

Discuss

Take an informal survey about students who have cut themselves when using a knife in food preparation. Now that they know safe knife handling procedures, ask them to relate what they should have done to prevent the cuts.

**Safety Link****Safely Handling Knives**

A good selection of stainless steel knives is very important when cooking. This may sound odd, but sharp knives are much safer than dull ones. It takes less force to cut through food with a sharp knife. This gives you greater control of the blade. Dull knives can easily slip off the food you are cutting and cut your fingers instead. Most cooking accidents are due to either the use of dull knives or using sharp knives incorrectly. Some tips for knife safety include the following:

1. Always cut with the knife blade angled away from you. Never try to open a can or bottle with a knife—or use a knife as a screwdriver. Use scissors instead of a knife to cut string, metal, or paper.
2. Always use a cutting board and keep it firmly in place. A damp towel or paper towel placed underneath will keep it from moving. Never cut anything in your hand. Use the cutting board, and make sure it has enough space for your task.
3. Make sure your hands are dry and stay focused on the job when using knives.
4. Do not use knives with broken or loose handles.
5. Wash your knives by hand and dry thoroughly. Never put knives into the dishwasher or drop them into a sink filled with sudsy water. Always hold a knife by its handle, never the blade.
6. Store knives properly. A knife block or magnetic knife rack is best. If you are storing knives in a drawer, make sure to keep them separate from other utensils.
7. Do not try to catch a knife you have dropped. Step away and wait until the knife comes to a complete rest before picking it up by the handle.

**Reading Review**

1. How can utensils be used to make preparing food easier?
2. Why should you start with a basic set of utensils?

Section Summary

- Kitchen tools consist of large and small appliances, pots and pans, and utensils.
- Each tool has its own purpose and use.
- Tools should be used according to their use-and-care manuals.
- Using kitchen tools correctly saves energy and prevents damage.

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