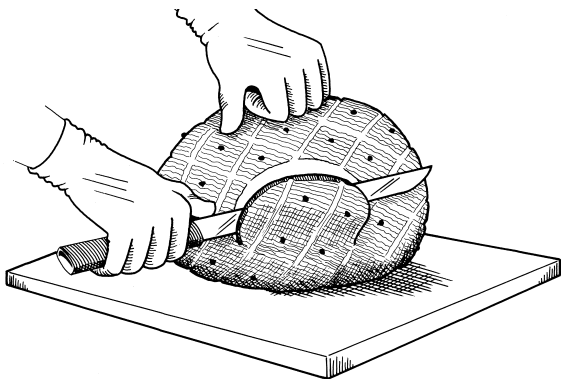


# Knife Handling and Safety

Knives are necessary in food service work, but they present some obvious hazards. Follow these safety tips to make sure that nothing but food gets cut.



## When Chopping, Slicing, Dicing or Peeling:

- ◆ Keep your fingertips out of harm's way by curling your fingers under on the hand that's holding what you're cutting. This puts your knuckles, not your fingers, nearest the knife.
- ◆ Wear cut-resistant gloves if you can.
- ◆ Angle the blade away from you when slicing or peeling so the knife won't cut you if it slips.
- ◆ If you get distracted or interrupted while using a knife, stop what you're doing until you can focus on the task at hand.

## Cleaning

Cleaning knives after each use can prevent the spread of bacteria, keep knives in good shape and prevent accidents caused by dirty or slippery knives. Always wipe or rinse food off of knives immediately after they're used (especially mayonnaise, which is highly corrosive).

- ◆ Lay the blade on a flat surface.
- ◆ Carefully wipe one side with a wet cloth, then the other.
- ◆ Wipe from the spine (back) of the blade
- ◆ Use soap and hot water to clean a knife after it has been used to cut poultry, meat or fish, and at the end of each day.
- ◆ Wash knives by hand and allow to air dry.
- ◆ Use a sanitizing solution.
- ◆ Avoid putting a knife into soapy water and leaving it unattended there. Someone could reach into the cloudy water and get cut.

## Avoid Putting Knives in a Dishwasher Because:

- ◆ loose knives could damage the machine's protective coating.
- ◆ knives are hazardous to people reaching into the machine.

## Sharpening

When a knife needs a good sharpening, get a sharpening stone or have a professional sharpen it for you. To align a knife's edge after daily wear and tear, use a sharpening steel.

- ◆ Hold the blade's edge at about a 20-degree angle from the steel.
- ◆ Draw the blade along the steel with a few easy strokes.
- ◆ Alternate sides.
- ◆ Be gentle; don't push too hard.

## It's Important to Keep Knives Sharp Because:

- ◆ sharp knives require less pressure to cut food.
- ◆ dull knives are more likely to slip and cut you instead of the food.
- ◆ if you cut yourself, it will be a clean cut.

## To Keep Knives Sharp, Avoid Cutting on These Surfaces:

- ◆ porcelain
- ◆ glass
- ◆ metal

## Storing

Store knives:

- ◆ in a wooden knife block, on a wall-mounted magnet strip, in racks or in trays.
- ◆ away from open flames or extreme heat.
- ◆ separate from other utensils.

## Knife Safety:

- ✓ Never use a knife as a substitute for other tools such as a screwdriver or bottle opener.
- ✓ Avoid scraping food off a cutting board with the sharp edge of a knife—you'll dull it. Use the back of the blade instead.
- ✓ Carry knives with the blade pointed downward.