



CULINARY  
INSTITUTE OF  
CHILD NUTRITION

# CULINARY QUICK BITES

BASIC FOOD PREP SKILLS:  
HOW TO SET UP AN ASSEMBLY LINE



# **CULINARY QUICK BITES**

## **BASIC FOOD PREP SKILLS: HOW TO SET UP AN ASSEMBLY LINE**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Aleshia Hall-Campbell, PhD, MPH

**Institute of Child Nutrition**  
The University of Mississippi, School of Applied Sciences  
[www.theicn.org](http://www.theicn.org)

Key Area: 2 – Operations

**USDA Professional Standards Code**  
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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 the lesson involves practicing setting up an assembly line. This activity helps reinforce knowledge and skills learned during this lesson. The food items 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 12.

## MATERIALS NEEDED



- Cycle menu – 1 per person
- Infographic: How to Set Up an Assembly Line – 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 set up an assembly line for large scale food production.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ASSEMBLY LINES

- In assembly line production for school nutrition kitchens, food is prepared in a systematic, step-by-step manner. Imagine a long preparation table where all the ingredients for making sandwiches, wraps, salads, or burritos are laid out.
- This setup is like a real-life version of a conveyor belt, except the workers are moving, and the food stays in one place until it is ready. It's designed to be efficient so that many meals can be prepared quickly and correctly, which is especially important in a busy school kitchen.

## STEPS TO SET UP AN ASSEMBLY

1. **Starting Point:** At one end of the table, you begin with the basic starting item, like bread for sandwiches or a tortilla for burritos and begin laying out the base ingredient. It may be that you begin with a piece of parchment paper for sandwiches and wraps or a container for salads.
2. **Adding Ingredients:** As you move along the table, you (or other workers) are responsible for adding each ingredient from the recipe, one-by-one, to the menu item. For example, one person might add lettuce, while another adds turkey, and another adds tomatoes to a sandwich.
3. **Single Employee or Multiple Employees:**
  - If there is just one employee, that person moves down the table, adding each ingredient to the menu item until it is complete.
  - If there are multiple employees, each one might have a specific job. One person could be responsible for adding vegetables, another for adding meats, and another for adding condiments.
4. **Quality Check:** Before the menu items are complete, staff (either the same worker or a different one) checks to make sure everything indicated in the recipe is included and the end product will look appealing to the students.
5. **Wrapping and Serving:** Once all of the recipe ingredients have been added and reviewed, it's then time to wrap up the menu item for the next step, which may be further cooking or ready to be served to students.
6. **Clean and Reset:** After the food items have been prepared, the table is cleaned and reset with new ingredients, and the process starts again for the next set of menu items.

## HOW TO SET UP AN ASSEMBLY LINE

- Utilizing the infographic, review the process for how to set up an assembly line.
- Review the embedded training video.

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



## Culinary Quick Bites

BASIC FOOD PREPARATION SKILLS

## HOW TO SET UP AN ASSEMBLY LINE

1



Prepare and portion your ingredients in advance using mise en place principles. Set up a food safe work area. Line a production table with parchment paper or film.

2



Lay out the base assembly component (tortilla, bread, grab-and-go container, etc.)

3



Add your next ingredient such as a spread for sandwiches and wraps or salad mix for salads to all of the base components. Be sure to use the quantity specified in the recipe.

4



Add, in the order specified by the recipe, each additional ingredient. Continue until all listed ingredients have been added to all base components.

5



Finalize the assembly by folding the wrap, topping the sandwich, or closing the grab-and-go box.

6



Store as appropriate for meal service.

### PRO TIP:

Whenever possible, work in a team of two or more with each person alternating adding the next ingredient.



# CULINARY QUICK BITES

## How to Set Up An Assembly Line

**WATCH THE VIDEO**

<https://vimeo.com/854356970/523885fc1f>

### 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:



Cycle menu  
– 1 per person



Infographic: How to Set  
Up an Assembly Line  
– 1 per person

## SETUP INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

- 1** Prior to the training, gather all the materials needed for the activity.
- 2** During the activity, remember to encourage staff to actively participate in the discussion.

# ACTIVITY

## ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

- 1** Refer the participants to the infographic and video. Then instruct the participants on the activity. Ask the participants if there are any questions before beginning the activity.
- 2** Facilitate a review of your site's menus.
  - Allow participants time to review the menus.
  - Ask participants which recipes could benefit from using the assembly line approach.

## POST ACTIVITY

- After completing the discussion, 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 if they think preparing their sandwiches, wraps or salads using an assembly line would be useful.
- Ask if the participants feel more comfortable with setting up an assembly line for large scale food production 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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