



Throwing Knives in the UK

One of the questions we get asked most on this page is:

“I’m new to all this, which knives should I buy?”

You have the cream of the UK throwers on this page so here is our opinion based on experience.

You should look for a knife of not less than 12inches (30cm)

This is for three main reasons:

1. For safety’s sake as it will keep you a sensible distance from the target in case of rebounds.
2. If attending a range most have this safety limit of 12 inches. This is to keep throwers at roughly the same distance. If you have a thrower with 14 inch knives in one lane and a thrower with 8 inch knives in the lane next to him the thrower with the shorter knives will be standing much closer to the target and the potential for accidents increases.
3. If attending competitions the first 2 rules apply with addition that in competitions there are minimum distances that you can throw from and it’s just not possible to achieve these distances with short, light knives.

Weight of knife should be around 10.5 ounces (300g) minimum.

If your knife meets the length criteria then if made from reasonable steel it should meet the weight. The weight of a knife helps target penetration and stability at longer distances. A heavier knife takes less effort to stick well.

A good quality steel that has been properly heat treated will absorb the punishment of throwing, sticking (and bounces round the range!). Some throwers are made from Stainless steel which has the obvious benefit of lower maintenance but we have found that a knife on knife/ knife on hard ground contact can cause very sharp slivers of steel to come off rather than the dents you would get in a good carbon steel blade

You should always check your knives regularly for signs of damage

Knife throwing in the UK is still very much in it's infancy and as such retailers have limited idea's about what constitutes a 'good' throwing knife.

You will see plenty of poor offerings with bad design, poor steel or that are too small. The ones with the adjustable 'balance weights' are a source of particular hilarity amongst anyone who knows anything about knife throwing.

These can be interesting 'toys' or novelty knives but are nothing more than an amusing distraction and should never be considered as a proper throwing knife.

In our opinion (and we have tried most of them) you have three main brands to consider.

1. The John Taylor thrower

John is the head of the KATTA UK organization and was frustrated at the poor choice of good throwing knives available in the UK. So he improved a discontinued design that was popular at the club and had a Sheffield company make them for him. They are great beginners knives at a sensible price. They can be a bit short for some people to achieve a minimum competition distances if you have a soft (not very powerful) throw.

Contact John Taylor via private message for availability and prices.

2. The John Bailey Ziel 2

These are a good knife but have a few known issues. The first is they are made from 420 Stainless Steel. Stainless steel is quite brittle and if you get a knife on knife hit or if they fall onto hard ground you tend to get slivers of razor sharp steel coming off them. The tip pattern is also quite brittle and tips have been known to break off.

That said I threw this design of knife of 4 years with only 3-4mm of one tip breaking off and by employing a "1 knife at 1 target" rule never had any issue with them.

The best people to buy them from would be Heinnie Haynes, their service is excellent.

<http://www.heinnie.com/magnum-bailey-ziel-3-piece-set>

3. The range from Cold Steel

Cold Steel have the largest available range of throwing knives. They provide a good range of weights, lengths and styles. Their current line up has 10 available models but I would suggest that the “True Flight” and “Mini Flight” are on the small side so you are likely to struggle with these at competitions and some ranges wouldn't allow them to be thrown.

The ‘Sure Balance’ is a beast of a thrower, very large and very heavy.

The ‘Pro Balance’ and “Perfect Balance” along with their slightly thinner “Sport” counterparts are a good size and shape. The handles are fairly unbreakable however the screws that hold them on will bend fairly easily from a bad throw. Most people that use these either use a very strong glue to hold the handles on or most people just take them off.

Handles can be a personal preference anyway. A lot of people don't like them, some love them.

The “Sure Flight” and “Pro Flight” are a good tried and tested design and a favourite of many. There's nothing really bad to say about them.

The “Perfect Balance’ range come with a sharp edge on them so require dulling before being thrown by the blade.

There are a handful of retailers selling these knives but the best place for service is the main UK importer BA Blades (Trading as Cold Steel UK)

<http://www.coldsteel-uk.com/store/Throwing-Knives.html>

These are our opinions based on our throwing experience and having owned and thrown most of them. We have tried to explain the positives and negatives of each knife to give a balanced view.

If you can make it to any of our ranges in the UK there will be most of these and other examples to try. If you can ‘try before you buy’ at one of our ranges you will understand what type of knife you need and hopefully save yourself some money!