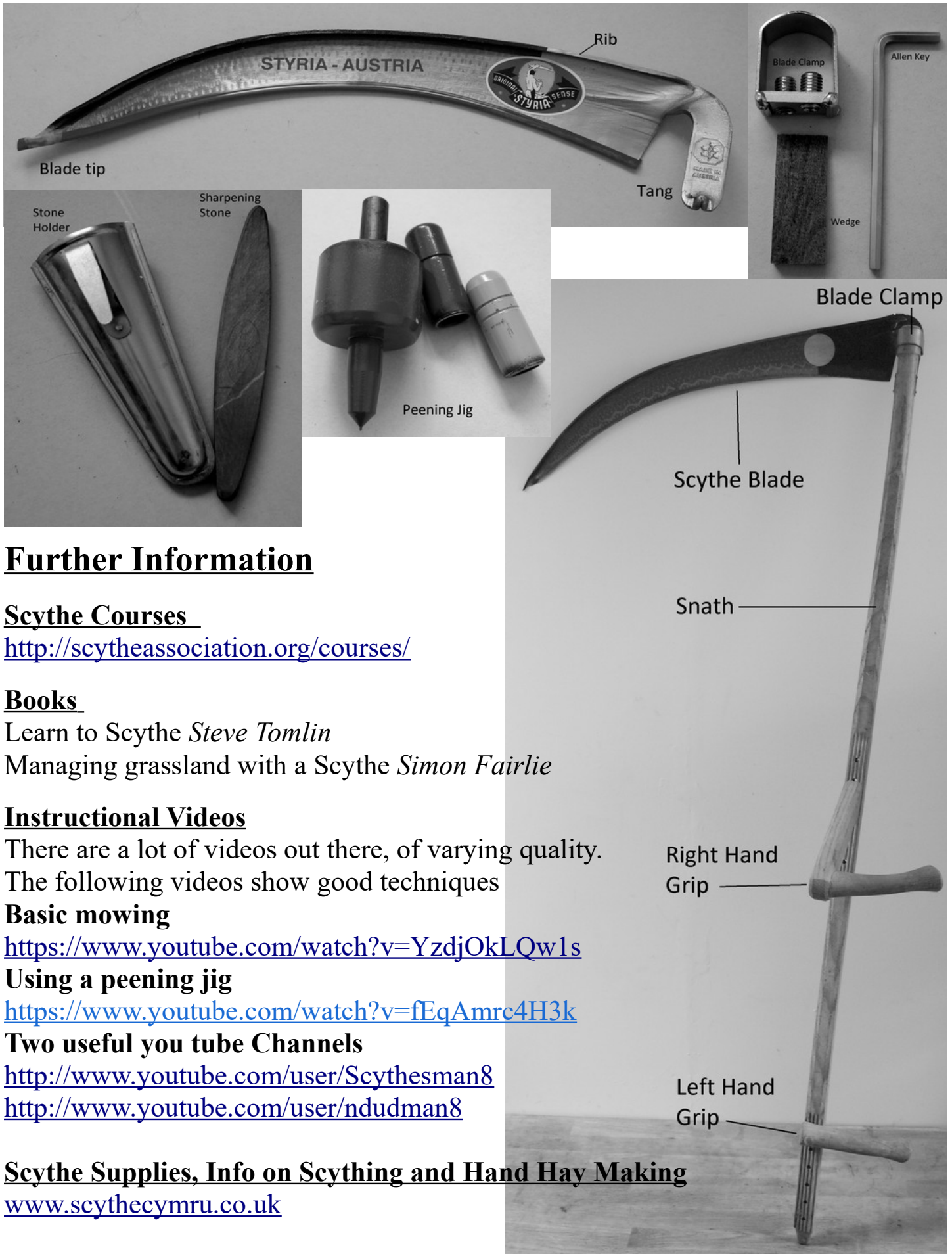


Quick Set Up Guide

This document is intended as a quick reference and aid memoir only.

