The Alaskan Ulu Knife is said to have originated among the Inuit (Eskimo) natives dating back to as early as 2500 B.C. Ulu knives come in various sizes depending on the use, but an Ulu with a 6-inch blade is most common for general purposes. The Alaskan style Ulu has the cut out in the center and both ends of the blade fit into the handle. Traditionally the Ulu knife would be passed down from generation to generation as it is believed that ancestor’s knowledge was contained within the Ulu.

The Ulu knife has many uses in the kitchen. The turned recess in the cutting board is designed to contain whatever you are cutting or chopping. Cutting is done by rocking the Ulu knife back and forth. The Ulu knife also works well on a flat cutting board for cutting vegetables and other foods. With the handle positioned directly over the cutting blade you’ll be amazed at how little effort it takes to cut or chop virtually anything.

1. This kit contains a genuine Alaskan-made Ulu knife, a maple cutting board with a knife groove and rounded edges, and double faced tape. We recommend finishing with mineral oil or other readily available food safe finish.

2. Screw a faceplate to the center of the MDF disc. It is probably a good idea to drill pilot holes, but be sure the screws do not extend through the surface as protruding screws will interfere with the flat surface needed to secure the disc and tape to the cutting board.

3. Mount the faceplate with disc on the lathe. True the outer edge and face of the disc using light cuts. Make sure the face of the disc is true and flat as this is necessary for a proper bond between the tape and the cutting board.

4. Center the disc and faceplate on the cutting board using a measuring tape and draw a line around the disc. Be sure to center on the back side of the cutting board.

5. Cut 5 strips of double-faced tape, and apply fairly evenly on face of the disc. Rub the strips firmly into place. Carefully remove the backing from the tape. Place the disc on the back side of the board as marked.

6. Using an adjustable clamp, apply firm clamping pressure, moving all around the perimeter of the disc. Keep pressure on for about 15 seconds, then move the clamp an inch or two and reapply. Repeat until you have gone all the way around the disc.

The Alaskan Ulu Knife Cutting Board General Information

- Lathe speed should not exceed 400 rpm at any time.
- Wear proper hearing and eye protection.
- Requires a 6-7" diameter piece of ¾" MDF or similar material for chucking.
- Use only 3" or larger diameter faceplate.
- Sanding and finishing required.
- Use a food safe finish such as mineral oil when finishing. Reapply as needed.

by Dale L. Nish
7. Mount the faceplate and cutting board on the lathe. Measure from the center point 3 1/8" and draw a circle which will be the maximum diameter of the turned recess. Position the tailstock against the work and advance the revolving center until the point penetrates the wood 1/8" or so. The pressure will help the tape to stick securely.

8. Use a gouge and begin shaping the recess. Take light cuts, gradually working from the rim (marked with pencil) to the bottom of the recess. Try to get a gentle, continuous curve approximately ¾" deep.

9. After most of the stock has been turned away, remove the tailstock and revolving center so you can get to the nub (center post) and turn it away.

10. When the nub has been removed, continue shaping the bowl using the Ulu knife to check the profile of the bowl.

11. The diameter of the knife should contact the bottom of the bowl, leaving each side of the knife about 1/8" above the outside edges of the bowl. This clearance will allow the knife to rock back and forth in the bowl when chopping.

12. If desired, turn an accent v-groove about 1/8" deep around perimeter of the bowl edge using a 3/8" spindle gouge. Be sure the tool is freshly sharpened to give a smooth, clean cut. Sand the interior of the bowl with 80, 100, 150, 220 and 320 abrasive paper.

13. Use a ¾" to 1" wide wood chisel with a flat board for leverage and gently pry the disc from the cutting board. Slow, gentle pressure will cause the tape to release the disc from the bowl.

14. Sand the board as desired. Mark the position of the rubber feet. Drill a 1/16" diameter pilot hole then fasten the rubber feet in place.

15. Apply a food safe finish such as mineral oil. Reapply as needed to keep the board looking new and to prevent oils from penetrating the wood.

Hint: Do not use vegetable oil as it will go rancid.

If you have any questions or require assistance, please give us a call at 1-800-551-8876.

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