



Week 8 & 9—Knife Skills

“When you learn proper knife skills, your time spent in the kitchen is safer, more efficient and definitely more fun! Your dishes will be more consistently prepared, more evenly cooked and the finished results will have the advantage of consistent texture and great eye-appeal.” -Chef Todd Mohr

Proper Grip

Proper grip gives you maximum control. The most common grip is holding the handle with 3 fingers while gripping the blade between thumb and index finger. The hand not holding the knife should have all fingers curled under, pressing down on the product to keep it against the cutting board.

Parts of the Knife

Edge – the sharp, cutting part of the knife

Spine – the dull side, opposite the edge

Tang – the metal part of the knife extending into the handle

Handle – the part you hold the knife by

Classic Cuts

Brunois 1/8 x 1/8 x 1/8

Small Dice 1/4 x 1/4 x 1/4

Medium Dice 1/2 x 1/2 x 1/2

Large Dice 3/4 x 3/4 x 3/4

Julienne 1/8 x 1/8 x 2 1/2

Batonnet 1/4 x 1/4 x 2 1/2

Paysanne 1/2 x 1/2 x 1/4

Rondelle—disc shaped slices of round vegetable

Bias—oval shaped slices of cylindrical vegetables

Chiffonade—Rough cut of leafy herb or vegetable

Types of Knives

French (Chef's) knife – Offers the greatest versatility for most cutting and chopping. Used in a rocking motion where knife tip always touches the cutting board.

Boning knife – thinner, pointed, used for cleaning meats and removing bones. Used in small strokes.

Paring knife – small, short knife, most often used for cutting fruit. Used in one hand, pulling the edge toward your palm in opposition to pressure applied by the thumb

Slicing knife – longer knife with serrated edge, for cutting bread and slicing meats in a sawing fashion.

Sharpening steel – used to “true” the knife's edge, eliminating “burrs” that cause friction and drag the knife.

Sharpening your Knife

Use a sharpening stone; electric sharpeners can wear down the blade. Hold blade at 20 degree angle, as if you are taking a small slice from the stone. Move the knife from heel to tip slowly.

The Steel is not used to sharpen but to true the edge. “True” means smooth out irregularities and remove burrs. Hold the tip of the steel at a 90 degree angle to your work surface. Place the knife against the steel at a 20 degree angle. Then draw the blade along the entire length of the steel. Wipe the blade in a safe fashion to remove metal scrapings. If you use the steel often, you will rarely use the stone.

Mise en Place

(“meez on plahs”)

***From French: “everything in place”,
the preparation and assembly of all
ingredients and equipment needed***