

Knife Cutting Techniques and Skills

Knife Safety Rules

- Avoid using a dull knife. They are more dangerous because you have to apply more pressure to get the same effect. This can cause a person to have an accident and cut themselves. You can sharpen knives with a “steel”: a utensil that you run the knife along to sharpen it.
- Do not store knives in unorganized drawers. A knife in an unorganized drawer can lead to someone being cut when looking for something in the drawer. Knives can be stored together, in a knife block, or with a covering on them.
- Wash knives immediately or set them on the side of the sink. Do not put knives into the sink with dishwater and leave them because others may not see the knives and could cut themselves.
- When walking with a knife carry it pointed toward the ground, and tell others “Behind you with a knife” when walking through the room.
- Use a towel or washcloth underneath a cutting board to prevent the cutting board from moving around when you are working. The cloth can be damp if you would like. This will help prevent the board from moving when you are chopping (especially thick vegetables).
- Pick a knife that is realistic for the job. Larger items need larger knives, likewise with smaller items. You don’t need a chef’s knife to cut peaches, and you don’t want to use a paring knife to cut jicama or large squashes.
- When cutting, curl your fingers towards your palm (similar to a claw shape)so your knuckles are closest to the knife blade. This will prevent your fingers from getting cut by the knife. Move your hand back on the item as the knife gets closer to your hand.
- If you happen to drop a knife, don’t try to catch it. Move back from the falling knife and let it fall.

Technique	Definition	Picture	Common Foods
Mince	To cut into very small pieces.		Garlic, Ginger, Herbs
Dice	To cut into ¼” to ½” squares		Onions, tomatoes, potatoes, fruit
Cube	To cut into ½” to 1 ½” squares		Potatoes carrots
Julienne	To cut into 1/8” square and 2 inch long pieces		Carrotts, celery, onion, peppers
Slices	To cut into similar sized flat pieces, ¼” to 1” in width		Cucumber, tomato, oranges
Rough chop	To cut into pieces that do not need to be exactly uniform, the size and shape does not affect the recipe		Lettuce, peppers, potatoes

Chiffonade	To cut leafy vegetables into long, thin strips (Stack leaves, roll them, then cut)		Spinach, lettuce, herbs
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