



**MATERIALS  
 NEEDED**

- 4 pairing knives
- 4 cutting boards
- Kitchen shears
- Produce for leader to demonstrate skills with
- Produce for individuals / groups to cut
- Peeler (optional)

**TIME NEEDED  
 FOR LESSON**

10 minute prep

10 minute lesson

10-20 for groups to practice cutting skills



**Knives—Lesson 1**

**Learner Objectives:**

The 4-H member will :

- learn how to safely use / hold / carry a knife.
- learn how to use a knife for chopping fruits / vegetables
- be able to identify different types of knives

**Educational Lesson:**

*The benefit of good knife skills is to keep all of our digits and limbs in place!*

*Sharp knives, used correctly, are safer than dull knives.*

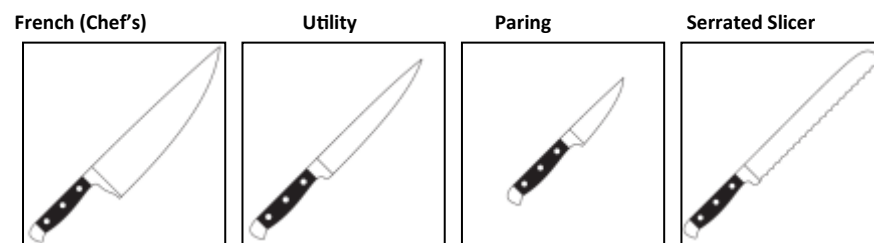
*Cooking often includes lots of cutting. There are specific tools to complete specific cutting jobs.*

*One of the most important tools is a sturdy, nonporous cutting board.*

*A very handy cutting tool is a pair of kitchen shears. They can be used to snip herbs, trim vegetables, and cut meat and/or dough.*

*There are many different knives for various cutting tasks. Knife blades can be smooth or serrated (saw-toothed). The knife handle should fit comfortably in your hand, and the highest quality knives have hardwood handles.*

*The most popular knives are chef knife (also called a French Knife), utility knife, slicing knife, and paring knife. The chef knife is a large knife that is used to cut, chop, and dice fruits and vegetables. A utility knife is a good all-purpose knife that can be used to cut up vegetables and cheese, or to trim fat off of meat. The slicing knife has a serrated blade and is used to cut meat, poultry, bread, and soft vegetables such as tomatoes. A paring knife is the smallest knife, and is used to peel fruits and vegetables.*



Blade: Broad	Blade: Narrow	Blade: Narrow	Blade: Narrow
Tip: Pointed	Tip: Pointed	Tip: Pointed	Tip: Rounded
Length: 8-12 in.	Length: 5-8 in.	Length: 2-4 in.	Length: 8-12 in.

## Activity:

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- If possible, watch “Knife Skills Video” at [www.http://cookingtogethercookingforever.org](http://cookingtogethercookingforever.org) with participants.
- Pass out the handout “Anatomy of a Knife”.
- *Discuss basic concepts briefly, including:*
  - Sharpening a knife, how to carry knives, the claw, and how to hold knives when cutting

### Leader Demo:

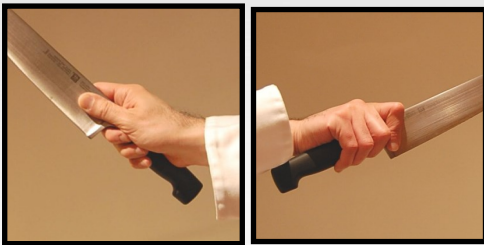
Wash hands with soap and water before beginning.

Review & show how to hold a knife properly.

Demonstrate how to carry a knife correctly. (Knife must be held at the person's side with the tip facing downwards. The sharp edge of the blade must be facing backwards).

Demonstrate how to make a claw when cutting.

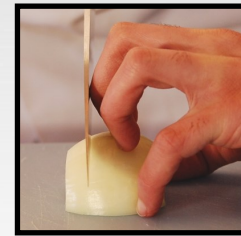
Gather cutting board, knife and vegetables. With vegetables and tools, demonstrate basic cutting skills using claw concept and emphasizing safety.



Holding a Knife Properly



Carry a Knife Correctly



The “Claw” Cutting Method

**Group Practice:** Break participants up into four groups. Remind participants to wash their hands. With vegetables and tools, 4-H members will practice basic cutting skills using the “claw” concept. Leader should walk around while participants are practicing to ensure safe cutting skills. To begin, the leader could ask each group to demonstrate safe cutting methods before beginning individual practice.

## Reflection:

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- Ask members if they can relate to a time when someone they know used a knife incorrectly and what happened.
- Ask members to describe how using knives correctly will benefit them in their food project.
- Ask what new concepts members learned.

## Additional Resources:

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# anatomy of a knife

