



Knife Safety

How to Hold a Knife

Knives can be held in several different ways. The best option is to pinch the blade of the knife where it meets the handle between your thumb and first finger, then wrap the rest of your fingers around the handle. This will give you the most power and control as you cut and dice. Do not lay your first finger across the top of the blade.

Use “The Claw”

Curl the fingers of your opposite or non-dominant hand (guiding hand) into a "claw" and rest just the tips of your fingers on top of the ingredient you are about to cut. Make sure to tuck your thumb in as well. As you cut, move your fingers back while still keeping your hand in this “claw” position.

Make a Bridge

When cutting large or round items, use your guiding hand to keep the item steady. Placing your guiding hand up and over the back of your knife, holding the items on both sides.

Store Safely

Store knives in a wooden block or in a separate “sharps” drawer. Make sure the knives are out of the reach of children and any others who could hurt themselves.

Cut Away

Slicing is a forward motion. Always cut away from your body when using a knife, only pulling back slightly with the knife when you are getting ready for the next cut.

Work Neat

Keep knives clean and dry, especially the handle.



Choose the Right Cutting Surface

Always use a cutting board, preferably one made from a poly (plastic) material, since this is the most gentle on knives and is easiest to clean. Wooden or bamboo cutting boards are good options as well, but they must be washed by hand. Do not use cutting boards made from stone, acrylic, or glass since these can be very hard on your knife.

Anchor Your Cutting Board

Put a damp hand towel or paper towel under your cutting board to keep it from sliding around as you cut. This not only makes cutting safer, but also less frustrating and more efficient.

Stabilize Round and Large Items

When cutting round or large items, cut a little slice off one side first and then rotate the vegetable so that it is now sitting on this cut side.

Lay Knives Down Flat

Always lay knives down flat, never on the back or edge.

Hone Regularly

Hone your knife at least once a month, or more often if needed. This realigns the blade and can be done with the textured steel rod that comes with most knife sets.

Sharpen As Needed

A dull blade is more dangerous than a sharp one. Keep blades sharp so that you can cut easily and accurately. This typically needs to be done yearly or bi-yearly.

Scrape Strategically

When scraping items across your cutting board, always use the back of the knife to keep the edge from dulling.

Let It Fall

Resist the urge to try to catch a knife or other sharp object as it falls.

Hand Wash Knives Right Away

As soon as you are done using your knife, wash it by hand, dry it, and put it in a safe place. Avoid washing knives and other sharps (e.g. pizza cutter, blender blade) in the dishwasher. Never leave your knives in the kitchen sink.

Go Slowly and Practice

Work at a pace that feels comfortable to you. Take some time to practice your knife skills a little bit every day, even if it is something as simple as slicing a tomato.