Other weapons

In the dispassionate language of the morgue, blunt trauma, asphyxiation account for a substantial portion of homicide. But scientific jargon cannot hide the brutal reality of improvised clubs, bloody knives, or lengths of cord can bring murder to an end. Though marks from such weapons are not as useful, for lives to those from guns, autopsy details may nevertheless provide...
**DEFENSE WOUNDS ▼**
Both blunt and sharp weapons cause defense wounds on the hands and forearms, where victims try to protect themselves from attack. Though they appear on either left or right limbs, they are more common on the left, as victims raise their left hand to fend off a right-handed attacker. As with all cutting wounds, the shape is a poor guide to the type of weapon used.

**BROKEN BONES ▼**
Only the most severe of beatings leads to fractures of the heavy leg bones, but jaw, nose, and rib fractures are much more common. The severity of the fracture can give some indication of the force used to inflict it, and overlying grazes and bruises may also bear the imprint of any weapon that was used in the attack.

**RUPTURES ▲**
Violent assaults that damage the abdominal organs do not necessarily leave external grazes and bruises. These kicks, punches, and attacks commonly damage the liver and spleen, and can cause lacerations to the stomach and bladder. Cause of death is usually not organ failure, but bleeding into the abdominal cavity.

**KEY:**
- Sharp weapons include knives, swords, nails, pins.
- Blunt weapons include baseball bats, rocks, household ornaments.

**TYPES OF KNIFE**

**DOUBLE EDGE**
Thick dagger blades leave marks that clearly have two sharp edges. Thinner double-edged blades may be less easy to recognize.

**SINGLE EDGE**
Knives with one sharp edge create wounds that are "boat-shaped." However, the shape may not be obvious if the knife blade was thin.

**SERRATED**
A ragged appearance to the edge of a victim's wound may suggest that the blade used in the attack had a serrated edge.