

# WORKING WITH TOOLS – KNIVES & SAWS

*Lesní klub Jurta*

## QUALITIES DEMONSTRATED

### Respectful

Support in mastering the work with knife and saw. Sensitive guiding of the children.

### Skills and knowledge

The children learn how to work with a knife and a saw. They learn how to recognize the wood suitable to work with.

### Open, not dominant

Adults offer advice, but instead of instructing they respect the children choice and are available to them for support. The children enjoy their space.



## EXPLANATION OF BEST PRACTICE

There are always at least two teachers with the group of children aged from 3 to 6 years during this activity.

In the first part we can see the teacher working with a small group of children. They are producing a "tripod" for holding the camping pot. We have created a base to be able to boil water for tea or cocoa at this place. The children here are working with a saw and they are carving the grooves into the wood for the camping pot. The teacher assists them. She is giving advice regarding holding a saw to make the work comfortable and more effective, returning to original notches.

In the second part children are carving. We dedicate a lot of time to carving in our kindergarten. At the beginning you can see that we are thinking about what we are going to produce and about the suitable kind of wood using the book. Hazel is the wood used in this case. The children are learning how to choose a suitable material depending upon

its properties such as hard or soft, heavy or light. Next you can see children working with the saw, with the clippers and with the knife. The teachers are attending all of the time and they are supporting the children to manage the tasks safely and with good technique. They are showing them how to work accurately with the tools to improve their skills. In this example someone is producing a magic wand; another child is producing a bow. The children are free to decide what they want to produce, this is not directed by the adult and they then choose the suitable branch and other resources they need.

In the last part of the footage we see the teacher helping a one-armed boy. This boy can manage the carving really well and has good strength to peel back the bark. The educator is careful to ensure a safer technique for him, showing him how to hold the branch securely under his arm to allow him to work with the knife and not to hurt himself.

📺 See footage Working with Tools – Knives and Saws at <https://youtu.be/k6FzaW37yUU>

### WHY THIS EXPERIENCE?

The children learn how to work with the real tools. They learn how to use the tools safely and treat them with respect. The children also obtain the trust and responsibility. It is very important for them.

### "I HAVE MADE MY OWN BOW!"

You can see one of our children's most favourite activities in this movie. Working with tools is part of our daily programme. Actually, we don't plan this activity every day, but there is always at least one child who comes to borrow and practice with a saw or clippers or who wants to carve. The children learn how to choose a suitable wood, to figure out the procedure and to choose suitable tools.

The presence of the teacher is necessary when working with sharp tools. The children are acknowledged and they never start to work without letting the teacher know. The teacher attends and stays available. When children ask for help, the teachers help to find the suitable way to work it out together. The educators never give direct orders, they just offer how to make the work easier and more effective.

The children go through the whole process of how to make real things. They choose the suitable piece of wood which needs to be found first in the forest. They choose the suitable tools. They need to think about the kind of product they want

and they need to think about how to make it. They often have to wait for their demanded tools, as it might be in use by someone else. They also sometimes have to negotiate with others about the availability of the tools.

It is a great demonstration of confidence to trust the children with a saw, a knife, or clippers. We trust each other. We do our best to let the children know that we trust them. On the other hand, the children observe the rules for work with the sharp tools. They know there is always someone in the team who is able to support them and to help in case of need.

**Confidence in children to build their skills in the world.**

**We of course agree on the rules first.**



## NOTE FROM THE PRACTITIONER



**Lucie Palovská**, Nature Pedagogue from Lesní klub Jurta says:

"What do we observe while working with a saw or a knife? The best way for children to learn these skills is copying. If one of the teachers starts to carve, within a few minutes there are children sitting next to them inspired and they are carving too. Carving is the kind of activity requiring a full concentration and peace. What can we see on the very active children who have a problem with concentration? They are able to concentrate, calm down and relax while carving. They can concentrate for a long time. Carving is a good way to relax and to practice the concentration."

