

## Skills

When teaching primary aged children to work with food, it is important that they learn how to use tools correctly. This is so they can work safely, efficiently and independently. The following are some photographs and notes to help teachers show children a safe way to handle kitchen tools.



## The Bridge Hold



First, twist the stalk from the tomato. Place the tomato onto the chopping board.

Make a bridge over the tomato with your hand. Your fingers should be on one side and your thumb should be on the other.

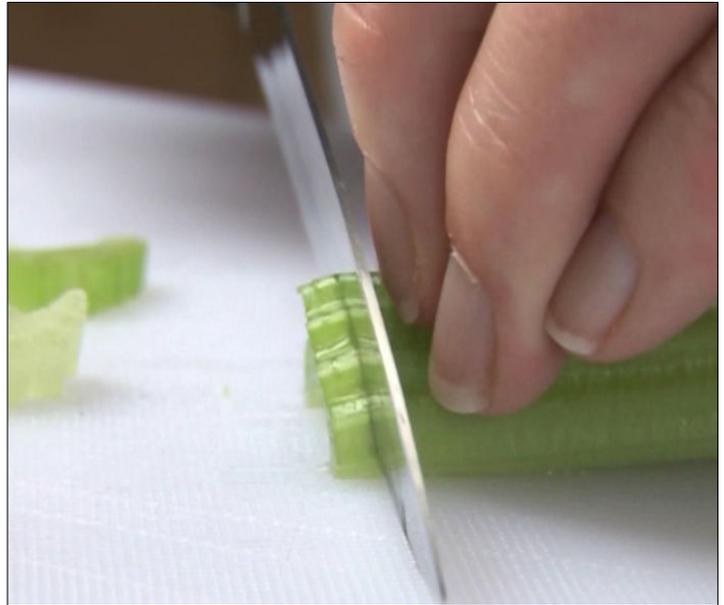
Pick up the knife with your other hand and check that the blade is facing downwards.

Then, guide the knife under the bridge and over the tomato. Cut into the tomato by pressing the knife down and pulling it out of the bridge. You might like to think of the knife as a train which goes under the bridge.

Now, take one half at a time and place it flat side down. Make a bridge over the tomato, and use the knife just like before to cut it into quarters.

This method of cutting is safe and can be used for lots of different ingredients, such as potatoes or strawberries.

## The Claw Grip



Place the celery onto the chopping board.

Make a claw with your hand by partly curling your fingers together. Decide how thick you want the slices before you begin.

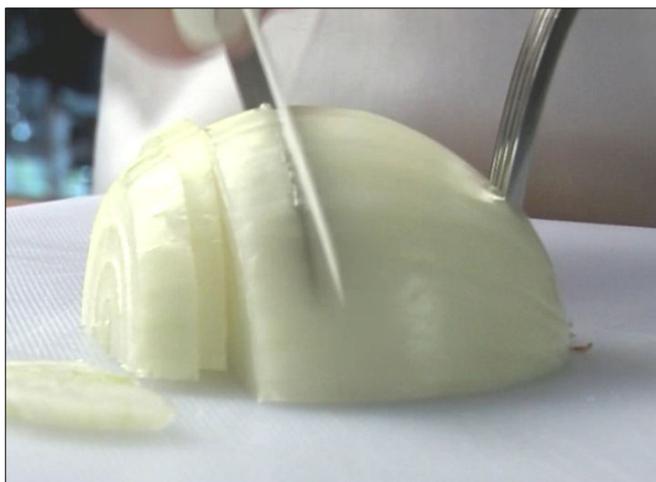
Then, pick up the knife with your other hand and check that the blade is facing downwards.

Tilt the knife and slice through the celery, using your fingers as a guide.

Slide your fingers back, keeping your grip on the celery, and continue slicing carefully.

This method of slicing is safe, and can be used for lots of different ingredients, such as peppers or paw paw.

## Fork secure



First, carefully cut off the pointed end of the onion on the chopping board. Then, stand the onion on its flat end.

Making a bridge with your fingers and thumb, cut the onion in half.

Now, peel away the dry, papery skin and any fine, transparent membrane.

To slice the onion, sit one half on its flat side. Make your fingers into a claw and draw the knife across the onion – using your fingers as a guide.

To slice another way, push the fork into half the onion near its root. Holding the fork with one hand, draw the knife across the onion to make slices.

To dice the onion, make a bridge using your fingers and thumb and use the point of the knife to make cuts from just above the root all the way to the top. Then make your fingers into a claw and draw the knife across the onion. This makes small, even-sized pieces

## Other tips

### Flat surface down

- Make sure that the food being cut has a flat surface face down on the chopping board so it is stable while being cut.

### Peeling

- Teach children to peel away from themselves while using a peeler. With long foods such as carrots they should hold one end and peel from the middle away from themselves and then hold the peeled end and repeat the same process.

### Grating

- Grating – remember, you do not have to grate every bit of the food. It is best to leave a small chunk at the end to hang on to. This means that fingers are not pressed against the grater.

### Scissors

- Kitchen scissors can sometimes be a useful alternative to a knife, especially if children are quite young. Scissors are good for snipping herbs and spring onions – even pepper slices!

### Part prepare

- It may sometimes be necessary to partly prepare foods so they are at a stage where children can handle them safely and confidently. For example, when making coleslaw, the teacher would quarter the cabbage and cut out the heart. Children would then be able to take a quarter, separate the layers of leaves with their hands and cut one or two leaves at a time using the methods previously mentioned.

