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CULINARY  
INSTITUTE OF  
CHILD NUTRITION

# CULINARY QUICK BITES

BASIC FOOD PREP SKILLS:  
HOW TO GARNISH



# **CULINARY QUICK BITES**

## **BASIC FOOD PREP SKILLS: HOW TO GARNISH**

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Key Area: 2 – Operations

**USDA Professional Standards Code**  
Food Production – 2100

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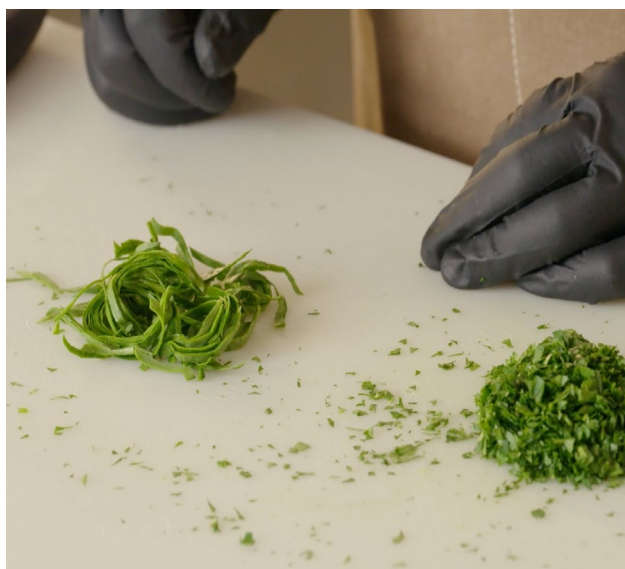
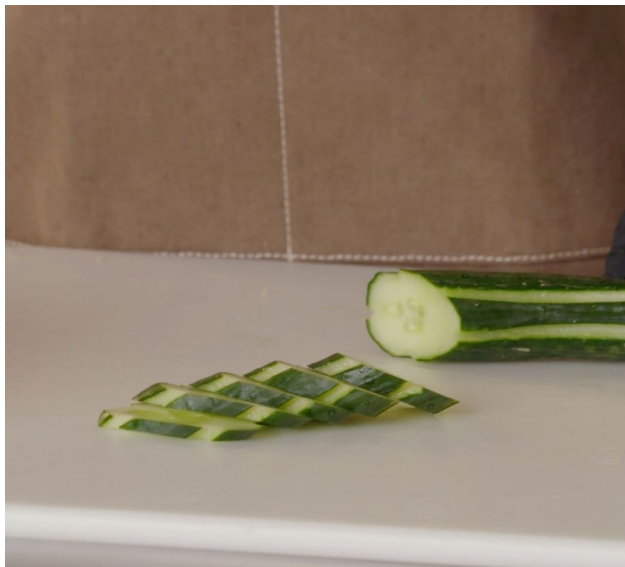
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# TRAINING OVERVIEW

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 at 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](mailto: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 this lesson involves preparing fresh produce for garnishing. The activity helps reinforce knowledge and skills learned during this lesson. Garnishes 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 12.

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 13.

## MATERIALS NEEDED



- Anti-slip mat – 1 per pair
- Cutting board – 1 per pair
- Chef knife – 1 per pair
- Waste pan – as needed
- Food pan – as needed
- Flat leaf parsley – 1 bunch per person
- Spinach – small handful per person
- Scallion – 1 bunch per person
- Cucumber – 1 per person
- Lemon – 1 per person
- Infographic: Garnish Preparation – 1 per person
- Handout: Knife Skills Peer Review Checklist – 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 garnish a food pan/tray.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO GARNISH FOOD ITEMS

- The term “we eat with our eyes first” is very accurate since we see our food before consuming it.
- A serving line that is eye-appealing highlights the colors, textures, and freshness of the food items being offered and serves as a free marketing tool to entice students to select a meal. Garnishing foods or meals on the line is one way to improve the visual presentation of your meal service.
- Every day, a few minutes before the meal service starts, walk in front of the serving line so you can view it from your customer’s perspective.
- You must adhere to food safety procedures when working with foods you plan to use for garnishing. Ensure garnishes are handled with safe food handling practices and are edible.
- As a primary guideline, garnishes should be:
  - Simple, natural, and fresh in appearance
  - Suitable in texture and size to the food
  - Flavorful – bland foods may require a seasoned garnish
  - Harmonious – colors should complement each other; pay attention to ensure the end result is visually pleasing and attractive
  - Colorful and add a variety of textures
  - Edible
- Additional guidelines for child nutrition garnishes:
  - Sprinkle or place in small groupings
  - Select inexpensive garnishes – they shouldn’t drive up the cost of the recipe
  - Use to enhance, not to compete with the food
  - Use sparingly
  - Follow the recipe. Do not garnish with ingredients that can significantly change the nutritional content of the product—for example, adding cheese, breadcrumbs, or pickled/marinated food items

