

Unit 34: Principles of How to Maintain, Handle and Clean Knives

Unit code: Y/502/8258

QCF Level 1: BTEC Specialist

Credit value: 2

Guided learning hours: 11

Unit aim

This unit aims to provide learners with the knowledge of how to use and care for knives within a professional kitchen. It covers straight and serrated bladed knives, cleavers, scissors and secateurs.

Unit introduction

Knives of all types used in a commercial kitchen need to be cleaned to remove and prevent microbial organisms forming. They need to remain sharp enough for their intended use and require special maintenance and care depending on the type of knife and its use.

Learners will be introduced to the principles of maintaining, handling and cleaning knives for commercial kitchens.

Appropriate knives required for differing tasks will be identified and learners will know why knives should be kept sharp, stored and handled safely and why any accidents involving knives should be reported.

Learners will be taught the safe working practices and hygiene procedures that should be applied when working in a food production situation with knives. They will learn how to ensure that knives are clean, especially when used for different foodstuffs.

Learners will know how to sharpen knives using safe sharpening methods. They will consider how to select knives for appropriate tasks, as well as ensuring that the cutting surface is firm, secure, clean and appropriate to the task. They will understand the microbial importance of clean cutting surfaces and the necessary actions to be taken to prevent allergic reactions when using knives in the kitchen. Safe storage of knives will also be covered.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

On completion of this unit a learner should:

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
1 Know how to maintain, handle and clean knives	1.1 State why knives should be kept sharp 1.2 State why knives should be stored safely 1.3 State why accidents must be reported 1.4 Identify the appropriate knives required for different tasks 1.5 State safety considerations when handling knives 1.6 Outline why knives should be cleaned when using for different foodstuffs 1.7 Describe the risks associated with using poorly maintained or damaged knives 1.8 State why cutting surfaces should be clean 1.9 Describe actions to be taken to prevent allergic reactions

Unit Content

1 Know how to maintain, handle and clean knives

Knives: straight-bladed knives and cleavers; serrated blades; scissors/secateurs

Reasons to keep knives sharp: sharp knives will slide easily through what is being cut requiring little force; makes food preparation easier; blunt knives require force to be applied and any slippage creates danger of cuts

Reasons to store knives safely: keeping the knives sharp; knives bumping in a drawer ruins their sharp edges; loose knives in a drawer can be dangerous if someone reaches into the drawer

Reasons why accidents must be reported: complying with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; avoiding injury, pain, possible infection, septic arthritis, time off work

Tasks using knives: preparing basic vegetable cuts; preparing meat, poultry and fish; preparing bread; opening packaging; sharpening; washing and cleaning knives after use

Appropriate knives required for different tasks: chef's knives for chopping vegetables or cutting meat; boning knives for separating meat from bone and stuffing meat; paring knives for peeling fruits and vegetables, or making decorative cut designs; bread knives for cutting bread; carving knives for cutting through meat (often complemented by carving forks)

Safety considerations when handling knives: not cutting towards self or own fingers when using a knife; not leaving sharp knives loose in a drawer; not trying and catching dropped knives; not putting knives in the sink; putting knives down safely

Reasons to clean knives when using for different foodstuffs: removing any bacteria; avoiding cross-contamination; remaining sharp enough for their intended use

Risks associated with using poorly maintained or damaged knives: hand and wrist injuries; fat or other substances can cause knives to become slippery making them a safety hazard; blades that have become dull or have nicks or cuts can be a hazard

Reasons why cutting surfaces should be clean: avoiding the spread of bacteria and related illness; avoiding cross-contamination

Actions to be taken to prevent allergic reactions: avoiding contact with foods to which employee is allergic; avoiding knocking cuts; washing hands regularly

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit introduces learners to the principles of maintaining, handling and cleaning knives.

Where possible, a range of knives identified within the unit content should be available for learners to see.

Much of the content of the unit, although theoretical, can be taught in a practical environment, such as a kitchen, where the theory can be readily applied.

Learners' self-directed study in libraries, learning resource centres, and where appropriate, the workplace, can support learning. Learners need to be encouraged to undertake self-directed research.

Learners will be taught the types of knives used for specific tasks in the kitchen and they will recognise the main criteria that experienced chefs use to determine the sharpness of their knives. Tutors should explain the importance of safety when handling and storing knives. Learners will also become familiar with the way chefs clean knives between handling different foodstuffs.

Learners will also be introduced to some of the safe working practices that reduce the risk of accidents to themselves and others, including correct food hygiene skills. They will learn about the correct practices for handling poorly maintained or managed knives as well as their correct and safe storage methods. Learners will also understand the correct procedures for maintaining the correct and safe cutting surfaces. They will find out what action they would take to prevent allergic reactions when using knives.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the delivery of multiple choice tests.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way of planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested activities
Introduction to unit.
Tutors to introduce learners to the principles of maintaining, handling and cleaning knives.
Tutors to introduce learners to why knives should be kept sharp, stored safely and cleaned when used for different foodstuffs.
Visits to commercial kitchens to witness the appropriate knives required for different tasks.
Discussions with chefs to understand safety considerations when handling knives.

Topic and suggested activities
Tutorial support and feedback.
Self-initiated independent learning time.

Assessment

Tutors should ensure that learners cover all the unit content.

Essential resources

Although this is a knowledge-based unit, to complete it learners should have access to commercial kitchens and support areas. They should be able to see an appropriate range of knives and cutting surfaces that are up to date and in good repair and working order.

Centre libraries should have a selection of contemporary cookery books available for learners to use. The books should cover a wide range of styles and recipes and show how excellent presentation of commodities can be achieved.

Indicative resource materials

Textbooks

Campbell J, Foskett D and Ceserani V – *Practical Cookery, 11th Edition* (Hodder Education, 2008) ISBN 9780340948378

Campbell J, Rippington N, Foskett D and Ceserani V – *Practical Cookery Level 2* (Hodder Education, 2010) ISBN 9781444112269

Davidson A – *The Oxford Companion to Food, 2nd Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2006) ISBN 9780192806819

Foskett D, Ceserani V and Campbell J – *Foundation Practical Cookery* (Hodder Education, 2009) ISBN 9780340983997

Other

Food hygiene: A guide for businesses (The Food Standards Agency, 2006)

Journals

Caterer and Hotelkeeper – Reed Business Information

Waitrose Kitchen – available in Waitrose supermarkets

Websites

www.bha.org.uk	British Hospitality Association
www.cookeryclub.co.uk	Cookery Club – cookery information of the web
www.food.gov.uk	Food Standards Agency – safer food, better business
www.hse.gov.uk/catering/knives.htm	HSE – safe use of knives in the kitchen
www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood	NHS Choices – good food and healthy diet
www.people1st.co.uk	People 1st – Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism