Core cleaning and surface preparation

When a core is newly cut open or unwrapped after storage, it is often necessary to lightly scrape the cut surface to expose fine sedimentary structures in preparation for imaging or core description. The lab originally used antique straight razors and single-edge razor blades, but a magnetics project that precluded the use of metal tools prompted us to start using glass microscope slides. A final refinement came when one of the staff suggested rounding the corners of the slides to eliminate the grooves the sharp corners made. The slides can be easily ground in bundles of five or six on a belt sander with a dust attachment, and can be cleaned and reused.

Cores are always lain on the bench with the "up" or top end to the *left*, in cradles with meter tape along the side so that accurate depth measurements can be taken. The core is cleaned by scraping parallel to the bedding planes (i.e., across the short axis of the core) with the flat of the slide, moving in the direction of the acute angle formed by the slide and the core surface. Remove a minimal amount of sediment, wiping the slide on a damp sponge between scrapes.