

Knife Skills for School Nutrition Professionals



The key to honing your knife skills is to hone your knife.

Sharp knives are safer, cut more efficiently and create better food presentations on the line. Keep your knife sharp by sharpening it regularly on a stone or by using a sharpening tool.

Why Good Knife Skills Matter

- Foods that are properly sliced and diced cook more evenly.
- Good knife skills help get more yield out of a product.
- Proper knife cuts can make foods look better on the line.

Knife Safety

- Always carry the knife at your side, by the handle with the point down.
- Never carry a knife across the kitchen on a cutting board.
- Never try to catch a falling knife with your hand. Let it fall and then pick it up off of the floor.
- When using the knife, keep the fingers of the non-cutting hand curled under like a cat's claw.
- If it feels unsafe, it is unsafe. Avoid cutting food that is rolling around. Slice a flat edge to keep the product stable.

Cutting Boards

Cutting boards come in a variety of colors to help commercial kitchens avoid cross-contamination. Consider using these cutting board colors to organize your school kitchen:

Red = Meat
White = Dairy
Green = Produce
Blue = Fish
Yellow = Poultry



KNIFE SKILLS:

Medium Dice Onion

1. Cut off the stem end of the onion, cut the onion in half from stem end to root end and then peel the onion.
2. Holding the onion steady, cut horizontally through the onion, but not all the way through (the onion should remain intact at the root end). Figure 1.
3. Repeat step 2 at various levels throughout the onion depending upon the onion's size. Figure 2.
4. Turn the onion so that the stem end faces you and place the tip of your knife 1" away from the root end of the onion. Make a vertical cut through the onion. Repeat these vertical cuts at $\frac{1}{2}$ " intervals across the onion. Figure 3.
5. Turn the onion so that the stem end is perpendicular to you and make cuts through the entire onion. Figure 4 and 5.
6. The onion will naturally cut into a medium dice. Figure 6.



KNIFE SKILLS:

Medium Dice

1. Firmly holding the product, make $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick slices. Figure 1
2. Cut each $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick slice into $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide strips. Figure 2.
3. Cut each $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide strip into $\frac{1}{2}$ " cubes. Figure 3 and 4.

KNIFE SKILLS:

Batonnet

1. Firmly holding the product, make $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick slices. Fig. 1
2. Cut each $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick slice into $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide strips. Figs 2, 3 and 4.



KNIFE SKILLS:

Chiffonade

1. Gently roll product into a tube shape. You can stack multiple products (lettuce leaves, spinach leaves, basil leaves, etc.) into a single tube for a more efficient cut. Fig 1.
2. Thinly slice through the tube to create long thin strands of the product. Fig 2.
3. Adjust how thin your slices are to create different chiffonade styles. Use



a chiffonade like the one on Fig 3 to top tacos, nachos or other creations. Use a wider chiffonade cut like the one in Fig 4 to for lettuces in salads.



KNIFE SKILLS:

Julienne

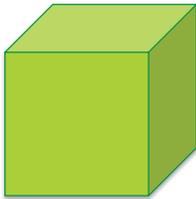
1. Cut product into 1/8" thick slices. Fig 1 and 2.
2. Cut each 1/8" thick slice into 1/8" thick strips. Fig 3 and 4.

KNIFE SKILLS:

Demonstration and Practice

Complete the following knife cuts:

- Medium Dice: Sweet Potato** (See page 21)



- Batonnet: Bell Peppers and Carrots** (See page 21)



- Julienne: Bell Peppers and Carrots** (See page 22)



- Chiffonade: 10-15 leaves Spinach** (See page 22)

- Chiffonade: 5 Collards Leaves** (See page 22)

- Mince: Garlic** (Watch demo)

- Small Dice: Onion** (Watch demo & see page 20)

**Place knife cut on your cutting board and present to your chef instructor*