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



# Culinary Quick Bites

BASIC FOOD PREPARATION SKILLS

## GARNISH PREPARATION

### ZEST CITRUS FRUIT

Using a kitchen rasp:



Use moderate pressure to drag the fruit across the coarse indentations. This tool produces thin, curly strips of zest that are ideal for garnishes.

Using a box grater:



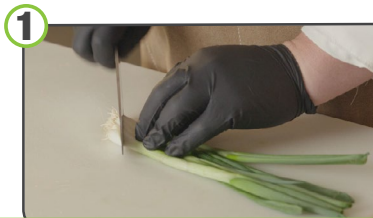
Use moderate pressure to drag the fruit down the side of the tool to create coarse zest.

Using a vegetable peeler:

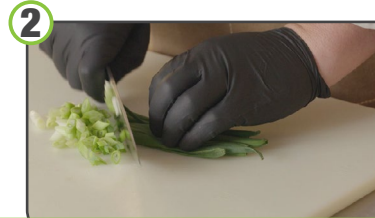


Using moderate pressure so as not to remove any pith, drag the peeler down the citrus fruit, from top to bottom, or around the fruit. This makes large pieces of zest perfect for garnishing. For smaller pieces of zest, slice into thin strips or mince into pieces with a knife.

### CUT SCALLIONS ON A BIAS

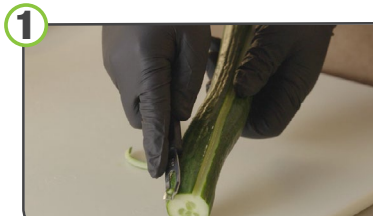


Place scallions on the cutting board in a manageable quantity. Remove the root ends of the scallions, cutting at a 45-degree angle. Discard the root ends.

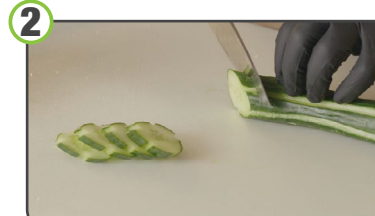


Continue to slice the scallions at a 45-degree angle, moving up the vegetable from the white to the dark green part. Store for use during meal service.

### SCORE CUCUMBERS AND CUT ON A BIAS



Trim off the ends of the cucumber. Using a channel knife or fork, score the skin of the cucumber from one end to the other. Discard any waste.



Slice the cucumber at an angle; 35 to 45-degrees is the most desirable. Store for use during meal service.

# Culinary Quick Bites

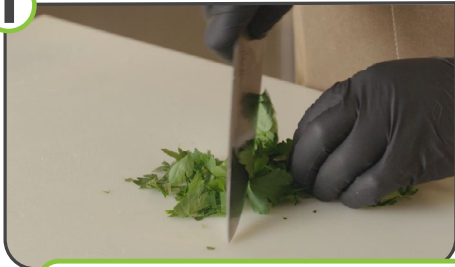
BASIC FOOD PREPARATION SKILLS

## GARNISH PREPARATION

### HOW TO ROUGH-CUT, MINCE AND CHIFFONADE

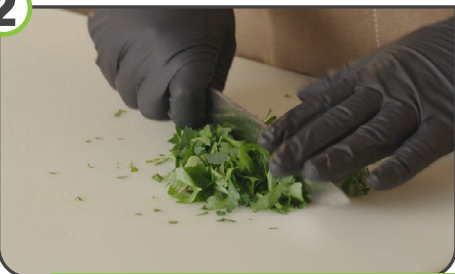
#### ROUGH AND MINCE CUT HERBS

1



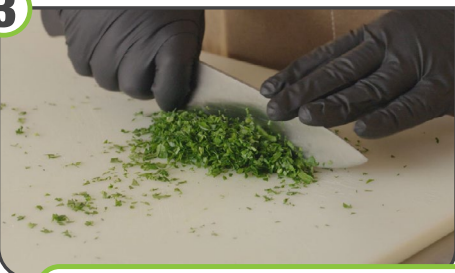
Using a chef knife, place the herbs in a pile on the cutting board. Run the chef knife through the herbs.

