

# Manager's Corner

## Knife Skills: Types of Knives

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Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

### **VISION**

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

### **MISSION**

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service through an agreement with the Institute of Child Nutrition at the University of Mississippi. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.

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Suggested Reference Citation:

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2018). *Manager's corner: Knife skills*: Types of knives University, MS:  
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December 13, 2018

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## 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.

## Introduction

*Manager's Corner: Knife Skills: Types of Knives* is designed for managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. This resource is one of a continuous set of training resources designed to give directors/managers an easy-to-use lesson plan for training staff in various topics. *Manager's Corner: Knife Skills: Types of Knives* provides a method for training using many of the Institute of Child Nutrition's resources. Every lesson plan contains the following:

- learning objective,
- statement explaining the importance of the topic,
- list of materials,
- instructions on how to present the information,
- questions to ask staff, and
- additional resources to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the manager.



## Lesson Overview-Questions

**Objective:** Participants will be able to discuss the types of knives most commonly used in school kitchens.

**Why it is important:** Different types of knives are uniquely important to the preparation of a variety of items in the school kitchen.

### Materials:

- Chef's knife
- Paring knife
- Bread/serrated knife
- Cutting Board
- Seven self-adhesive notes
- Pen
- **Optional** Meat cleaver
- **Optional** Utility knife
- **Optional** Spatula spreader
- **Optional** Carving knife

### Instructions:

Collect the different types of knives (chef's knife, paring knife, bread/serrated knife, meat cleaver, utility knife, spatula spreader, and carving knife) used in your kitchen. Ask the staff to answer the Questions for the Staff included in this training. Facilitate the activity.

### Questions for the staff:

- **What is the knife that can be used when cutting vegetables or meat?**

**Answer:** A chef's knife can be used when cutting vegetables or meat.

- **What knife can be used for small tasks like peeling fruits or vegetables?**

**Answer:** A paring knife is used for small tasks like peeling fruits or vegetables.

- **What foods can be cut using a bread/serrated knife?**

**Answer:** Bread/serrated knives can be used for cutting soft fleshed fruits or vegetables and bread

## Activity

### Knife Type Activity Instructions:

- Discuss the types of knives used in your kitchen:
  - Arrange the types of knives (chef's knife, paring knife, bread/serrated knife, meat cleaver, utility knife, spatula spreader, and carving knife) used in the kitchen on cutting board.
  - Place a self-adhesive note with the knife's name on the cutting board under each knife.
  - Ask participants to gather around for the lesson.

### Knife Type Activity:

- **Chef's knife:** Explain that the chef's knife is the most common knife used in the kitchen. The chef's knife has a large blade and helps to slice, dice, and chop easily.
- **Paring knife:** Explain that the paring knife is best used to peel fruit, vegetables, or other small tasks.
- **Bread/serrated knife:** Explain that this knife is best used on breads, soft fleshed fruits or vegetables because of the serrated edge. The tooth like edge helps to easily slice without damaging the food item that is being cut. When using this knife, a sawing motion will help to cut the product without damaging the food.
- **Optional Meat cleaver:** Explain that a meat cleaver is sharp and great for slicing through ribs, bones, and thick cuts of meat.
- **Optional Utility Knife:** Explain that the utility knife is great for coring fruits, vegetables, and trimming excess fat.
- **Optional Spatula spreader:** Explain that with its flexible blade the user can mix, stir, spread, slice, and serve with just this knife.
- **Optional Carving knife:** Explain that the carving knife helps to make thin, smooth, even slices of meats or large fruits and vegetables.

## References

The Culinary Institute of America. (2011) *The professional chef (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.)*. Hoboken, New Jersey:  
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.



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