

## Woodsman Requirements

*For Mountain Lions Outdoor Skills Core Step 05 Edge Tools in order to earn the Woodsman Card*

Folding knives make the best “first” knife for a Trailmen because they are smaller and lighter and can be safely carried in a pocket. Pocket knives are best used to teach children basic knife safety. Before any Trailmen use a pocketknife, it is important to teach safety and proper use. The following is a guide to some common-sense, yet instructive, folding knife safety rules for children.

When using a knife, always keep in mind – “A knife is NOT a toy.”

Allow the Trailmen to repeat this phrase back to you several times before picking up a knife, and remind them of it frequently during this training and outings. Make sure it is known to only use a knife when it is needed. We should never use a knife to show off or use it while we are angry. Remembering a knife as a tool will help when making decisions on its use.

### 1. Where can I carry a knife?

- Set clear rules on when and where it’s appropriate to carry the blade.
- A knife should only be brought out and used with the Trail Guide or parent’s permission and under close supervision in places such as a Trail Life USA meeting, campout, or other outdoor event.
- An inappropriate place would be to carry a knife to school or the store.

### 2. How do I use a knife?

- Establish a SAFETY CIRCLE:
  - Before opening and using a folding knife, a Trailman should learn to become aware of their surroundings in order to prevent injuring others.
  - Instruct the Trailman to hold the closed knife at arm’s length and slowly spin around in a circle.
  - If the Trailman is able to turn without bumping into anyone, he has a safe zone where the knife can be used without hurting anyone.
  - Never walk or run with an open knife.
  - Stay still when using a knife in the safety circle.
- Passing the Knife:
  - A Trailman should also be taught how to safely pass a knife to someone else.
  - A knife that folds should always be closed before passing.
  - To pass off an open knife, hold it by the blade, cutting edge facing away from the hand, and present the handle to the other person.
  - The Trailmen receiving the knife should acknowledge with a, “Thank you, I have it,” to let the passer know he or she has control of the knife.
- Show how to safely open and close the knife.

- First, grip the handle with your thumb and finger tips of your non-dominant hand so that no fingers are in the way of the blade opening.
- Place the thumbnail of your dominant hand into the groove on the back of the blade.
- Pull the blade out as far as possible, ensuring it won't snap back.
- Use your dominant hand to pull back on the thick point of the blade to lock it into place.
- Reverse the process to close the knife, gripping the knife with your thumb and finger tips so that no fingers are in the way of the blade closing.
- Show how to properly cut with a folding knife. When we learn this skill, a good way to practice is to carve a bar of soap.
  - Double-check that the blade is locked in the open position.
  - Grip the handle with your thumb and finger tips so that no fingers are in the way of the blade closing.
  - Cut away from your body.
  - Don't use too much force.

### 3. How do I care for my knife?

- Keep the knife sharp; explain why a dull knife is dangerous.
  - A dull knife doesn't serve the purpose for which it was intended. You want a knife that will cut through something; a dull knife doesn't do that. It doesn't slice through the cutting material cleanly and easily. With a dull knife, you must use more force to get something cut.
  - If we are using extra force to cut, we are not letting the tool do the work. As a result, the knife can slip or twist uncontrollably. The next thing you know, you've cut yourself. Cuts made with a dull knife are usually worse. This kind of cut makes it more difficult for the body to heal.
  - Taken from <http://preppingtosurvive.com/2012/10/22/dull-knives-are-dangerous/>
  - Demonstrate how to sharpen a knife with a sharpening stone. This link shows the most basic means of sharpening a blade.
  - <http://www.artofmanliness.com/2009/03/05/how-to-sharpen-a-pocket-knife/>
- Keep the blade oiled for smooth opening. Demonstrate where to put the oil and how much is applied.
- Clean and dry your knife after each use. After cleaning, place the blade in the closed position.
- In the beginning, the Trailman's knife, while not in use, should be given to the Trail Guides or parents. After learning is complete, the Trailman should take responsibility to fold the knife and put it away in a safe place.



Mountain Lion's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## WOODSMAN

\_\_\_\_\_ The Mountain Lion can explain why a knife is a tool, not a toy.

### PART 1: Where can I carry a knife?

\_\_\_\_\_ He can adequately explain where and when it is appropriate to carry a knife.

### PART 2: How do I use a knife?

\_\_\_\_\_ He can establish and demonstrate the Safety Circle.

\_\_\_\_\_ He demonstrates the proper passing and receiving of an open knife.

\_\_\_\_\_ He has mastered safely opening and closing a folding knife.

\_\_\_\_\_ He has demonstrated proficiency cutting with his knife in a safe manner.

### PART 3: How do I care for my knife?

\_\_\_\_\_ He can explain why a dull knife is a dangerous knife.

\_\_\_\_\_ He has demonstrated how to sharpen a knife with a sharpening stone.

\_\_\_\_\_ He has demonstrated oiling his blade.

\_\_\_\_\_ He has demonstrated cleaning and drying his knife after use.

\_\_\_\_\_ He can relay the importance of safely storing his knife.