

Tool Information

Congratulations! You are the owner of some of the finest handcrafted woodcut tools made. To help make sure you avoid some fairly uncommon but disappointing problems such as chipped edges and broken blades, we want to pass along a few tips for care of your new tools.

First of all, avoid dropping tools. Something as simple as dropping a tool onto the table top while reaching for another tool can cause the blade to break if it strikes another knife, the floor or the edge of something hard.

Second, always store your tools and transport them so they do not bang against each other.

Third, keep your tools sharp. Cutting with a dull tool is difficult so one is tempted to force, twist or rock the tool. This action puts stress on the blade in a manner it was not designed to endure. We highly recommend an old-fashioned razor strop or leather honing block as the simplest means of keeping your tools sharp. Use it frequently and you may never have to use a whetstone! We can also send tools back to Japan for professional sharpening. Please check the catalog or call for details.

Fourth, be sure you understand how to hold and carve with these tools before using them.

Cutting at too steep an angle can put too much stress on the smaller blades and cause them to break. While the steel is strong, there is not much of it in the smaller tools. When you cut, the angle of the tool should never be greater than the angle of the bevel on the cutting edge of the tool, about 30°.

Do not cut deeply with a single stroke when using 1.0 mm to 4.5 mm tools. If the cut needs to be deep, work your way down with several strokes, removing the wood gradually. If the blade does jam, wiggling or levering up on the tool can break or chip the blade. Instead pull the blade back out of the cut and continue cutting at a shallower angle. **Never try to wiggle or force the blade through the wood.**

Fifth, **never lend** your tools. We have found that this commonly leads to disaster with broken or chipped blades.

And finally, we recommend cutting down the handles on the *Namisei* (standard) and *Josei* (superior) tools so that the tools fit into the palm of your hand. Measure from the web between the first finger and thumb to the top of the middle finger, and cut the tool to this length. If in doubt, cut long; you can always cut the handle shorter.



These woodcut tools are not intended for use on hard surfaces, including plastic, masonite, end-grain wood, Resingrave®, plaster or metal. Only tools with a metal ferrule on the end of the handle are meant to be used with a mallet.

All the tools are inspected and tested by the manufacturer. We personally test each tool and add a protective plastic tube over the blade. Please inspect the tools again BEFORE USING for possible damage during shipment.

We hope these tips will help you keep your tools like new so they give you many years of enjoyable use.



McCLAIN'S
PRINTMAKING SUPPLIES

15685 SW 116th Avenue PMB 202
King City, OR 97224-2695 USA

www.imclains.com

503-641-3555 (phone)

503-641-3555 (fax)

800-832-4264 (orders)