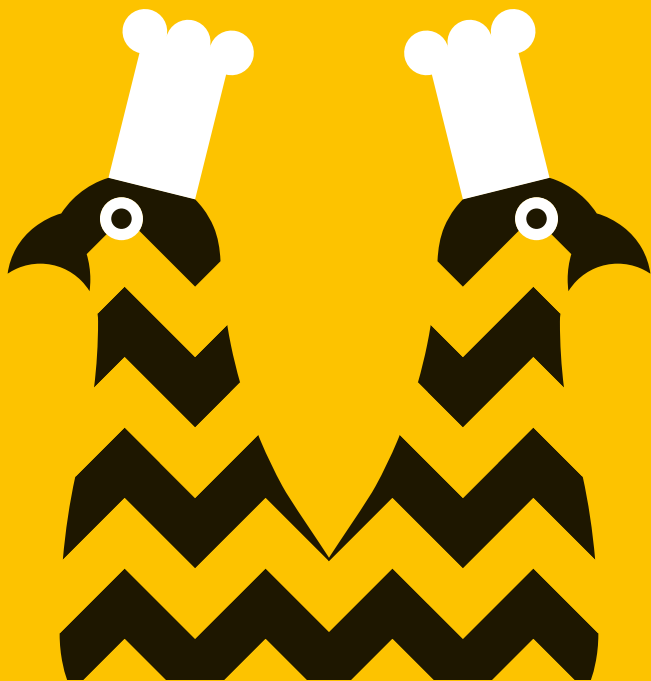


KITCHEN SAFETY





**Shoreditch
Trust**

Community Table www.shoreditchtrust.org.uk

Introduction

Hello from the Shoreditch Trust Community Table team!

Before you start cooking, please read through this safety booklet. Then read through all your recipe cards, choose your recipe and set up everything you are going to need.

Make sure there is always an adult with you, they will be your 'sous chef' (deputy chef), they will support you with all the chopping and slicing, grating and sizzling. Get your *sous chef* to read this booklet with you. You can ask them about anything you don't understand.

At Community Table we recommend that, if you are under 11 years old, your adult *sous chef* uses the knife and you give them the orders! You can watch them and learn from what they do, ask them questions and talk together about different kitchen techniques.

Chopping is one of the most-used techniques for any chef and preparation work (chefs call this 'prep work') in the kitchen requires careful, safe and professional chopping and slicing — from onions to cucumbers to tomatoes! Kitchen knives are a chef's most prized possessions and the most important tool for any professional chef — they treat them with the utmost care, respect and attention.

On the following pages are some guidelines on working safely with some key kitchen tools. Remember take it slow, focus on each task at hand, and have safe and tasty fun in your kitchen!

Knives

The best and safest way for young chefs to learn to use a knife is by using a real knife. Teaching children knife skills with regular eating knives or plastic knives can establish bad habits, and these can be difficult to shake off later on. This is because these kinds of knives require more weight and pressure when chopping, which increases the risk of slipping or sliding. A blunt knife can cause exactly the same problem, so it is equally important to ensure that knives are always sharp.

Any cooking done with younger children should focus on touching, smelling, and tasting, with knives only being introduced once the supervising adults feel confident in each child's abilities — this should be decided on a case by case basis. In our experience, 11 years old is around the right age to start learning knife skills.

When working with young chefs, we recommend that there should be at least one adult present for every four children — the right level of supervision is absolutely key when using sharp knives. The following general knife safety tips should be kept in mind to encourage safety and best practice.

Knife safety tips

It is all about the knives. Young chefs spend most of the kitchen shift washing, chopping, slicing and dicing vegetables. It's important to know the basics when handling a knife.

- Learn how to hold a knife, and how to ensure a good grip — always with a clean and dry handle.
- Make sure your knife is sharp! A blunt knife can do more damage than a sharp one.
- Make sure your chopping board is secure with a damp cloth or tissue underneath so that your board does not slip.
- Always chop with the ingredient flat-side down.
- Never chop quickly — it can be dangerous — work slowly and steadily.
- Practice makes perfect, understand the pressure needed for each ingredient — such as a hard carrot compared to a soft tomato.
- Make sure the knife is cleaned after use — an adult should always wash the knives.
- Pay attention to what you're doing. It only takes a fraction of a second to make a mistake.
- Never leave a knife in the sink — someone might reach in to wash something without seeing it.
- Keep the handle of your knife clean. If you get grease or oil on it, stop what you're doing and wash it off immediately, so that your grip on the knife is good at all times.

