

How to choose a knife

Before purchasing a set of expensive knives, review your needs.

Several factors should be considered when purchasing knives.

Reputable manufactures - Most companies do not manufacture their own knives, but get involved in Branding, A process of using your company name on a knife manufactured by another company. Knife manufacturing is a complex process that involves several factors; the quality of the steel used, the steel itself, & the heating and tempering processes. When used in conjunction these factors produce quality cutlery.

Feel & Comfort of materials - The best knives are those that are the most comfortable. The feel of a knife will determine how you will use it and if you become fatigued while using it.

Quality of materials: One Piece Forged knives are considered to be the standard upon which all knives are compared.

There are two basic types of knives Forged and Stamped.

1. Forged knives are formed by a process called Forging, where a metal is heated until soft and hammered to shape.
 - a. Forged knives have several benefits over Stamped knives.
 - i. Stronger.
 - ii. Better edge holding ability.
 - iii. Durability.
 - iv. Uniformity of the steel.
 - v. Made from a single piece of solid steel.
2. Stamped knives are formed by a process called Stamping, where the knife blank is cut out of a sheet of steel.
 - a. Both forged and stamped knives are manufactured using 7 common steps.
 - i. Hardening - Heating a metal to a specific temperature and rapidly cooling.
 - ii. Tempering - Heating a metal slowly and moderately to a specific temperature, holding and cooling it.
 - iii. This heating and cooling changes the structural form of the steel to achieve specific characteristics.
 - iv. Ground to shape.
 - v. Polished.
 - vi. Sharpened.
 - vii. Etched.

- i. Forged knives will cost, per knife, approximately 2 1/2 - 3 times as much as stamped knives.
 - ii. Mixing and matching your knives enables you to get the most for your money.
- f. Conclusion - Whether you choose forged or stamped knives, how well they are maintained will determine how long they will last. should be cleaned after each use and never put away dirty, do not use a dishwasher as heat, detergent and other objects may damage your knives. Store your knives in sheaths, a knife case or block to protect your blades from damage and injury. Your knives should be maintained daily by using a steel to maintain sharpness (See The Sharpening Steel Article).

There are of course other factors. I hope this helps in your decision-making.