

# BASIC GUIDE TO

## WHITTILING

This page contains a few hints for the beginning whittler. The instructions assume the whittler is right handed. If you are left handed, reverse the directions or processes.

1. Learn how to sharpen a small knife blade. Keep the blade clean and sharp.
2. Never lay your knife down. Close it and put it in your pocket and you will always know where it is.
3. Do not try to whittle hardwood or wood containing resin or sap.
4. Use your thumb to keep your hand steady; keep the thumb clear of the blade.



*The pull stroke:*

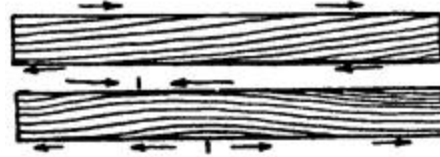
*Hold your knife firmly at all times.*

*Make or use a thumb guard to protect your thumb.*

5. Hold your wood in your left thumb and index finger. Hold your knife in your right hand, right index finger almost touching the base of the blade and the optional thumb guard on your right thumb. Carve to your thumb. This is called a pull stroke.
6. Carve with the grain of the wood. Carve slowly, taking small, short cuts. Think before taking each cut.

- Cut with the grain of the wood to prevent the knife from digging into the wood at the wrong place. If the wood does not show the grain, the knife will find it.

*The arrows show the direction in which to cut.*



- Another carving method is to place the wood in the left palm, knife in the right hand, put both thumbs on the back of the blade and push away with the left thumb. Guide the knife with the right thumb and hand. This is called a push stroke.



*The push stroke*

- Practice both the push and pull strokes. Use scrap wood or twigs before you carve your project.
- To carve grooves, use the blade tip following the directions in step 5 for the right angle cuts and step 8 for left angle cuts.

*The "V" cut*

