, and bring the axe up over your right shoulder. Always keep your eye on the log at the spot where you want the axe to hit. As you bring the axe down, slide your right hand along the handle until it touches your left hand. The axe head should enter the log at an angle of about 45 to 50 degrees. The object is to cut a V-shaped notch in the log. The top of the V should be as wide as the log is thick. (Ever seen confetti being made?)
- (8) Never fell a tree unless there is good reason and you have permission to do so. Felling a tree can be very dangerous. Do not let anyone fell a tree unless you know that he is an experienced axeman. When felling a tree, decide where you want it to fall. It is best to fell it in the direction in which it is leaning. Clear the ground by removing all underbrush and overhanging branches so that the axe will not get caught in them while you are swinging. Make two cuts, the first one on the side on which you want it to fall, close to the ground, and the second cut on the opposite side, two inches higher. In making a box cut, the lower cut goes straight in and the upper cut comes down to a 45 degree



angle, forming an irregular V. Be sure that when the tree is ready to fall, everyone is out of the area in which it will fall. Using the old woodman's signal, shout "Timber!" and step back for often a falling tree kicks backward. If in any doubt about which way the tree is going, drop your axe and go for your life in the opposite direction.

Sharpening an axe:

- (1) Always support the axe head when sharpening. Either:
 - (a) Prop axe head between a log and a peg.
 - (b) Prop axe head between 2 pegs.
 - (c) Grip shaft in vice or workmate.
- (2) Always sharpen inwards from cutting edge to avoid producing burrs
- (3) Use a cross cut bastard (coarse) file to remove notches. A file is a one way tool – it works when pushed, not pulled. Use long smooth strokes in line with original bevel. Shape both sides.
- (4) Use a single cut bastard file to smooth. Shape both sides.
- (5) Change to a rough stone and use wet with oil. Use a circular motion. Do not drag stone off cutting edge. Push on to blade. Sharpen both sides, circling in opposite directions for each side.
- (6) Finish with a smooth stone used wet with oil.



Fitting a new axe head:

- (1) Whittle the head end of the handle to fit the hole in the axe head.
- (2) Cut a notch in this end.
- (3) Make a wooden wedge to fit the notch.
- (4) With the head in place drive the wedge into the notch.
- (5) Next hammer a small metal wedge at right angles to the wooden wedge.
- (6) Soak the axe head in linseed oil (or water in an emergency) overnight to tighten the head on the shaft.

Care of an axe:

- (1) Keep axe head oiled or greased to prevent rust.
- (2) Oil wooden handles regularly with linseed oil to keep the head tight and the wood supple.



Removing a broken handle:

- (1) Bury bit in the earth.
- (2) Build fire over head.
- (3) Light fire. Burying the bit prevents metal losing its temper.