**** To get the most from your scythe we strongly recommend you attend a Scythe Course and read the book "Learn to Scythe" by Steve Tomlin. ****



Further Information

Scythe Courses

<http://scytheassociation.org/courses/>

Books

Learn to Scythe *Steve Tomlin*

Managing grassland with a Scythe *Simon Fairlie*

Instructional Videos

There are a lot of videos out there, of varying quality. The following videos show good techniques

Basic mowing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yz dj Ok L Q w 1 s>

Using a peening jig

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEqAmrc4H3k>

Two useful you tube Channels

<http://www.youtube.com/user/Scythesman8>

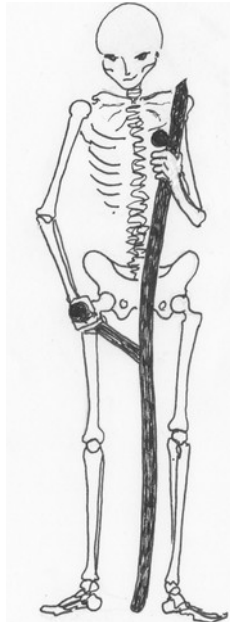
<http://www.youtube.com/user/ndudman8>

Scythe Supplies, Info on Scything and Hand Hay Making

www.scythecymru.co.uk

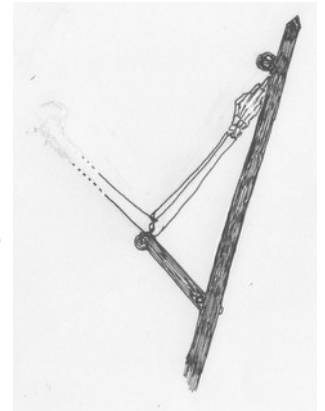
1. Position and attach the hand grips

The following will give you a good first approximation for positioning grips



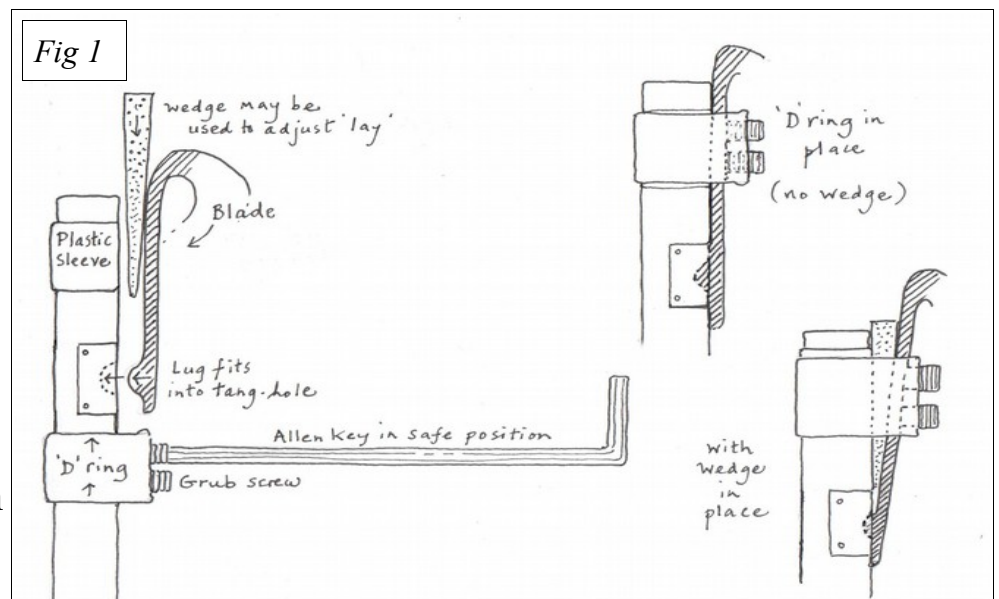
Lower / Right hand grip. Place the bottom end of the snath on the ground next to you. Hold the lower grip in position on the snath. The handle of the grip should be level with the greater trochanter (the point where the leg rotates at the hip when lifting the knee).

