

How to sharpen a saw

Step 1 - Secure saw blade

Clamp your saw blade in a vice with the teeth pointing upwards. Don't forget to use a file block!



Make sure the teeth are as low down as they can be without being blocked by the edge of the vice. This will help to reduce unwanted vibrations in the saw blade as you're filing.

Step 2 - Level off teeth

Run your mill file all the way across the top of the teeth of your saw, applying light pressure.



This will create a series of flat spots which will shine when the light hits them. By the time you're done sharpening, all of these spots should be the same size.

Step 3 - Sharpening

You'll need to switch over to your taper saw file.

With your dominant hand, hold the handle with your thumb angled towards the point of the file. Grip the point of the file with the thumb and forefinger of your non-dominant hand.

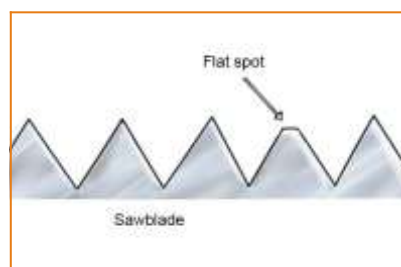
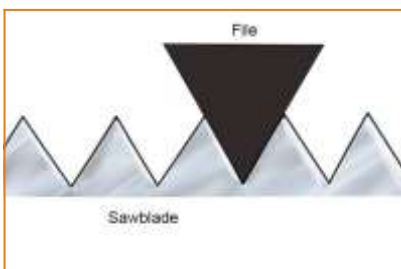
Use just two strokes of the file in the gap between each of the teeth. Using the same number of strokes each time will give you consistent, neat teeth.

When filing, be sure to keep the file level. If someone was watching you with the saw end on, they should be able to see a perfect T shape.

You also need to make sure the file is level with the saw blade.

Step 4 - Evening out

If any of your teeth still have a wide flat spot on the top, file the back of them (the side pointing towards the handle) until they come to a point.





The process for sharpening crosscut saws is very similar to the one used to sharpen rip saws.

Steps 1 & 2 - As above

Secure your saw in the vice and level off the teeth as described in the above guide to sharpening rip saws

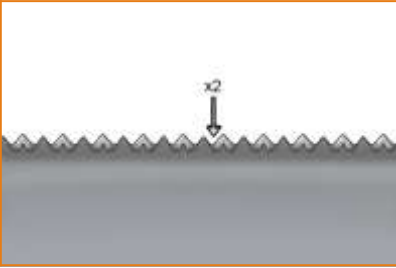
Step 3 - Mark the cutting edge

To begin the sharpening process, run a marker along the top of your saw teeth.

You'll need to sharpen alternate teeth, so this will help you to keep a track of your progress and prevent mistakes if you lose concentration. Teeth that have already been filed will have the mark from the pen worn away.

Step 4 - Sharpening

This works in the same way as sharpening rip cut saws. However, instead of holding the file square to the saw blade, the point will need to be tilted 15° away from the handle during your first pass.



Each alternate gap between teeth should be filed twice.



Once this is done, the same process should be applied to the remaining gaps, but with the point of the file tilted 15° towards the handle.



Sharpening in this way makes the saw's teeth point alternately in opposite directions. Looking at the saw end-on should show that there are two rows of points running side by side.

Having the teeth set up like this means the saw has a 'flean', which cuts a wider channel (kerf) and therefore prevents the saw from jamming when cutting across the grain.

Step 5 - Gullets

Larger crosscut saws can have deep, arch shaped gullets that allow material to be pushed out of the kerf when sawing logs.

The rounded side of the crosscut file can be used to deepen these if they are starting to look shallow after multiple

