

Knife Safety

1. Any time a knife is one hand, a cutting glove **MUST** be worn on the other hand. (No exceptions) (See side note)
2. Keep knives sharpened, and let other staff know when knives are newly-sharpened. **Dull knives tend to slip and may cause injuries.** (See side note)
3. Never touch knife blades.
4. Use a knife only for its intended purpose; use the appropriate knife for the cutting job. For example, **DO NOT** use a knife as a screwdriver, can opener, bottle opener, or ice pick.
5. Place a damp cloth under a cutting board to prevent slipping of the board.
6. When interrupted, stop cutting and place knife down on a flat and secured surface. **DO NOT try to cut while distracted.**
7. Never place knives near the edge of a countertop.
8. Let a falling knife fall. Step back, warn others. Do not try to catch the knife.
9. Clean the knife immediately after use or place it in a dishwasher or a container labeled “for knives only.”
10. **NEVER** leave a knife soaking in a sink of water.
11. Carry knives with the cutting edge angled slightly away from your body, with the tip pointed down to your side.
12. To hand a knife to someone else, place it down on a clean surface and let the other person pick it up.
13. Store knives properly in racks or knife sheaths.
14. Store knives, saws, and cleavers in a designated storage area when not in use. Do not store the blades with the cutting edge exposed.
15. Handle, use, and store knives and other sharp utensils safely.
16. Cut in the direction away from the body. (See side note)
17. Keep your fingers and thumbs out of the way of the cutting line.
18. Allow only experienced, trained workers to sharpen knives. This is done correctly by keeping the thumb beneath the knuckle guard rim protection on the handle of the sharpener, rather than on top of the rim where it may get cut.

Cut-Resistant Gloves

Due to the increased risk of injury in our field of work, all employees are required to use a cut-resistant glove on the non-cutting hand.

Various types of cut-resistant gloves are available to provide protection from an inadvertent cut or loss of control.

A cut-resistant glove is typically worn under a disposable latex or nitrile glove for hygienic reasons.

If a cutting glove is needed, be sure to contact office or order on grocery order form.

Signs and Hazards of Dull Blades

Many common uses of knives aren't controlled by a regular sharpening schedule, so it's up to us to recognize the signs of a dulling knife.

If you notice an increase in the amount of force needed to cut material or see that the blade is tearing rather than cutting, it's time to sharpen the blade.

Cutting with a dull blade causes us to apply more force and pressure to the blade in order to get it to cut. This can lead to a variety of unsafe situations:

- Applying too much pressure that the blade bends and breaks
- A loss of balance when the blade slips free of the product being cut
- Loss of paying attention to cutting path due to focusing too much on trying to make the cut

Even with a sharp blade, applying too much pressure can be a source of injury. When cutting thick product, make several passes, cutting a little bit each time rather than trying to cut through the product all at once.

Keeping Body Parts Away from Blade's Path of Travel

Maintain an awareness of where your body parts are related to the path the blade will travel.

We have all heard the advice to always cut away from our body. This works well for whittling a stick, but is usually awkward in food preparation. In fact, when cutting on a flat surface, the most powerful and efficient cutting motion is towards your body.

Cutting at a 90-degree angle to your body is also a safe and powerful stroke.

Source: Washington State Dept. of Labor and Industries

Source: OSHA