

# Field Proven, Wallet Friendly

THE SCHRADER SCHF42D IS A HEAVY HITTER WHERE IT COUNTS BUT USES KID GLOVES ON THE BUDGET

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOSHUA SWANAGON

A few months ago, I was perusing Facebook and checking in on some of my favorite knife groups when I saw the new Schrade SCHF42D. I was immediately drawn to its compelling profile and well thought out ergonomics. I noticed on the side of the blade a stamp that instantly let me know that I had to test one, "Griffin Design." Those two simple words let me know that this was designed by someone I highly admire in the knife world, Brian Griffin. If you know Brian Griffin then you know that he is not only a lover of knives, but one of the most knowledgeable knife users in the field today — making a name for himself as a talented knife reviewer and exceptional knife photographer over the years. Fortunately for us, he has not let his experience, knowledge and love for knives go to waste and with a few solid knife designs already under his belt he presents us with the Schrade SCHF42D, a solid workhorse that is purpose built and designed by someone who knows how he wants his knives to function and feel in the field.

## INITIAL IMPRESSIONS

### Sheath

Harkening back to the sheaths of old, the sheath for the SCHF42D is a very solid, old-school style leather sheath. When I first opened the box and saw the sheath, I was apprehensive. On one hand I really loved the classic look, taking me back to my youth, while on the other hand my



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mind went to other attempts at sheaths of this style, even a few from back in the day, that were poorly executed. However, when I pulled it out my apprehensions were alleviated. It is constructed of 1/8-inch thick leather, with double stacked spacers around the blade itself and two solid rivets holding it together at the mouth of the sheath for added durability while unsheathing and sheathing the SCHF42D. The stitching is very well done and although it is not double stitched, I have no fears about its ability to withstand consistent use.

The only slight issue I have with the sheath is the retention strap. Being designed to wrap around the diameter of the grip, the opening left when unsnapped is smaller than the blade itself. This will cause the edge to run against one side of the strap when sheathing and unsheathing the blade. In time this could cause a weak spot in the retention strap, so I tend to find myself holding the blade side of the strap out of the way when sheathing or unsheathing, which can be a bit of a struggle while it is on the belt.

### Grip

I absolutely love the ergonomics of the grip and found it to be very comfortable in the hand. When I first got it I held it and squeezed it very tightly to see if there were any noticeable spots that would cause any issues during use and I didn't find anything that caused me concern. During the hours of straight use, I didn't notice any kind of fatigue or hot spots developing. The SCHF42D comes with Desert Grivory grips which were

comfortable but felt a little slick in the hand, although I was surprised to find that they got more grippy when wet. However, after using it for a while with the stock scales, I opted to replace them with custom Micarta scales from Joe Snarski of LMF Knives; the ergonomics on the custom scales were matched identically but with the grip and comfort of Micarta.

### The Nitty Gritty

The SCHF42D is made of 1095 High Carbon steel and has a Teflon-like coating, that has a glossy, almost candy look to it, but don't try to eat it. The coating on the 5.12 inch drop point blade was very wear resistant and didn't begin to show any signs of use until I was well into my tasks. The 20 degree edge bevel allows for very clean cuts while the full flat grind of the primary bevel on the 3/16 inch blade provides for very little drag through my cuts.

Although I know that Brian is not big on using a knife to strike a ferro rod, due to the potential for accidents when you are cold and frustrated in the field, I still felt it was important to test it for those that do use their knife for this purpose. I found that even with the glossy coating on the blade, the 90 degree spine is very proficient at throwing a solid spark from a ferro rod. The spine also features 1.25 inches of jimping leading away from the grip, which provides for a slip proof grip while bearing down on subject matter using your thumb on the spine for leverage.

Following in the footsteps of its predecessor the SCHF42, the SCHF42D sports a 9.95 inch overall length and a



The heavy duty leather sheath was a very nice throw-back that I really enjoyed seeing.



The hard grind line on the full flat grind really stands out and adds to the SCHF42D's incredible aesthetics.



I was able to get some very nice curls on my feather stick.





Even though it is not a "chopper" the design and balance of the SCHF42D allowed me to easily chop through a small limb with some very clean cuts.



I was able to get a very clean slice on some 1/2 inch climbing rope.



The finish on the blade shows very little wear even after a lot of use.

weight of 8.9 ounces. The SCHF42D features a straight edge, which is what separates it from the SCHF42 which utilizes a recurve, giving people who love the SCHF42 an option if they are not keen on a recurve style blade.

