

FORMIDABLE DAILY COMPANION

THE SPARTAN BLADES FORMIDO DOUBLES
DOWN ON SELF-DEFENSE AND EDC

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOSHUA SWANAGON





Above: I was able to reduce a large ice block into a bunch of small chunks of ice using both the tip and the edge, with no signs on the blade.



The Formido features a robust tanto tip, perfect for maximum penetration.

As tough as their namesake.

When it comes to quality, the name Spartan Blades has a way of rising to the top of the list. Perhaps it is the clean, well thought out designs. Or maybe it is the fact that the owners—and general designers—are retired special forces Green Berets and design all of their products based on operational experience. Or it could simply be that the products are purpose built for extremely hard use, and every time you pick one up you can feel the soul and strength of the great Spartan warrior class joining you in that selection. Whatever it is, one thing is for sure: When you pick up a Spartan Blade, you will feel the overwhelming sense of security that you are ready for whatever life throws at you.

Right: I was able to get some clean cuts on a small piece of rug and reduce it to many smaller pieces of rug.

The company's latest EDC offering, the Formido, is no different. But, where many of Spartan's skeletonized EDC selections are geared almost exclusively for self-defense, the Formido is designed to handle both self-defense and everyday home and field chores—making for a well-rounded option.

I have recently been carrying one and have been very impressed.

The Design Factor

At first glance, the Formido has a very streamlined form with clean lines and well-rounded design cues.



The Formido features a robust overall length of 8.75 inches, with a no frills, all business design. The 3.875-inch, S35VN Crucible stainless steel blade features a tanto tip, and finishes at an oversized choil, which helps to ensure that you are able to sharpen the entire length of the blade, maintaining an even and clean cutting edge from tip to choil.

The Formido that I received has the ZrN (Zirconium Nitride)—flat dark earth—coating, which is extremely durable and gives the Formido a sheen that only enhances the look of this already great-looking blade. The ZrN

coating provides a smooth, drag-free operation during cutting tasks. The Formido can also be purchased in a black, SpartaCoat—PVD—Tungsten DLC coating that is also very durable and drag free as well.

The skeletonized handle is beveled around the entire extremity and fits the hand well for comfortable, extended use. The handle has a small channel etched into either side with a series of reversing triangles for weight reduction, balance adjustments and enhanced grip. If you feel that the skeletonized handle is just a little too narrow for your hand, the triangles can also be used to help secure a paracord lanyard for a more palm filling grip.

Just forward of the handle, on the spine, at the top of the ricasso, is a thumb ramp with some medium jimping for enhanced thumb control—

used in conjunction with the finger notch in the handle this helps to secure a solid purchase of the Formido during heavy thrusting or stabbing chores. The butt of the Formido also features jimping around the bottom corner for secure thumb placement during hard stabbing tasks, along with a lanyard hole—lanyard included—to secure the hand for a slip free grip.

The Formido comes with your choice of nylon sheath—perfect for belt line carry, vest or pack—or heavy duty Kydex sheath with IWB (inside the waistband) loop. I went with the Kydex sheath for an EDC option and am very glad I did. The thin profile of the Formido and sheath together allow it to virtually disappear inside your waistband while keeping it very accessible. The sheath also features a series of eyelets for mounting other carry options, such as molle loks or a Tek-Lok.

“WHEN IT COMES TO QUALITY, THE NAME SPARTAN BLADES HAS A WAY OF RISING TO THE TOP OF THE LIST.”



Left: The tip sank easily, an inch deep, into this old seasoned barn wood.

Spartan Blades EDC Offerings

Although it has not placed a whole lot of focus on accessories and has put its efforts into its incredible line of knives, over the years Spartan Blades has come out with a few different offerings for its dedicated fans who want to show their brand loyalty. From Spartan beads, coins, patches and chopsticks to hat brim clip-ons, shemagh's and clothing, the Spartan brand has been expanding into an ever-growing diverse line of EDC fare.

Its most recent foray into the field comes in the way of its new Harsey Pocket Tool. Designed by Bill Harsey, the Pocket Tool is designed for prying, self-defense and getting the cold beverage out of a tall bottle. The Harsey Pocket Tool is 4 inches overall, with a thickness of 0.25-inch and is constructed of AL64V Titanium.

You can get it in either of two options—the plain version for \$75 or the compass engraved anodized version with beautiful bronze patina finish for \$90.

The Formido in Action

Billed as a self-defense/EDC blade, it was time to put the Formido through the paces deserving of its name.

It seems that in this issue “Porkman” is a recurring theme; although completely unintentional and coincidental, it is for good reason. When discussing a self-defense or EDC knife, it is good to test it on all matter that it may come across, this includes organic medium.

