



CULINARY
INSTITUTE OF
CHILD NUTRITION

CULINARY QUICK BITES

KNIFE SKILLS: HOW TO DICE



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Institute of Child Nutrition
The University of Mississippi, School of Applied Sciences
www.theicn.org

Key Area: 2 – Operations

USDA Professional Standards Code
Food Production – 2100

2023

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Institute of Child Nutrition. (2023). *Culinary quick bites knife skills: How to dice*. University, MS:
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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 dicing potatoes. This activity helps reinforce knowledge and skills learned during this lesson. The potatoes prepared during this lesson may be included in the next day's menu production.

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 11.

MATERIALS NEEDED



- Anti-slip mat – 1 per person
- Cutting board – 1 per person
- Chef knife – 1 per person
- Washed potato – at least 1 per person
- Waste pan – as needed
- Food pan – as needed
- Infographic: How to Dice – 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 demonstrate how to dice.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT DICING

- Diced foods are cut into cubes and can range in size from $\frac{1}{8}$ inch to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch – a precision cut that is consistent in size.
 - The large dice measures $\frac{3}{4}$ inch \times $\frac{3}{4}$ inch \times $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.
 - Ideal for foods like hearty stews, soups, or roasted root vegetables
 - The medium dice measures $\frac{1}{2}$ inch \times $\frac{1}{2}$ inch \times $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
 - Generally, a good choice when recipes don't specify the size of the dice
 - The small dice measures $\frac{1}{4}$ inch \times $\frac{1}{4}$ inch \times $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.
 - Chopped used for mirepoix (flavor base made of diced onion, carrot, and celery)
- A chef knife is the most popular knife for dicing.
- Creates uniform squares for even cooking and look.

STEPS OF A DICE CUT

1. **Prepare the vegetables:** Rinse and dry the vegetables. Remove the stem ends as needed.
2. **Peel:** Peel the vegetables, if desired.
3. **Cut into planks:** Cut the vegetables lengthwise into slices: $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick for small dice, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick for medium dice, and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick for large dice.
4. **Cut into sticks:** Stack the planks on top of each other and cut the planks lengthwise into sticks that are the same width as the planks.
5. **Dice:** Cut the sticks crosswise, again in the same width as the sticks, to produce dice.

HOW TO DICE

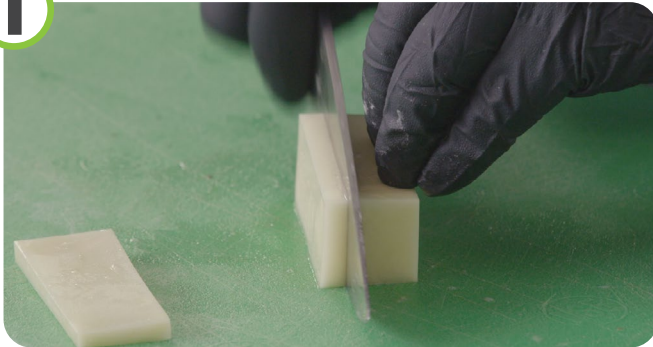
- Utilizing the infographic, review the process for the dicing technique of cutting.
- Review the embedded training video.

After we review the infographic and video, there will be an activity to reinforce skills learned.

Culinary Quick Bites KNIFE SKILLS

HOW TO DICE

1



Cut into planks: Trim and peel vegetables, if applicable, and cut lengthwise into slices: 1/4-inch thick for small dice, 1/2-inch thick for medium dice, and 3/4-inch thick for large dice.

2



Cut into sticks: Stack the slices on top of each other and cut the slices lengthwise into sticks that are the same width as the slices.

3



Dice: Cut the sticks crosswise, again in the same width as the sticks, to produce even dice.



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WATCH THE VIDEO

<https://vimeo.com/695264191/ed6ca4d8af>

QR CODE

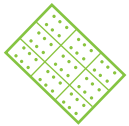
Utilize the QR code embedded to the right to share the video with staff utilizing handheld devices such as smartphones and tablets. Use the photo app on the smart device to scan the code to be directed to the video.



ACTIVITY

SETUP

MATERIALS:



Anti-slip mat
– 1 per person



Waste pan
– as needed



Food pan
– as needed



Cutting board
– 1 per person



Washed potato
– at least 1 per
person



Infographic: How
to Dice – 1 per
person



Chef 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. Pre-wash the potatoes that will be used for the training. Set up a workstation for each participant with an anti-slip mat, cutting board, chef knife, and potato.
- 2** During the activity, remember to monitor and observe staff as they practice their culinary skills.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

- 1** 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.
- 2** Instruct all participants to wash their hands and put on single-use gloves before starting the activity.
- 3** Each participant will dice one potato into a medium dice.
 - Instruct participants to take their time and practice their cuts carefully.
 - Discard waste.

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 to describe menu items that benefit from being diced.
 - Ask participants why cutting food items to the same size is important.
- Ask if the participants feel more comfortable dicing or want more time to develop the skill further if time allows.
- Plan the next training session based on the needs of your staff.



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