



Surgical scalpels


Surgical scalpels consist of two parts, a blade and a handle. The handles are often reusable, with the blades being replaceable. In medical applications, each blade is only used once (even if just for a single, small cut).

The handle is also known as a "B.P. handle", named after Charles Russell Bard and Morgan Parker, founders of the Bard-Parker Company. Morgan Parker patented the 2-piece scalpel design in 1915 and Bard-Parker developed a method of cold sterilization that would not dull the blades, as did the heat-based method that was previously used.^[1]

The handle of medical scalpels come in two basic types. The first is a flat handle used in the #3 and #4 handles. The #7 handle is more like a long writing pen, rounded at the front and flat at the back. A #4 handle is larger than a #3. Blades are manufactured with a corresponding fitment size so that they fit on only one size handle. The following table of blades is incomplete and some blades listed may work with handles not specified here.

Types of surgical scalpel blades

Blade No.	Picture	Compatible Handles	Blade Description	Uses
No. 6		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. 9		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. 10		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	Curved cutting edge with an unsharpened back edge. A more traditional blade shape.	Generally for making incisions in skin and muscle. Commonly used in to cut the skin in abdominal operations.
No. 10a		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	This blade is a small and straight	
No. 11		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	Triangular blade with sharp point, flat cutting edge parallel to the handle and flat back	For precision cutting, stripping, sharp angle cuts and also stencil cutting due to its similarity to the X-Acto artknife blade
No. 11P		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. E11		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. E/11		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. 12		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	A small, pointed, crescent-shaped blade sharpened on the inside edge of the curve	
No. 12D		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	A small, pointed, crescent-shaped blade sharpened on both sides of the curve	
No. 13		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. 14		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		

No. 15		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	A smaller version of the #10	For the same general use as the #10 blade
No. 15A		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	A front-facing straight blade with flat back	
No. 15C		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	The #15 with a downward angle, flatter and thinner than the #15	The downward angle makes this the preferred blade for working within the chest during cardiac surgery, and is commonly used to make the distal arteriotomy during coronary artery bypass grafting.
No. 15T		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. D/15		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. 16		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	A narrow chisel-like blade with flat, angled cutting edge, positioned higher than the axis of the handle	For cutting stencils, scoring and etching
No. 17		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9	A flat face 1.6 mm chisel blade	For narrow cuts
No. 18		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A 12.7 mm chisel blade	For deep cuts and scraping
No. 19		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A similar blade to the #15	
No. 20		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A larger version of the #10 blade, with a curved cutting edge and a flat, unsharpened back edge.	Used in general surgery and orthopaedic surgery.
No. 21		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6		
No. 22		2, 4, 5, 6	A slightly larger version of the #20, with a curved cutting edge and a flat,	Used for skin incisions in both cardiac and thoracic surgery, and to cut the bronchus in lung resection surgery.

			unsharpened back edge.	
No. 22A		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6		
No. 23		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	Similar to #22, leaf-shaped	For long incisions.
No. 24		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A wide, flat, angled cutting edge	For corner cuts, trimming, stripping, and cutting mats and gaskets
No. 25		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A front-facing straight blade with flat back (similar to #15a)	
No. 25a		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A triangular straight blade with flat back edge taking a downwards angle (similar to #10a, shorter than #26)	
No. 26		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A triangular straight blade with flat back edge taking a downwards angle (similar to the #15a, longer than #25a)	
No. 27		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6		
No. 34		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A triangular blade similar to the #11	
No. 36		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A larger blade	Used in general surgery but also within a Laboratory setting for Histology and Histopathology
No. 40		B3, 3, 3 Graduated, 3 Long, 5, 7, 9		
No. PM40		Stainless PM Handle		
No. PM40B		Stainless PM Handle		
No. 60		4, 4 Graduated, 4 Long, 6	A long blade resembling the #10 with a long cutting edge, rounded tip	

			and flat back.	
No. PM60		PM8		
No. PM60B		PM8		

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