

Victoria's Machete Ban

Traditional, historical or cultural significance exemption

What's changing?

From 1 September 2025, it will be illegal to own, carry, use, buy or sell a machete in Victoria unless you are covered by an exemption.

Machetes will be classified as a prohibited weapon under Victoria's Control of Weapons laws.

Cultural exemption: what you need to know

If a machete has traditional, historical or cultural significance, you may be exempt from the ban – but only under certain conditions.

You can legally own, carry or use a machete with cultural, historical or traditional value if:

- the machete has genuine cultural, historical or traditional significance (for example, has been passed down through generations or is used in cultural activities), **and**
- you are genuinely involved in a recognised cultural, historical or traditional activity (and not using the machete for everyday or general use).

You do not need to apply for this exemption.

Examples of approved cultural use

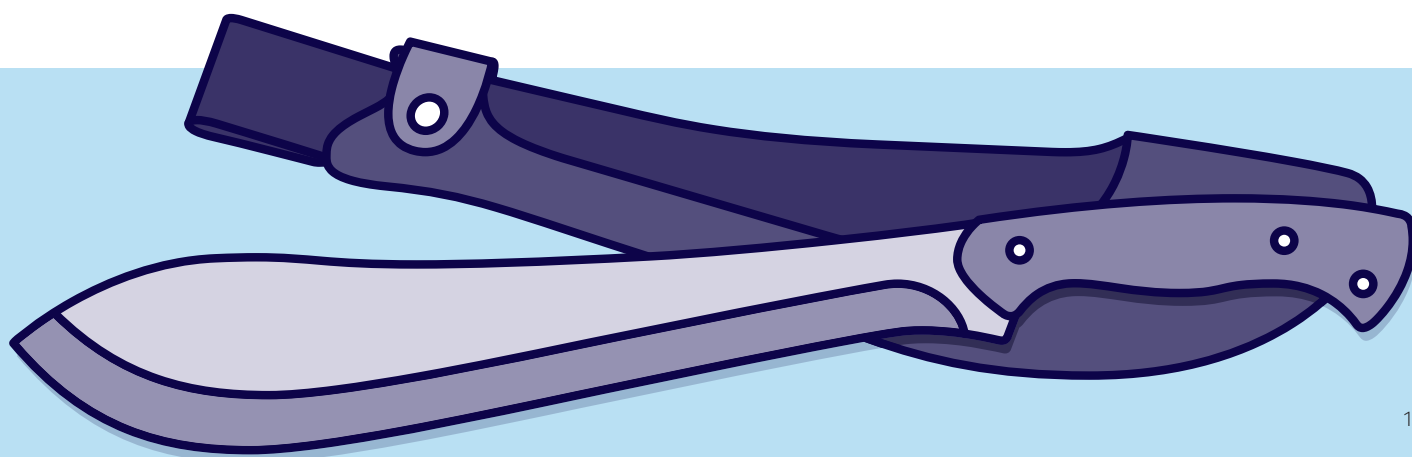
- A Samoan machete (nifo'oti) used in a traditional dance performance or cultural event in Victoria's Samoan community.
- Members of Victoria's Papua New Guinea community using a machete to make traditional costumes or in cultural dance performances.
- A machete being used in the traditional Mexican folk dance known as *Los Machetes*.
- Latin American communities displaying decorative or engraved machetes in homes as cultural symbols.

What you can do under this exemption

- Keep a machete at home if it holds cultural, historical or traditional significance to you or your family.
- Use or carry a machete during a recognised cultural or traditional activity, linked to a cultural group or community.

What you cannot do

- Keep a machete that does not have cultural, historical or traditional significance.
- Use it for everyday tasks like gardening, cooking, camping, or general maintenance.
- Take it into a public place, unless it's for a recognised cultural event.
- Carry it in your car, unless you are travelling to or from a cultural activity.
- Use or carry a machete for self-defence or personal protection.



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What evidence you'll need

You must be able to show that you're legally allowed to keep a machete for traditional, historical or cultural reasons. Suitable proof may include:

- membership or affiliation of a community or cultural group
- taking part in a recognised cultural program (e.g. dance event).

Important conditions

- Machetes must be stored securely to prevent unauthorised access.
- If you're in a public place for a recognised cultural activity – keep the machete out of sight when you're not using it.
- Make sure the machete is not accessible to anyone who is not covered by an exemption.

Penalties

From 1 September 2025, machetes are banned in Victoria. Possession without exemption can lead to:

- up to 2 years in prison, or
- a fine over \$47,000.

What is a machete?

A machete is a large, broad-bladed cutting knife.

The ban only applies to machetes. It does not include kitchen knives or other types of knives.

Machetes can vary in shape and size. Examples are shown in the images below.