For my testing on Porkman, I delivered a few quick forward and reverse slashes, to see how it would do in a sudden self-defense scenario. The edge on the Formido is a little more robust in order to cover a gamut of varying chores, so it was not as keen as

would be expected from a dedicated self-defense blade, and therefore did not deliver quite as deep a cut as could be expected. However, it was still able to cut deep enough that I feel it would have effectively immobilized an attacker's limb and thwarted a follow up attack. I am quite comfortable in its ability in the self-defense arena.

Next, it was time to test the edge retention and capabilities, and I started by reducing a small rug into a bunch of much smaller rugs. Rugs can be a bit difficult to cut sometimes due to the weaving pattern throughout, which tend to pull out and tear, resulting in a rough line. The Formido however, cut cleanly through everything and gave me relatively clean lines on all of the cuts.

I then moved on to a thick, old cat litter bucket we had laying around. The plastic on this bucket is very thick and solid, so I started by stabbing into the side of the bucket and the tanto tip penetrated the heavy-duty plastic like butter. After stabbing into the side, I then proceeded to press the knife downward for some very clean cuts. I repeated this process until I had completely opened up the entire side of the bucket. The blade cut through the plastic smoothly and cleanly, with no resistance or drag.

I live in an old farmhouse, and years ago we had to tear down a barn that was on the property; this has left me with a little bit of old, seasoned, very hard, barn wood. To test the tip of the

At the ricasso the Formido features a thumb ramp with medium jimping, a finger notch for additional grip and an oversized choil for aid in sharpening.



“THE FORMIDO FEATURES A ROBUST OVERALL LENGTH OF 8.75 INCHES, WITH A NO FRILLS, ALL BUSINESS DESIGN.”



My rapid slashes to Porkman, my training device, produced cuts sufficient enough to immobilize an attacker's limb.



The Formido has an overall length of 8.75 inches.

Formido, I drove it about an inch deep into that old seasoned barn wood and it penetrated deep into it with no issues at all. The tip shows a couple, very small, flat spots on the edge, but it is very hard wood and was kind of expected—the tip itself maintained its point.

I then moved on to a Goodyear tire and proceeded to cut away the sidewall. I made sure to do it up near the tread

“THE THIN PROFILE OF THE FORMIDO AND SHEATH TOGETHER ALLOW IT TO VIRTUALLY DISAPPEAR INSIDE YOUR WAISTBAND, WHILE KEEPING IT VERY ACCESSIBLE.”

SPECS

Blade Material: S35VN
Blade Length: 3.875 inches
Overall Length: 8.75 inches
Blade Thickness: 0.1875 inch
Blade Finish: SpartaCoat—PVD—Tungsten (flat black) or ZrN (flat dark earth)
Handle Material: None, skeletonized handle
Weight: 4.8 ounces
MSRP: \$215

ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF SELF-DEFENSE

- + HIGH-CARBON S.S. BLADE
- + M.O.L.L.E. COMPATIBLE BELT SHEATH
- + FULL TANG

M&P by Smith & Wesson®

www.STORE.SMITH-WESSON.COM 877-509-9160 @SMITHANDWESSONGEAR



section, so I could be sure that I was getting some very thick rubber. The Formido did not disappoint and cut away a large section of the sidewall with no resistance whatsoever. All cuts were clean and fluid.

I finished up my testing on an ice-block that I created for just this purpose. I started by stabbing the tip into the ice-block and the tanto tip made very quick work of the ice. Once I had reduced the block to a few good-sized chunks, I began hacking at the individual chunks with the edge. The Formido broke the ice up in rapid fashion and showed no sign of wear or damage to the edge or tip.

Comfortable Daily Use Blade

Spartan Blades has a name for quality craftsmanship and hard use cutlery, and the Formido only exemplifies that reputation. The Formido is an extremely comfortable daily use blade in every way, from use to carry. Designed by men who apply

Above: The Formido cut a large opening in the sidewall of this Goodyear tire with no resistance.

Right: The Formido moved cleanly through the thick plastic sidewalls of this heavy-duty cat litter bucket.

experience into every design, the Formido demonstrates just why that is such an important quality in a knife.

Although the blade length is a bit long for EDC in some jurisdictions, the Formido makes a formidable EDC companion that disappears when you don't need it—and makes an indelible impression when you do. Make sure to check your local laws concerning blade length; if the Formido falls within your legal limit you will thank yourself for picking one up. If not, then you owe it to yourself to consider adding one to your bug-out bag. Either way, the Formido can make itself an integral part of your bladed arsenal. **KI**

Contact
SPARTAN BLADES
 (910) 757-0035
www.SpartanBladesUSA.com

