



## KNOWING KNIVES

### Chef's Knife

**How to Use It:** A classic chef's knife is the most important knife in your collection. Choose an 8- to 10-inch chef's knife; the longer edge makes the knife more versatile and efficient. The more blade you have, the more knife you have to do the work for you, and the bigger the blade you have to slice through an ingredient, the safer it is. A chef's knife is the go-to tool for more than 90 percent of daily kitchen tasks.

**How Not to Use It:** While a chef's knife may be the "king of the kitchen," it should not be used to butcher or carve poultry, to remove the skin of large vegetables such as butternut squash, or, as some people have tried, to puncture a hole in cans. The broadness of a chef's knife blade makes it

unwieldy for tasks better suited to a smaller knife.



### Paring Knife

**How to Use It:** A paring knife picks up where a chef's knife leaves off. It's best for slicing and mincing items that are too small for an 8- to 10-inch blade, such as garlic, shallots, or strawberries. The average paring knife blade is about 3 1/2 inches long, it's a great tool for any foods that require an attention to detail.

**How Not to Use It:** Avoid using paring knives to cut very hard vegetables, such as carrots, celery root, or parsnips. These smaller knives don't carry enough weight to easily slice through the foods, which may prompt you to increase the pressure or tighten your grip as you're cutting. If you find yourself applying pressure at any point, you're doing something wrong. Forcing the cut is a signal that you aren't using the right blade for the job, and it can be dangerous, too, causing the knife to slip.



### Serrated Knife

**How to Use It:** Serrated knives may be most commonly associated with slicing bread. However, the toothed blade can take on almost any job not suited to the straight blade of a chef's knife. A serrated knife, with an average blade length of 6 inches, is especially useful for foods with waxy surfaces, such as tomatoes, pineapples, watermelons, citrus, and peppers. The jagged edge can grip and penetrate those slippery exteriors, while the flat blade of a chef's knife would slip and slide across the surface.

**How Not to Use It:** Serrated knives should only be used for slicing, rather than chopping, foods. Using a sawing motion with the knife allows the teeth along the blade to grip and cut through ingredients, which is also

why a serrated knife should not be used to slice smaller items such as fresh herbs, garlic, or berries.



### **How to Choose and Use a Honing Steel**

**How to Use It:** Another essential tool for your knife block is actually not a knife at all but rather a honing steel, which is designed to keep your knives at their peak sharpness for as long as possible. Note: A honing steel does not really actually sharpen your knives, but it can keep them sharp by realigning the teeth (or fibers) on the blade, which leads to a sharper edge and thus a cleaner cut. Knives should be honed every time you use them, but because honing doesn't actually sharpen the blade, cooks have their knives professionally sharpened once a year.

**How Not to Use It:** A honing steel can be used with any straight-sided blade, such as a chef's knife or paring knife, but it should not be used on serrated knives since the teeth won't glide along the steel.

### **STEP 1: START AT THE HEEL**



Most first-timers find the vertical grip to be easiest. Hold the handle of the steel and plant the tip into your cutting board. Place the heel of the knife against the top of the steel at an approximate 15-20 degree angle.

### **STEP 2: FINISH AT THE TIP**



Applying only light pressure, draw the knife down the steel, using the full length of the steel, and pulling across the full length of the knife, maintaining a constant angle.

### STEP 3: BEGIN SECOND SIDE



Hold the heel of the knife against the other side of the steel, again at a 15 - 20 degree angle.

### STEP 4: FINISH SECOND SIDE



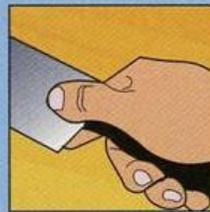
Drag the knife blade across the steel until the tip of the knife and the tip of the steel meet. Repeat with both sides until blade is honed—usually about 8 strokes per side.

### Three basic knife grips

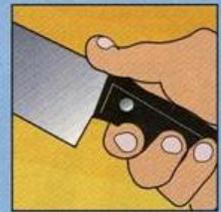
1. Grip the handle with four fingers. Hold the thumb against the side of the blade.



2. Grip the handle with three fingers. Rest the index finger flat against the blade on one side, and hold the thumb on the opposite side to give additional stability and control.



3. Grip the handle with four fingers. Hold the thumb firmly against the blade's back.



## **Rules for Knife SAFETY**

**Securely hold your knife**

**Ancor cutting boards**

**Fingertips curled back**

**Eyes on the knife**

**Take your time**

**Yield to falling knives**

## **Knife Safety Dos and Don'ts**

**DO:**

- Keep knives sharpened and communicate to others when knives have been sharpened.
- Use a knife only for its intended purpose.
- Use the appropriate knife for the job.
- Carry knives with the cutting edge slightly away from your body.
- Store knives properly in racks or knife sheaths.

**DON'T:**

- Touch knife blades.
- Try and catch a falling knife.
- Hand a knife to someone- put it down and let the other person pick it up.
- Leave a knife soaking in a sink of water.
- Talk to people, or be distracted while using a knife.



<http://allrecipes.com/video/38/how-to-master-basic-knife-skills/detail.aspx>  
<http://www.serious-eats.com/2014/05/draft-knife-skills-the-three-basic-knife-cuts.html>