

Going Wider and Deeper as a Pioneer in Cutters



The world's first snap-off blade cutter was developed 65 years ago, allowing users to reproduce the sharpness of a new edge multiple times on a single blade, by snapping it along the score lines.

As well as coming up with the idea, OLFA founder Yoshio Okada showed incredible tenacity in developing the product, allowing him to reconcile the contradiction of making a thin blade that is sturdy but also easy to snap.

The angle of the cutting edge and the width and length of the blade, determined through trial and error, later became the world standard.

Today, overseas sales exceed those in Japan, and the Osaka-born OLFA brand, which derives its name from the Japanese for "snap-off blade," has successfully established itself around the world.



The world's first snap-off blade cutter, invented in 1956.

As a result of expanding its user base in terms of both cutter knives as stationery for the general public and as tools for professional use, it now has a lineup of about 200 products.

In the product development process, prototype models were created based on sketches and simple drawings. Then, every time the usability and comfort of the product were checked, revisions were made and incorporated into the design drawings.

In this way, the founder's spirit of development has been faithfully passed down to the present day, and the number of new OLFA fans continues to grow.



The mainstay X-Design Series, winner of the Good Design Award

The Kitta, released in 2018, is a cutter for children.

Many schools have banned the use of cutters, and as a result, children have fewer opportunities to handle them compared to before.

This product was developed following an employee's recognition of the problems, and their desire to let children experience the fun of using a cutter knife and to stimulate their creative talents.

The blade is covered with resin, leaving only the tip exposed to ensure safety. An egg-shaped device to snap the blade was also developed, allowing students to learn the overall process of cutting, snapping off, and tidying away.

"It was difficult to make the blade snap off easily while keeping the plastic bonded on," says Senior Engineer Kazuhiro Okamoto. It seems to bear a resemblance the struggles that the founder went through.



Kitta, a cutter knife for children that minimizes the risk of injury by covering the blade

This cutter, developed to safely open packages, is known as “Kaikorn”

This cutter was developed in response to the needs of the North American market, which is highly conscious of safety. It is designed to prevent fingers from coming into contact with the blade, while the resin used for the handle is mixed with glass for reinforcement.

The “Kaikorn” cutter became a hit product with over 500,000 units sold annually worldwide.



Kaikorn, a cutter knife for opening packages, designed to prevent fingers from coming into contact with the blade

The fourth product in the outdoor-focused line OLFA WORKS, to be released this April, is a knife that can be used not only for cutting and shaving, but also for chopping wood by using it to strike from above (batoning).

The 3.2 mm thick blade runs all the way through to the end of the handle, and the tip of the blade is polished into a clamshell shape for long-lasting sharpness.



The full-tang knife “Sanga,” the fourth product in the outdoor line OLFA WORKS

Mr. Okamoto says that "We would like to discover new markets by drawing on OLFA's unique cutter knife technology and offering a variety of use cases."

It is looking more likely that OLFA's activities will continue to expand.



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Business: Manufacture and sale of blades and hand tools