

DIETARY IN-SERVICE

Knife Skills

COVID-19

Safety is crucial, so ensure that you hold your knife correctly before you begin in the kitchen!

Basic Knife Techniques

The most important and commonly used knife in a kitchen is a chef's knife. There are many ways you can hold this knife but there is only one way you should hold it to maximize comfort, control and safety while minimizing fatigue.

Follow these steps to learn how to hold a knife properly:

1. Grip the knife around its bolster.
2. The bolster is both your knife's balance point and a finger guard.
3. Only your last three fingers should rest on the handle.
4. Your thumb and index finger should be on opposite sides of the blade.



When you hold a knife around its balance point, it works as an extension of your hand. Hence your arm doesn't tire and you have excellent control.

SLICE, Don't CHOP!

Most knives work best by 'slicing' using a forward cutting motion, rather than 'chopping' with a straight up and down motion. Slicing lets the knife do the work and chopping makes your arm apply more force.

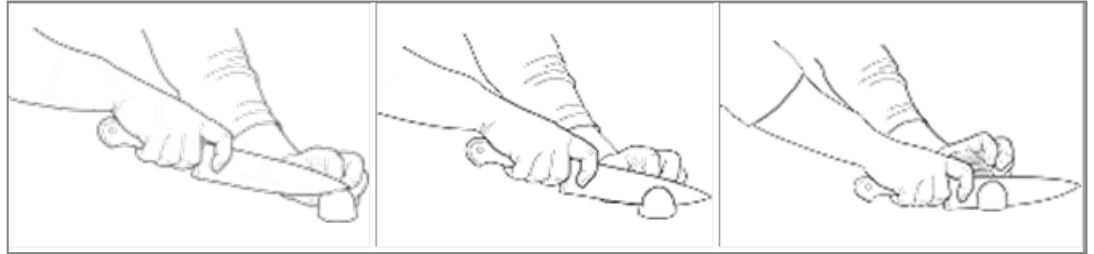


- Begin by starting the cut with the tip of the knife and pushing the knife forward across the food.
- Only a light touch is required because the sharp edge is doing the cutting.
- If you find yourself pushing down on the food, or needing effort, either you are not doing it right or your knife is dull.
- Follow all the way through the cut to achieve a fluid motion.

Depending on the item you are slicing, follow one of these techniques to cut properly and safely!

Let's Review 3 different techniques:

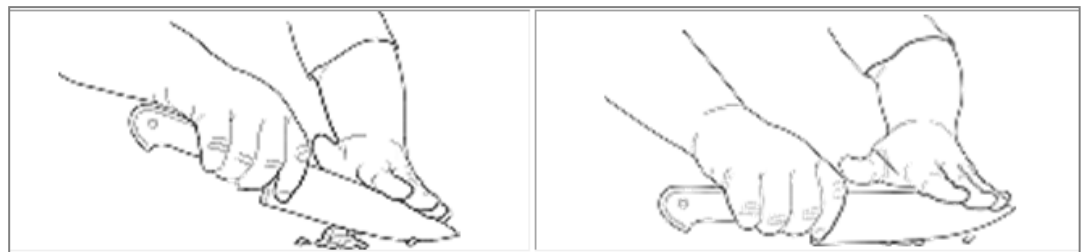
Technique 1: For large items which are high above the cutting board (e.g. potato or onion), start with the tip of the blade on the object.



Technique 2: For smaller items (e.g. parsley, celery, or carrots), start with the tip of the blade on the cutting board.



Technique 3: A third technique to use with a cook's knife is a "rocking" motion - generally used to mince herbs or garlic. Your guiding hand will sit on top of the blade, helping you pivot the knife repeatedly along its curved edge. You never lift the knife off your board.



The Guiding Hand

Regardless of what you are slicing, your other hand has a key role to play. It stabilizes the food you are cutting, guides the knife, and determines the size of your cut. Make sure that your fingers are **curled inward** and **your thumb is tucked underneath**. The side of the blade should rest against your knuckles, but **NEVER** the edge itself.