Knife techniques for young chefs

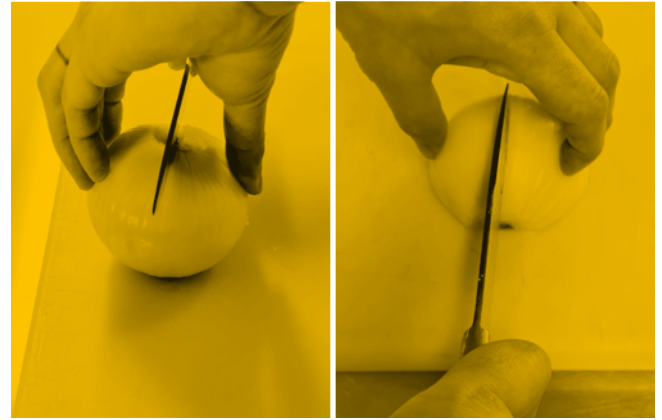


These safe knife techniques can be used with lots of different ingredients and encourage best practice. The adult should always demonstrate before letting the children have a go, explaining clearly and showing them the techniques every time a recipe is demonstrated. The adult should ask the children to show them their technique before allowing them to continue.

Large or awkward items, such as onion, swede, turnip, butternut squash, pineapple and mango should be cut down into smaller, more manageable pieces by an adult before passing them to the children.

It's still important to make a point of showing children the whole ingredient before cutting it down, because many children may not have seen it before, and might not know what it looks like.

The Bridge



The bridge technique is used to cut ingredients into smaller, more manageable pieces. Form a bridge over the ingredient with your hand, making sure the arch is nice and high so there's plenty of room for the knife to fit underneath. Hold the item securely with your fingers on one side and your thumb on the other. Now pick up the knife with the other hand — get the children to check the blade is facing downwards — and guide the knife under the middle of the bridge. Cut into the middle of the ingredient by pressing down and sliding the knife back towards you out of the bridge. Then take one half at a time and place them flat-side down. Repeat the bridge over each half one at a time and cut into quarters. Keep going until you've got the number of pieces you need. Never rush — it's important to take your time — stop between each slice to check your fingers are out of the way.

The Claw



The claw technique is used to slice ingredients into strips. Place the item onto the board, flat-side down. Make a claw by partly curling your fingers closely together, making sure you tuck your fingertips and thumb out of the way. Pick up the knife with your other hand, check the blade is facing down and place your claw on top of the ingredient, with your fingers facing the knife. Keep the tip of the knife on the board and slowly slice through the item, sliding the knife back towards you. To make your next slice, move your fingers back along the item, keeping your fingers together and keeping a grip on the top. Remember, stop between slices to look at where your knife is and make sure your fingers are tucked out of the way — it's not a race. When children are learning, don't encourage them to chop all the way to the end of the item — it's better to have safe fingers than get that extra bit of carrot or celery.

The Cross Chop



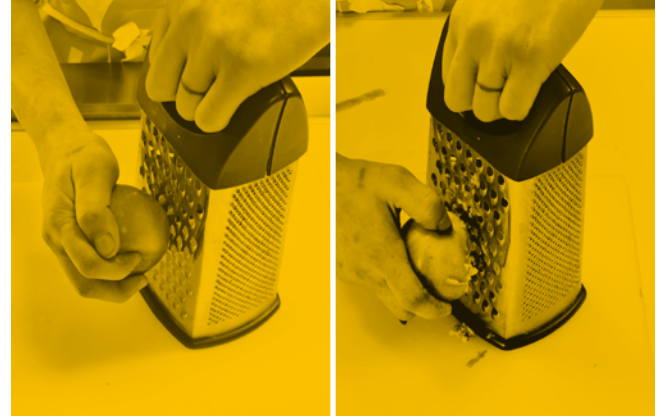
The cross chop technique is used to finely chop vegetables or herbs. To begin, cut your vegetable or herb into rough pieces, using the Bridge and Claw techniques. Then, hold the knife firmly in one hand, place the tip of the knife on the board at an angle of roughly 20 degrees. Keep the fingers of your other hand rigid on the top edge of the lower half of the blade. Keeping the tip of the knife on the board. It's tempting to want to slice really quickly, but it's better to work slowly and get to know your knife. Practice makes perfect! As you chop, stuff will tend to fly all over the board, so every now and again use the knife as a scraper to bring it all back into the middle. You can use the knife to pick up whatever you're chopping, to save your hands getting dirty, but you need to be extra careful.

Peeling



Always peel downwards and not towards your body, holding the item on the chopping board and not in the air. For long items, like a carrot or parsnip, hold them at the top and peel to the middle, turning it as you go. Then, turn the item upside down and repeat the process. It is also a good idea to slice a flat surface into wobbly or round items before you start peeling, because this creates a more secure surface to work from. Y-shaped peelers have long handles that keep fingers well away from the blade.

