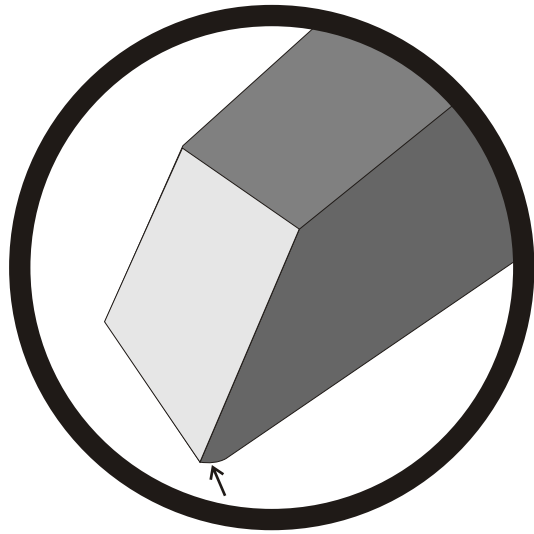
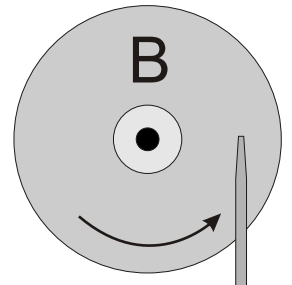
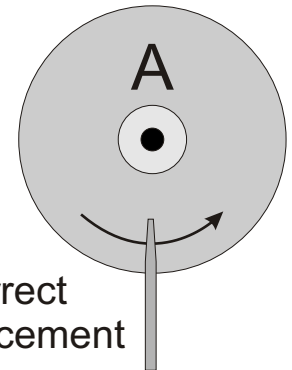
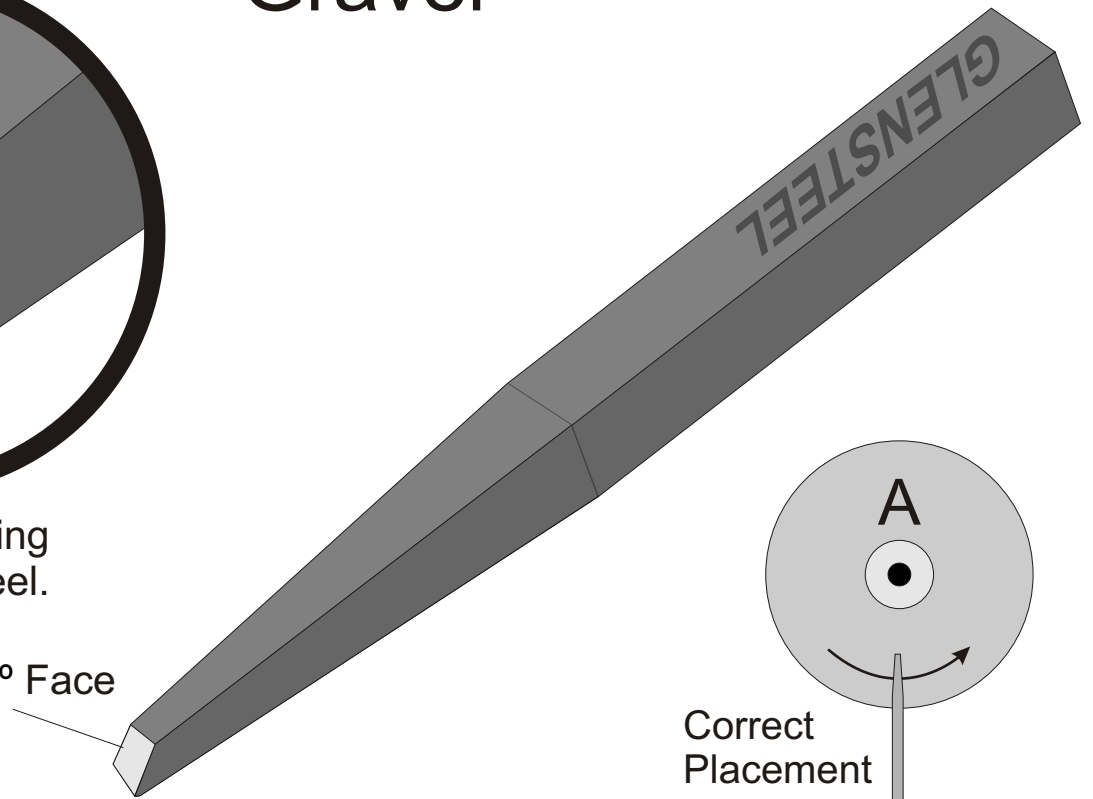


Script Lettering/Bright Cut Graver



Close-up showing the radiused heel.

40° Face



This is a very useful graver for a variety of things, from western bright cut engraving to script lettering. It is shaped from a GlenSteel or carbide blank and sharpened with a 40° face and radiused heel. The sides of the tool can be tapered for a slimmer tool that's easier to sharpen. For script lettering I prefer a graver shaped like the one in the illustration. For very wide bright cuts, you may prefer an untapered graver. If you do use a tapered one, just be sure your cuts do not exceed the width of the graver.

I have found that proper heeling of this tool is the secret to its performance. Instead of a flat heel, this graver is radiused on the bottom which is what many western style engravers use. For script lettering, I sharpen in a similar way, but keep the radius very close to the end. This short, curved heel allows me to cut very tight hairlines and bright cuts without the back of the heel dragging and tearing up the work behind it.

- 1.) Mount the graver in the Dual Angle fixture and sharpen the face to 40°.
- 2.) Rotate the graver 180° to sharpen the heel, and keep the tool post angle loose.
- 3.) Position the graver on the ceramic wheel as in illustration A, and while watching the tool post angle, rock the graver between 15° and 20°. This will sharpen the heel very close to the end of the tool. The amount of heel that performs best must be determined by testing. A heel that's too short will be difficult to control, and one that's too long can drag and damage the metal behind it.
- 4.) Spray a piece of hard leather with diamond spray and strop the graver a few times to polish the heel and face. A brightly polished heel will impart its finish onto the work and produce very bright cuts.

When sharpening the heel and face, orient the tool on the diamond lap so that it sharpens *across* the face of the tool (illustration A). This will ensure that the scratches left by the lap are left-to-right and not front-to-back (illustration B), which creates a microscopic sawtooth edge that prevents brightly polished cuts.