Upper / Left hand grip. Place your elbow on the now fixed lower grip and reach up towards the top of the snath. Position the upper grip at the hole nearest your finger tips.



2. Attach the blade

- Loosen the grub screws on the blade clamp and slide onto the end of the snath, pushing it past the plastic guard.
- Position the blade with the lug on the end of the tang in the guide hole on the snath.
- Place a wedge between the blade and snath if required.
- Slide the blade clamp up over the tang and tighten the grub screws.



Adjust the lay of the blade

Hold the scythe in a relaxed position. When the back of the blade is on the ground the cutting edge should be about ¼ inch above the ground. A wedge between the blade and the clamp can be used to adjust the lay of the blade if the cutting edge is too low.

Safety Point – to avoid risk of injury to fingers from blade edge

Use allen key in **safe position** as much as possible (see figure 1)

Use allen key in **long handle position** (see figure 3) for initial loosening or final tightening only. For safety, keep handle on opposite side of snath to blade.

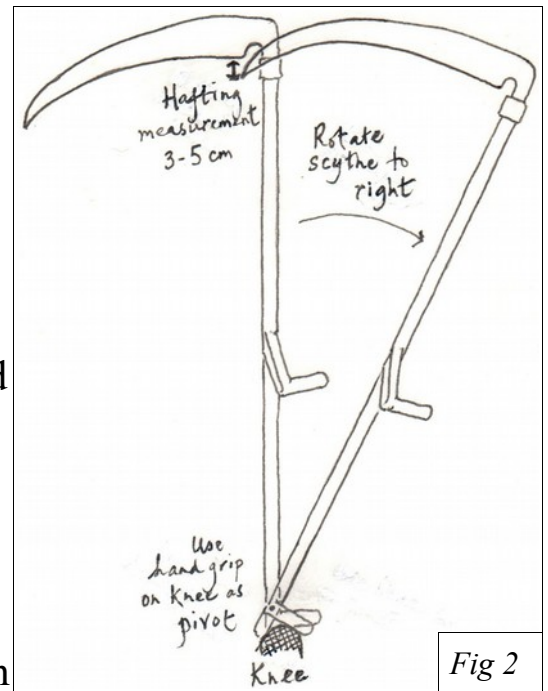
3. Check and adjust the hafting angle

Check the hafting angle. Place the lower grip on the knee with the scythe pointing straight in front of you. Mark the position of the heel of the blade.

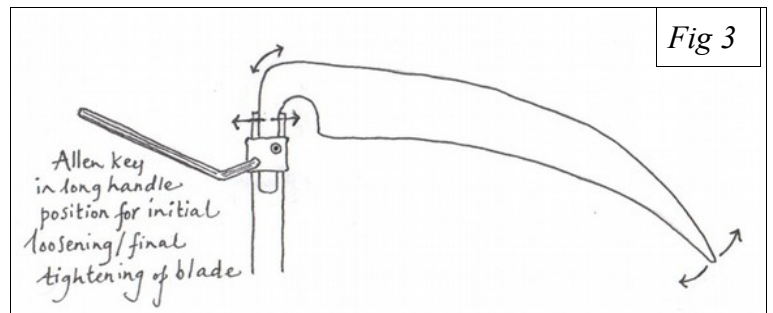


Rotate the scythe anticlockwise, using your knee as a pivot point, until the tip of the blade is where the heel was. As a basic rule, the tip of the blade should fall 3-5cm inside of the heel, depending on blade being used.

****Check the hafting angle every time the scythe is used**** A wide hafting angle, especially in combination with a blunt blade, puts excess stress on the snath and can lead to breakages



Adjusting the hafting angle – loosen the grub screws slightly so the tang of the blade will move in the clamp. Rotate blade tip towards the snath to close the hafting angle, away to widen it. Tighten the grub screws and recheck the hafting angle.



