

AMERICAN KNIFECRAFT

GRIPS • STROKES • HOLDING POSITIONS • CUTS

Watts and Wescott, ©2016

I have come to recognize that there is an enormous lack of understanding and skill in using hand tools – knives and axes in particular... The use of the knife, ax and other hand tools, an important part of our cultural heritage, is about to be lost in only two generations. **Wille Sundqvist, 1999**

BASIC TERMINOLOGY

- **Grip** is how you hold the knife and the orientation of the blade.
- **Stroke** is how the blade is moved/controlled in relation to the project.
- **Holding Position** is how the project is stabilized in relation to the stroke.
- **Cuts** are what you want to accomplish with the application of the other terms.

(Most literature and practice referred to in Bushcraft instruction today comes from Swedish traditions - in particular the Sundqvists. The terminology list above clarifies some of what is regularly taught. For example, The Chest-Lever Grip is actually a combination of all 4. The knife is used with a reverse/backhand power grip and the wood is held in the fist like a handle. Using a lever or scissor stroke, the movement creates a slicing cut.)

- **GRIPS**
- **STROKES**
- **HOLDING POSITIONS**
- **CUTS**

- **Knife Selection - Fixed-Blade vs Slip-Joint**
- **Knife Safety**
- **Knife Care & Maintenance**
- **Whittling Skills**