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Knife Skills

Chapter 6

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After studying this unit

- You will be able to:
 - Care for knives properly
 - Use knives properly
 - Cut foods into a variety of classic shapes

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One of the most important tools the student chef must master is the knife.

Good knife skills are critical to a chef's success because the knife is the most commonly used tool in the kitchen.

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Using the Knife Safely

- Use the correct knife for the task at hand
- Always cut away from yourself
- Always cut on a clean cutting board
 - Do not cut on glass, marble or metal
- Place a damp towel underneath the cutting board to keep it from sliding as you cut

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Using a Knife Safely (cont.)

- Keep knives sharp; a dull knife is more dangerous than a sharp one
- When carrying a knife, hold it pointed down, parallel and close to your leg as you walk
- A falling knife has no handle. Do not attempt to catch a falling knife; step back and allow it to fall
- Never leave a knife in a sink of water; anyone reaching into the sink could be injured or the knife could be dented by pots or other utensils

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Caring for Your Knives

- Sharpening
 - Whetstone
 - Steel
- Washing and storing
 - Do not wash knives in commercial dishwashers
 - Always wash and dry knives by hand

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Controlling Your Knife

- Use a grip that is most comfortable for you
- Keep the sharp edge of the blade on the cutting board
- Grip the item being cut with three fingertips and your thumb
- Use the second joint of your index finger as a guide
- Use smooth, even strokes to slice the food
- Do Not use a dull knife

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Cutting with Your Knife

- Slicing
 - Chiffonade
 - Finely sliced or shredded leafy vegetables or herbs
 - Rondelles or rounds
 - Disk-shaped slices
 - Diagonals
 - Oval-shaped slices
 - Oblique-cut or roll-cut
 - Small pieces with two angle-cut sides
 - Lozenges
 - Diamond-shaped pieces, usually of firm vegetables

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Horizontal Slicing

- To horizontal slice is to butterfly or cut a pocket into meats, poultry or fish; it is also a method used to thinly slice soft vegetables

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Chopping

- To chop is to cut an item into small pieces where uniformity of size and shape is neither necessary or feasible

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Cutting Sticks

- Batonnet
 - 1/4 X 1/4 X 2 inches
- Julienne
 - 1/8 X 1/8 X 2 inches
- Fine julienne
 - 1/16 X 1/16 X 2 inches

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Dice Cuts

- Brunoise
 - 1/8 X 1/8 X 1/8
- Small dice
 - 1/4 X 1/4 X 1/4
- Medium dice
 - 1/2 X 1/2 X 1/2
- Large dice
 - 3/4 X 3/4 X 3/4
- Paysanne
 - 1/2 X 1/2 X 1/8

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Mincing

- To mince is to cut items into very small pieces
- The terms finely chopped and minced are often used interchangeably

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Round Cuts

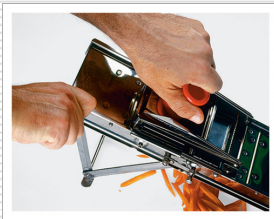
- Tournier
 - Football-shaped pieces with seven equal sides and blunt ends
- Parisiennes
 - Spheres of fruits or vegetables cut with a small melon ball cutter

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Mandoline

- The mandoline is a nonmechanical cutting tool



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