Grating



Young chefs love grating and can get very carried away with it, so when they are developing grating skills it's important to teach them not to rush. As with peeling, teach children to always grate downwards. You should also instruct them to hold thick, fat pieces and not to grate all the way to the end of the item, but to leave a little bit to hold on to. This reduces the risk of them cutting themselves on the blades. Graters can be just as sharp as knives, so it is important to highlight this to children. Box graters with handles are the best option for young chefs, because they can be placed securely on a chopping board and held with a firm grip. If using a microplane grater, hold it firmly by the handle and make sure the base of it is flat against a chopping board to hold it steady. Move the food you're grating against the grater, rather than moving the grater itself. Remember to be careful of fingers because microplane graters can be very sharp.

Manage your fridge

Being smart about what you've got in the fridge and how you organise it all will make it easier to limit wasting food while keeping things safe. Here are a few simple guidelines to help you get organised. When you put food in the fridge, make sure:

- The vegetables are put in the salad drawer.
- Any cooked food or leftovers are covered.
- Uncooked meat and fish are well wrapped up and put on the bottom shelf to stop them contaminating anything on the other shelves if raw juices drip out.
- Food that's ready to eat, whether it's cooked or doesn't need to be cooked, is put on a higher shelf, away from the raw meat or fish.
- Newer and older food is rotated, for example: if you've got some pots of yoghurt from last week's shopping to use up, put those in front of the ones you've just bought so you remember to eat them first.

General fridge tips:

- If you open a tin of food such as soup, tomatoes or beans and only use half, never put the half-empty tin in the fridge as the food can react with the metal when exposed to the air — always pour the leftovers into a small bowl or plastic container and cover with an airtight lid or clingfilm, then keep it on one of the upper shelves in the fridge.
- Try to take everything out of the fridge at least once a month or sooner, if necessary — clean the shelves and the rubber seal around the door with hot soapy water, then dry the fridge thoroughly with kitchen paper.

Top tips before you start to cook

- Firstly, read through the recipe a few times so that you understand it, and ask someone else if something isn't clear.
- Wash your hands regularly — before and after each task.
- Your kitchen should be clean and surfaces disinfected.
- Lay all your ingredients out on a tray and have small bowls or containers to put your prepared foods in.
- Do not take out high-risk products like meat, fish and cheese, until you're ready to use it.
- Locate all your cooking equipment that will be used — pans, saucepans, utensils, knives, bowls, chopping boards...
- Try to get the whole family to help with preparation. One person could peel potatoes and another could slice a pepper. Preparation is key and will save you time. Cooking together in the kitchen makes the meal ahead even more enjoyable!
- Waste should be separated, make sure you have a food waste bin.
- Try to clean as you go otherwise you will have a big pile of dishes in the sink to clean up after.
- Always have an adult to help, support and supervise — especially with hot pans and food or dangerous equipment like knives — as well as to answer any questions. You can also ask them to taste your cooking as you work through it, and to talk together about flavours and techniques.

Cross contamination

Some foods are naturally much higher in bacteria than others, and need to be handled with extra care. Raw meat and fish are the most important ones to look out for, because the bacteria found on them can easily lead to food poisoning if allowed to spread to other foods. Imagine for a minute that you're cooking grilled chicken and salad for dinner. If you chop the raw chicken on a chopping board before cooking it, then use that same knife and board to prepare your salad, the salad will be contaminated with bacteria from the uncooked chicken. This is called "cross contamination" and here are the golden rules for avoiding it:

- Store raw meat and fish on the bottom shelf of your fridge (see 'Manage your fridge' on the previous pages).
- If you're preparing raw meat, chicken or fish on a chopping board, wash the board, the knife and your hands thoroughly with warm soapy water afterwards so that bacteria don't spread onto food that is cooked or ready to eat.
- Some restaurants have different coloured chopping boards for raw and cooked foods, or for meat, fish and vegetables, to minimise the chances of this happening. These are readily available from lots of home and kitchen shops, so you might like to try this at home.

Kitchen rules for young chefs

- Respect the kitchen and its dangers: fire, knives, gas and hot equipment.
- Always wash your hands! And not just once — after you sneeze, cough, go to the loo, touch raw meat, pat your pet... Think about the germs you might have picked up and wash your hands with warm soapy water, then dry off before you carry on.
- Wear an apron, suitable shoes and clothes. Sleeves should be short, rolled up or tight fitting. No dangly sleeves and no jewellery that could get caught or dangle into things.
- No walking around with sharp knives or hot pans.
- Keep pan handles angled inwards so they don't get caught, remembering to angle the handles over the worktops and not the hob — so that they don't get hot.
- If you cut, burn or hurt yourself — get help from an adult straight away.
- Always use an oven glove to pick up trays, pans and pots. They might be hot!
- Don't leave a hob unattended. If you need to go somewhere else, turn it off.
- If anything spills on the floor, warn others and clean it up straight away.
- Listen when the adult's talking!
- Keep your mobile phones or other screens at a safe distance from the hob, running water and food preparation areas.
- If you are cooking with other members of your family or friends, remember to always respect each other, take things in turns, and share your space safely.
- Enjoy yourself and get creative in the kitchen!



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