2



Continue to run the chef knife through the herbs until the desired size is achieved. Store for use during meal service.

3



To mince herbs, continue from the rough chop size by continuing to run a chef knife through the herbs until the herbs are cut into very small pieces. Store for use during meal service.

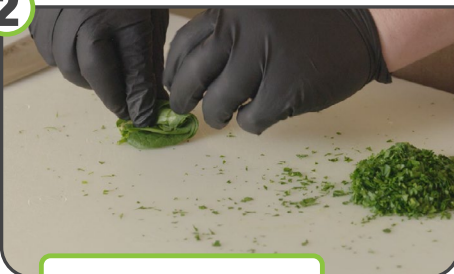
#### CHIFFONADE HERBS

1



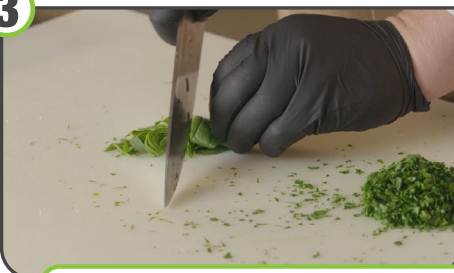
Stack the leaves.

2



Roll the leaves tightly.

3



Thinly slice the leaves perpendicular to the roll. Unroll and separate the ribbons. Store for use during meal service.

# CULINARY QUICK BITES

## How To Garnish Food Pan or Tray

**WATCH THE VIDEO**

<https://vimeo.com/854355373/a4a92e5b35>

### QR CODE

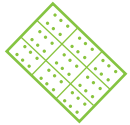
Utilize the QR code embedded to the right to share the video with staff utilizing handheld devices such as smartphones and tablets. Use the photo app on the smart device to scan the code to be directed to the video.



# ACTIVITY

## SETUP

### MATERIALS:



Anti-slip mat  
– 1 per pair



Food pan  
– as needed



Cucumber  
– 1 per person



Cutting board  
– 1 per pair



Flat leaf parsley  
– 1 bunch per person



Lemon  
– 1 per person



Chef knife  
– 1 per pair



Spinach  
– small handful per person



Infographic: Garnish  
Preparation  
– 1 per person



Waste pan  
– as needed



Scallion  
– 1 bunch per person



Handout: Knife Skills  
Peer Review Checklist  
– 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 produce that will be used for the training. Set up a workstation for each participant with required utensils and food items.
- 2** During the activity, remember to monitor and observe staff as they practice their culinary skills.

# ACTIVITY

## ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Each participant will practice making garnishes for food pans.

- 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 demonstrate the following knife cuts:
  - Flat Leaf Parsley
    - One bunch each, rough chop, and then mince
  - Spinach
    - Small handful each, cut into chiffonade
  - Scallion
    - One bunch each, slice on a bias
  - Cucumber
    - One cucumber each, score and slice
  - Lemon
    - One lemon each, zest
- 4** The reviewing partner will use the Knife Skills Peer Review Checklist to observe and provide constructive feedback.
- 5** Save the food items to garnish the week's serving line pans.

## 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 discuss current program recipes that can benefit from adding a garnish for visual appeal.
  - Ask participants to describe other garnishes they may have used to make foods more visually appealing and discuss how those can be incorporated into program recipes.
- Ask if the participants feel more comfortable with garnish preparation or want more time to develop the skill further if time allows.
- Plan the next training session based on the needs of your staff.

# HANDOUT: KNIFE SKILLS PEER REVIEW CHECKLIST

## Knife Skills Peer Review Checklist

#	Task	Never	Sometimes	Always	Comment
<b>Work Station Setup</b>					
1	Cutting board is secured				
2	Station is clean and sanitized				
3	Food items have been properly washed before beginning task				
4	Station is set up with a waste pan for trim				
5	Selects the correct knife for the task				
<b>Application</b>					
1	Addresses board at a slight angle with feet hip-width apart				
2	Maintains a confident stance while performing cutting tasks				
3	Uses the correct knife grip on the knife				
4	Uses the correct grip to hold items with the guide hand				
5	No bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods				
6	Uses major muscle groups to apply pressure instead of using wrist motions				
7	Uses a rocking motion when cutting, blade rarely leaves the board				
8	Cuts are consistent and uniform (similar in shape and size)				
9	Station is organized and uncluttered				
10	Cleans and sanitizes, as appropriate, between tasks				
11	Follows S.A.F.E.T.Y. at all times				



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