



Make it Fresh with Cooking Counts Lesson Plans for: *Knife Skills*

Course Description:

This hands-on training will introduce you to knife skills which will help participants feel more comfortable when processing fresh fruits and vegetables for use in scratch cooking.
Estimated class time: 2 hours

Preparation:

Equipment Needed:

Chef knives
Cutting boards
Paper towels

Grocery List:

Onions
Potatoes
Spinach

Opening Remarks:

Today's lesson is Knife Skills.

Understand the Knives:

Knife Types

French knife, or chef's knife, is the most frequently used knife in the kitchen, it is used for general purpose chopping, slicing and dicing. The blade is wide at the heel and tapers to a point.

Boning knives have a thin, pointed blade about 6 inches long. These are used for boning raw meats and poultry. It has a flexible blade that makes navigating around bones and tendons easier.

Utility knives have a narrow, pointed blade 6-8 inches long. These are used mostly for pantry work, cutting and preparing lettuce, fruits and vegetables.

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Slicers have a long, slender, flexible blade up to 14 inches long used for carving and slicing cooked meats.

Serrated slicers are slicers with a serrated edge and are used for cutting breads and cakes.

Paring knives have a small, pointed blade 2-4 inches long and are used for trimming and paring vegetables and fruit.

Handling the Knife

Grip – A proper grip gives you maximum control over the knife, increases your cutting accuracy and speed, prevents slipping and reduces the chance of an accident.

Guiding hand – While one hand controls the knife, the other hand controls the product being cut. This hand holds the item being cut firmly so it will not slip and guides the position of the item. The fingertips on this hand should be curled under, out of the way of the blade.

Knife Safety

Knives can be very dangerous. Please follow these guidelines while working with knives:

- Keep knives sharp
- Use the correct knife for each job
- Secure cutting boards so that they do not move while in use
- Never leave a knife in a sink
- Always hold knives securely when carrying them through the kitchen
- Announce yourself when navigating the kitchen with a knife using the word “sharp”

Show video:

[Knife Skills](#)

Lab:

Practice your cuts.

Chop – Cut into irregularly shaped pieces. Holding the tip of the knife against the cutting board, rock the knife rapidly up and down. At the same time, gradually move the knife sideways across the product on the board so the cuts pass through all parts of the pile of food. Continue until the product is chopped as fine as you desire (use onions).

Mince – Chop into very fine pieces (use onions).

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Batonnet – Start by squaring off the product by cutting a slice from all sides. Cut into even slices of the desired thickness. Stack the slices and again slice across the stack. The final result will be $\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 2-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", similar to a French fry (use potatoes).

Dice – Dicing starts with the same process as the Batonnet, but the pieces are lined up and cut one more time to cut cubes. Dice cuts may be large, medium or small (use potatoes).

Chiffonade -- This term refers to cutting leaves into fine shreds. Remove the heavy fibers, roll the leaves into a tight cylinder and slice (use spinach).

Discussion and Evaluation:

1. Did you feel comfortable holding and using the chef knife in the lab?
2. Did you find that your cuts became more consistent the more you practiced?
3. Were any of these cutting techniques new to you?

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