



CULINARY
INSTITUTE OF
CHILD NUTRITION

CULINARY QUICK BITES

KNIFE SKILLS: KNIFE CARE AND
MAINTENANCE



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Aleshia Hall-Campbell, PhD, MPH

Institute of Child Nutrition
The University of Mississippi, School of Applied Sciences
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TRAINING OVERVIEW

The Culinary Quick Bites training series is a tool to help child nutrition professionals develop and refine their culinary skills. Each lesson is designed to last approximately fifteen minutes. Each lesson should be facilitated (led) by the person responsible for overseeing food production at a meal site, service area, or the district level.

Training facilitators should review the training, in its entirety, prior to conducting the training.

This training has been developed to address a variety of learning styles. The training includes an overview of the topic presented by the facilitator, an infographic to reinforce the training topic visually, a video to demonstrate the topic, and an activity to reinforce learning.

Please contact the Institute of Child Nutrition Help Desk at 1-800-321-3054 or helpdesk@theicn.org if you have any questions about how best to facilitate this training.

KEY AREA

Key Area: 2 – Operations

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

FOOD PRODUCTION – 2100

Employee will be able to effectively utilize food preparation principles, production records, kitchen equipment, and food crediting to prepare foods from standardized recipes, including those for special diets.

2130 – Develop culinary skills necessary for school meal preparation.

FACILITATOR'S NOTES

This training counts for 15 minutes of training credit under USDA Professional Standards learning objective 2130 – Develop culinary skills necessary for school meal preparation.

The activity at the end of the lesson involves honing knives safely. This activity helps reinforce knowledge and skills learned during this lesson.

Before the training, prepare for the lesson activity and set up the kitchen workstation as described on page 11.

Deliver the lesson/training to participants:

- Read the lesson overview to the participants.
- Discuss the infographic and how it relates to the training topic.
- View the instruction video with participants.
- Answer any questions participants may have on the lesson, infographic, and video.

Complete the activity as instructed on page 12.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Chef Knife – 1 per person
 - Honing Steel – 1 per person
 - Towel – 1 per person
 - Infographic: How to Hone a Knife – 1 per person
 - Infographic: Methods for Sharpening Knives – 1 per person
 - Access to a screen to show the training video. Possible options include:
 - Site computer monitor with sound
 - Projector with sound
 - Tablets and smartphones
- A QR code has been provided for quick access to the video on handheld devices.

LESSON OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVE:

At the end of this lesson, participants will be able to identify proper methods for maintaining kitchen knives.

WHAT IS HONING?

- Honing the knife between uses is a best practice to maintain a sharp edge. A common misconception is that honing steel is used to sharpen a knife. Honing steels are maintenance tools for chef and paring knives. Wash the knife after honing it to remove any metal debris.
- Your knife is perhaps the most important tool you will use when preparing foods. Proper knife care will increase the effectiveness of the tool, ultimately increasing your efficiency. Many of us may have heard the adage that a sharp knife is safer than a dull knife.
- All knives, in essence, are serrated. You may not notice this because the teeth are microscopic. A blade becomes dull when the teeth get out of alignment.

METHODS FOR SHARPENING KNIVES

- The importance of maintaining a sharp blade
 - Always have a “safety first” mindset. A sharp knife is a safe knife!
 - Efficiency benefits of using sharp knives
 - Precision of knife cuts
- As a knife is used, the teeth begin to fall out of alignment, causing the blade to become dull. When a knife is sharpened, the teeth are brought back into alignment, and the blade is once again sharp.
- The three most common methods for sharpening knives
 - Whetstone
 - Electric sharpener
 - Sharpening service
- Avoid using handheld knife sharpeners. They are dangerous to the user.
- Identify a knife sharpening system that works for your site. Work with your foodservice leadership team to identify procedures for your site.

KNIFE HONING AND KNIFE SHARPENING

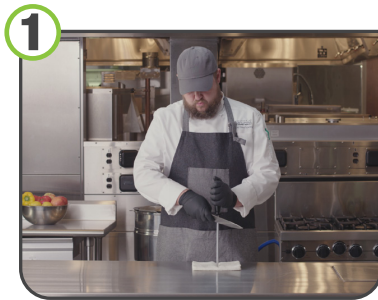
- Utilizing the infographics, review the process for how to care and maintain your knives properly.
- Review the embedded training video.

