Swiss Army Knife Encyclopedia Article

Swiss Army Knife

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Swiss Army Knife

The swiss army knife was first produced for the Swiss military by Karl Elsener in 1891. It was a wood-handled device with a newly designed spring mechanism that allowed such utensils as a bottle opener, screwdriver, and fingernail file, to fold alongside the blade. Elsener also designed a knife for civilian use; this one had a red handle so that it could be found easily in snow.

Today, the Victorinox Cutlery Corporation, whose president is the inventor's great-grandson, continues to make the swiss army knife. The largest version, called the Swiss Champ, weighs approximately 7 ounces and has 29 attachments, including a ballpoint pen, magnifying glass, and a leather-stitching needle. Numerous companies make similar knives that sport a variety of attachments for men and women.