

The wedge

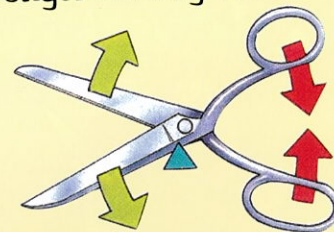
A wedge is a simple machine. It is used to push and spread things apart.

The blade of an **axe** is a type of wedge. When the cutting edge is driven into a log, the powerful movement creates a strong force that splits open the wood. The downward effort of the hand is changed into a sideways splitting effort that cuts the log.



SCISSOR BLADES

Most of the machines we use are made up of combinations of simple devices. An everyday example is the scissors. Each blade of the scissors is a wedge. But the two blades, or wedges, are joined to make another device - a **lever** - which gives the scissors an even stronger cutting action.



Any sharp object is a type of wedge – knives, arrows or needles are all wedges. The sharp **bow** of a ship acts as a wedge when it moves through the water. The pointed end of a rocket cuts through the air as it powers through the atmosphere.

A Vietnamese woman chopping wood.



Inventor's words

axe • blade • bow
furrow • lever
plough • wedge

