

KENDELLKREATIONS

Quick Knife Skills Guide

This guide will explain a few basics, from how to hold a knife to the difference between chop and mince. Even if you don't have all the fancy tools or the latest pots and pans, a good knife and the skills to use it are all you need!

Knives

- 10-inch Chef's
- 6-inch Chef's
- 7-inch Santoku or Nakiri
- Serrated Bread
- 3-4-inch Paring
- Kitchen Shears
- Honing Steel
- Hand Sharpener

4-5 knives are all you really need to get the job done. You will see knife sets out there that have 12+ knives in them, and unless the majority are steak knives you will never use most of them. Quality knives are what you want. When shopping ask if they are stamped or forged steel. Stamped means, exactly like it sounds. They stamp the shape out of a sheet of steel and then sharpen it. These knives don't last. They don't hold a sharp blade for long and tend to rust very easily. Forged is what you want! Forged knives have been stretched and fired, beaten and ice cooled to harden. These types of knives should last a couple of lifetimes, can be repeatedly sharpened and will hold a sharp edge longer.

How to hold a knife

Holding a knife correctly is crucial to using it safely as well as being efficient in the kitchen. To this day I still see the "pro's" on TV shows holding their knife incorrectly. When you get busy or overwhelmed in the kitchen, speed becomes necessary. This is when accidents happen and when proper knife handling provides safety for you and those working with you.

What you want is a stable grip, choke up on the handle and hold it like you would the key when starting your car. Your forefinger should wrap around the bolster while the rest of your fingers grasp the handle. Place your thumb just above the heel. This is THE safest way to hold your knife. Not with your forefinger along the back of the blade or with all of your fingers wrapped around the handle.

See the images above for proper technique.

Chop

- To chop is to cut meats or vegetables into large pieces without much regard for uniformity.

Dice

- There are various sizes of a dice. Small, Medium or Large. They are uniform squares that will cook evenly. More care is given resulting in a more visually appealing final product.

Slice

- Slicing can be done in any desired thickness, but is usually thin and uniform. Each pass of the knife is the same giving a uniform look. From slice onions for fajitas or soup, or squash slices for a veggie lasagna or stuffed rolls. Keep it clean and looking great!

Mince

- Typically something you will do to garlic or shallots. This is an extra fine dice. Passing your knife over many times to make the pieces as small as you can.

Get my full knife handling guide at

KendellKreations.com