Culinary Quick Bites KNIFE SKILLS

KNIFE CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Steps to Hone a Knife:

- Place a towel on your work surface to prevent the steel from slipping.
- Hold the steel vertically, with the tip resting on your work surface.
- The knife should pass across the steel at a 22 degree angle. A good way to identify what a 22 degree angle looks like is to address the steel with your knife at a 90 degree angle. From 90 degrees, cut the angle in half to 45 degrees, and then cut that 45 degrees in half again, arriving at an approximately 22 degree angle.
- Begin by placing the heel of the blade near the top of the steel and swiping the blade across the steel in a motion similar to closing a pair of scissors.
- Alternate sides of the blade, applying even pressure and making smooth, consistent strokes.



Begin at the heel of the blade, high on the steel.



Pull towards you as you slide down.



Finish at the tip.



Switch to the other side.



Pull as you slide.



Finish up. (repeat approximately 6 times on each side)

Culinary Quick Bites KNIFE SKILLS

KNIFE CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Knife Sharpening Methods:



Whetstone

- A fine-grained stone used for sharpening knives
- Economical for long-term use
- Requires staff training
- Manual application
- Requires precision and practice as there are no guards to guide the hand



Electric Sharpener

- Draw the blade through a guided slot that has a spinning stone wheel
- Economical for long-term use
- Requires consistent application of pressure when drawing the blade through
- Requires staff training



Sharpening Service

- Professional service requires a procurement process
- Price is a consideration – the service can be costly
- Vendor may be able to service knives on-site or off-site
- Sharpening can be done on a set schedule
- Best option for staff safety



CULINARY QUICK BITES

Knife Skills: Knife Care and Maintenance

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

<https://vimeo.com/695264342/14bea467d9>

QR CODE

Utilize the QR code embedded to the right to share the video with staff utilizing handheld devices such as smartphones and tablets. Use the photo app on the smart device to scan the code to be directed to the video.



ACTIVITY

Each participant will set up a work station.

SETUP

MATERIALS:



Chef Knife
– 1 per person



Towel
– 1 per person



Infographic: Methods
for Sharpening Knives
– 1 per person



Honing steel
– 1 per person



Infographic: How to
Hone a Knife
– 1 per person

NOTE: If your site does not have enough materials for all participants to complete the activity simultaneously, divide participants into groups based on your materials. Allow enough time for each participant to complete the activity.

SETUP INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

- 1** Prior to the training, gather all of the materials needed for the activity. Set up a workstation for each participant with anti-slip mat, honing steel, towel and chef knife.
- 2** During the activity, remember to monitor and observe staff as they practice their culinary skills.

ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Each participant will hone a knife.

- 1** Discuss and demonstrate the steps to hone a knife.
- 2** Instruct participants to take their time and practice honing a knife carefully.
- 3** Refer the participants to the infographic. Then read the instructions for the activity. Ask the participants if there are any questions before beginning the activity.
- 4** Instruct all participants to wash their hands and put on single-use gloves before starting the activity.
- 5** Place a towel on your work surface to prevent the steel from slipping.
- 6** Hold the steel vertically, with the tip resting on your work surface.
- 7** The knife should pass across the steel at a 22 degree angle. A good way to identify what a 22 degree angle looks like is to address the steel with your knife at a 90 degree angle. From 90 degrees, cut the angle in half to 45 degrees, and then cut those 45 degrees in half again, arriving at an approximately 22 degree angle.
- 8** Begin by placing the heel of the blade near the top of the steel and swiping the blade across the steel in a motion similar to closing a pair of scissors.
- 9** Alternate sides of the blade, applying even pressure and making smooth, consistent strokes.

POST ACTIVITY

- After completing the hands-on activity, recap the lesson with the participants. Offer an opportunity for participants to share their learning experience during the training and highlight any tips or takeaways they want to share with the group.
- If time allows, facilitate a discussion with the participants. Suggested discussion topics include:
 - Ask participants the best way to sharpen knives at their site.
 - Ask participants to describe how often they will hone their knives moving forward.
- Ask if the participants feel more comfortable with knife care and maintenance or want more time to develop the skill further if time allows.
- Plan the next training session based on the needs of your staff.



The University of Mississippi

School of Applied Sciences

800-321-3054

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