



Tried & tested *we try before you buy*



Tool sharpeners

Consumer editor **Julia Heaton** hones in on the garden tool sharpener that produces results a cut above the rest

KEEPING GARDENING tools clean and sharp not only prolongs their lifespan, but is essential if they are used to make cuts in living plants. In much the same way as cuts to our skin react, clean neat wounds heal quickly and are less likely to succumb to infection or disease.

We tested these sharpeners on a whole host of tools, including secateurs, shears, loppers, hoes, knives and scissors. It took time to perfect using each sharpener, as

they work in slightly different ways and each blade being sharpened had its own bevelled angled edge. Burrs found on the opposite sides needed flattening too.

Some of the sharpeners were more suited to carrying around the garden - useful if you're doing lots of pruning that blunts secateurs or loppers quickly. Others are better for tackling lots of tools in one sharpening session, particularly if the tools need to be taken apart - a good job in winter when you might be twiddling your thumbs.

ACCUSHARP GARDEN SHARP TOOL SHARPENER **£7.19** P&P **£5.40**

Buy Brand Tools ☎ 0114 251 3535
buybrandtools.com



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Features ★★★★★

Large plastic handle 5½in long x 2in high (14cm x 5cm), with two small tungsten carbide sharpeners in the tip. Plastic finger guard for protection.

Performance ★★★★★

Incredibly easy to use with a natural drawing action. One edge is straight and the other angled, but could be taken apart and reversed. On certain tools though the height of the handle stopped the entire blade being reached.

Value ★★★★★

Superb tool, which was close to best buy, just a little limited.

DRAPER MULTI-SHARPENER

£4.91 P&P **£3.95**

☎ 0845 6008 999 caneadam.co.uk



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Features ★★★★★

Measuring 5in (12 cm) long, the tungsten carbide blade is over ¾in (2.2cm) long. Has a screw cap to allow oil to be stored inside and then sponged onto the blade if required.

Performance ★★★★★

Sharpened excellently and a good design. It was well weighted and a great shape that was nice to hold. Another great tool for carrying in your pocket whilst pruning.

Value ★★★★★

Good long blade, built to last, making it a great price too.

SWISS ISTAR SHARPENER

£15.99 P&P **£2.99**

☎ 015394 88100 lakeland.co.uk



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Features ★★★★★

Extremely lightweight aluminium body, with a tungsten carbide sharpening edge. Overall length is 4in (10cm), with the blade ¾in (1.9cm).

Performance ★★★★★

A great all rounder, it worked equally well on all the tools. Really came into its own when sharpening knives though. Required very little pressure.

Value ★★★★★

A steep price on first inspection, but turned out to be a fine tool and pretty much unbreakable, offering good long term value.