****Ensure the grub screws are fully tight every time you mow****
to prevent the blade being knocked into a wider hafting angle during use

4. Basic mowing action

When holding the scythe the hands should be about level. The blade is moved in a semi-circle in front of you from right to left, with the snath staying close into the body. *The blade remains on the ground AT ALL TIMES*

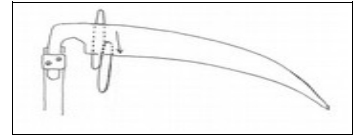


See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzdkOkLQw1s> for more instruction.

5. Sharpening with a stone

The blade should be honed frequently to maintain sharpness. This is a easy, safe technique to begin with.

Hone one side of the blade at a time using short overlapping strokes. Note, narrow edge of the stone is used and it is used wet.

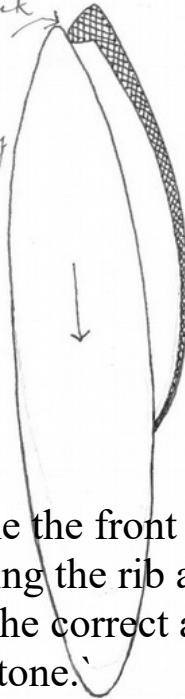


Using a bunch of mown grass, wipe down blade to remove debris before sharpening. Be aware of the blade edge.

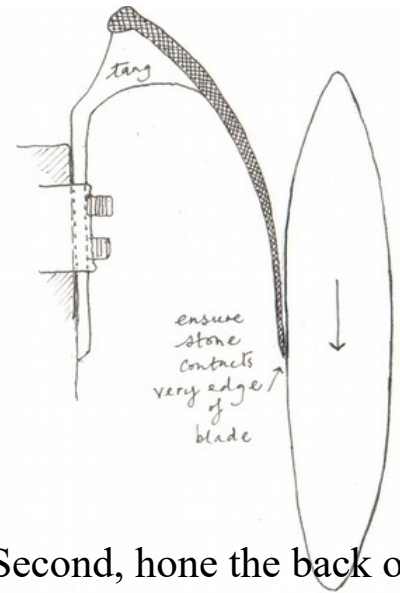


Kneel next to the scythe and place tip of the blade on the ground to hold it steady.

Use back rib of blade as guide to angle of stone



First, hone the front of the blade, using the rib as a guide to the correct angle of the stone.

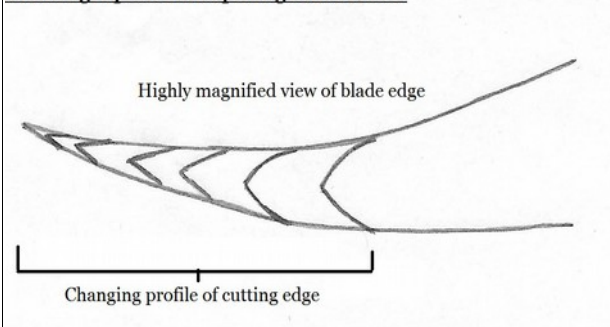


Second, hone the back of the blade, ensuring the stone contacts the very edge.

6. Cleaning Clean and dry the blade after every use.

7. Peening

Diagram showing the change in the profile of the cutting edge following repeated sharpening with a stone.



Peening is used to reshape the edge of the blade so that it can hold a sharp cutting edge and is a **necessary part of the maintenance of your blade.**

It's time to peen when: The mower has to sharpen more frequently, the blade is not holding it's edge so well and mowing is becoming harder work.

Further instruction is beyond the scope of this leaflet. A scythe course is an excellent way to learn more about peening. See also the book "Learn to Scythe" , <http://scythecymru.co.uk/scythes-for-sale/peening/> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEqAmrc4H3k>

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