

Knife Skills 101

A sharp knife is arguably the most essential piece of cooking equipment. With a little bit of know-how and practice, anyone can chop, dice, and mince like a pro. Use the information below as a guide and you'll be ready to tackle any cutting task.

Using Your Knife



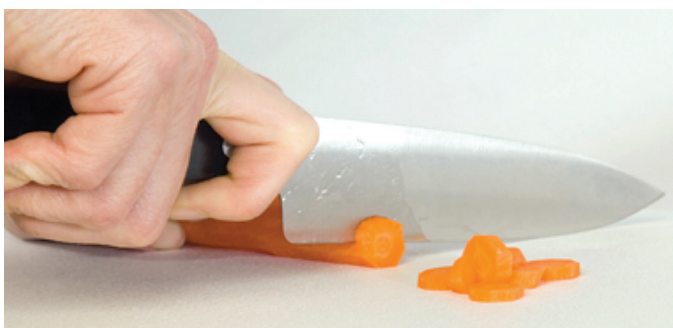
Grip the Blade

Hold your knife properly by using a “pinch grip” with your thumb on one side of the blade close to the handle, your pointer finger on the other side of the blade close to the handle, and your other fingers wrapped around the handle.



Curl Your Fingers

Your other hand will hold the food with fingers curled under. Your little finger and thumb should be behind your other fingers. This reduces the risk of you cutting the hand that is holding the food.



Rock the Knife

Keeping the tip of your knife on the cutting board, use a rocking motion coming down on the food and pushing slightly forward. Your non-knife hand moves as you chop the food.

Cutting Round Foods

Round or cylindrical foods pose a unique challenge. Cutting food that can wobble is a safety hazard. To avoid this, peel or slightly cut one side of your item to create a flat, stable surface. Then lay your item flat-side down. From there, you can chop as you typically would with any other flat food.



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Ingredients for Life

There are many different knives and cutting tools on the market. As you begin building your kitchen supplies, these are a great place to start. With a few simple tools, you can handle most cutting tasks.

Chef's Knife

If you have only one knife, this should be it. A chef's knife is the most versatile knife in the kitchen. Most chopping, dicing, and mincing can be done with a chef's knife. They typically come in 8- to 12-inch blades and should feel comfortable in your hand.



Other Tools



Serrated Knife

Serrated knives have a ridged edge and are used for slicing bread. The blade is jagged (serrated) to prevent tearing food when trying to cut. Perfect for bread, sandwiches, tomatoes, or other soft fruits or vegetables.



Paring Knife

Paring knives are typically smaller than other knives, about 3–4 inches long. They are used for peeling and coring fruits and vegetables and other fine tasks.

Cutting Board

Cutting boards should be made of plastic, composite, or wood. Plastic boards are easier to sanitize than wood boards, which may help reduce the risk of cross-contamination.



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For More Information

Scan the code to access videos knife skills, cutting fruits and vegetables, and essential knives for the home kitchen.