The butt of the SCHF42D has an elongated lanyard hole allowing for paracord or other lanyard material to be run through twice for added security, while the butt itself includes light jimping for greater thumb control during penetrating or drilling tasks. I found the jimping on the butt to be a little abrasive to the palm during a drilling task, but it was minimal. However, over a long period of use in this manner, a hot spot could develop in that area.

### Function

I have been quite excited about the SCHF42D since it first came out and have been looking forward to getting it out and

running it through the paces. My excitement was not in vain and I was very happy with the results of my playtime with it.

### Bushcrafting

I began my testing by creating a try stick. I like to include them in my testing because of the different types of cuts and control necessary to make one and I was very happy with the results. The SCHF42D was very comfortable in the hand during my work on the try stick and I was able to achieve great levels of control in even the smallest cuts. The ergonomics of the grip allowed me to maneuver the SCHF42D for finer work, even allowing me to work all the way out at the tip comfortably.

While making a field expedient fishing spear, I found some parts to be very easy and some parts to be a little tougher with the larger blade of the SCHF42D. Splitting the tip four ways to get the four tips of my

spear proved to be no issue, sharpening the tips was a little more difficult, but manageable. Where the tricky part came in was carving out the barbs in my tips. With the high profile of the blade it was kind of difficult getting inside to do the finer work of carving out the barbs. I was able to get them carved out, but this would have been a task better suited for a smaller knife. However, if this was the only knife you had on you, you would be able to construct a complete spear in a short time.

### Fire Prep

With its 5.12-inch blade, the SCHF42D was perfect for splitting kindling-size wood and even had no problem splitting some very dry, very hard oak. The full flat grind acted as a sort of wedge, gliding right through the kindling with very little resistance, allowing me to produce a nice pile of kindling in a very short time.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**BLADE LENGTH:** 5.12 INCHES  
**HANDLE LENGTH:** 4.83 INCHES  
**OVERALL LENGTH:** 9.95 INCHES  
**BLADE STEEL:** 1095 CARBON STEEL  
**BLADE SHAPE:** DROP POINT  
**BLADE FINISH:** BLACK  
**HANDLE MATERIAL:** DESERT GRIVORY  
**SHEATH MATERIAL:** PREMIUM LEATHER  
**WEIGHT:** 8.9 OUNCES  
**MADE IN TAIWAN**  
**MSRP:** \$75.56

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

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I was able to make a complete, field expedient fishing spear.



Although it has a 3/16-inch thick blade, I was able to cut 1/8-inch leather well enough to do field repairs confidently.

While creating a feather stick I noticed that the edge could have been a little keener, which would have given me a little thinner shavings. The factory edge on the SCHF42D tended to want to bite into the wood a bit, which wound up giving me some thicker curls. However, that being said, even though I wouldn't have minded it being a little more consistent, I was still able to get some nice, thin curls throughout my feather stick. It was definitely good enough to get a fire going.

#### General Tasks

As with all of my reviews I like to finish off my testing by doing my rope press cut test to see how the edge held up during the testing process. I was a little surprised during this test to find that I was unable to press the SCHF42D all the way through the 1/2-inch climbing rope. I tried a couple times with a few different parts of the blade with the same results. However, when I sliced the rope it went right through with no problems whatsoever. It is worth noting that when cutting rope, slicing the rope is the proper method and I

am confident that the SCHF42D will slice any size rope you would be carrying with you in the field.

I also do a lot of my own leather work and like to test knives to see how well they would perform if I had to do any leather repairs in the field. After a couple passes on the 1/8-inch thick leather, I was able to get a nice cut that I felt would be clean enough for a field repair. Since cutting leather cleanly is generally a task best left to utility, Exacto, or razor blades, I was quite pleased with how well the 3/16-inch thick blade of the SCHF42D did. Having to do leather work or repairs in the field can be a bit of a pain, but I would feel very confident in the ability of the SCHF42D to assist me with any repairs that may pop up.

#### Conclusion

After the wait, I can honestly say that I am very glad that I got to review the SCHF42D, it was well worth it. I found it to be a very capable bushcrafting knife that will easily find itself on my hip during excursions into the field. With its

ergonomics, well thought out blade geometry, excellent sheath and perfect size, the SCHF42D is must have go-to knife for any bushcrafting task you can throw its way. On top of the outstanding performance it is hard to overlook its gorgeous lines and amazing aesthetics, making it one of the most attractive knives in my collection and my favorite in the Schrade line. Perhaps one of the things I found to most impressive about the SCHF42D however, is the MSRP of only \$75.56, which I found to be almost unheard of in a high quality bushcrafting knife. If you are looking for a solid field knife, but find that your budget just won't bear a heavy hit, the Schrade Griffin Designs SCHF42D is one of the best choices I have found. **KI**

#### LMF KNIVES BY JOE

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