



Knife handling 101:

Anatomy, types of knives, and knife safety



Materials

Knives

- Nasco Knife Safety Classroom Kit ([NE40197](#))
- Mercer® Cutlery 13-Piece Cutlery Set ([WA29343](#))
- Mercer® Genesis® Knives - Set of 3 ([WA33594](#))

Guards

- Mercer® Knife Guards ([WA33647-WA33650](#))

Cut gloves

- Millennia A5 Cut Resistant Gloves ([NE40371-NE40373](#))
- MercerMax™ Cut Glove - Medium ([WA34054](#))

Sharpening

- Mercer® 400/1000 Grit Sharpening Stone ([WA33658](#))
- Genesis® Sharpening Steel ([WA33659](#))

Cutting boards

- Grip-EZ® Cutting Board - 12" x 16" ([WA33377](#))

National FCS Standards

8.3 Demonstrate industry standards in selecting, using, and maintaining food production and food service equipment.

8.5.1 Demonstrate professional skills in safe handling of knives, tools, and equipment.

Objectives

Students will...

- Understand the different parts of a knife
- Know the names of different types of knives and be able to identify their function
- Understand how to safely set up a food prep station and transfer knives in the kitchen area

Activity 1: Anatomy of a knife

1. Display the “Anatomy of a knife” slide on **p. 3**. Go over the slide using a demonstration knife until students are familiar with the parts of a knife.
2. Then, hand out the “Anatomy of a knife quiz” on **p. 4** to test students’ recall of the parts of a knife.

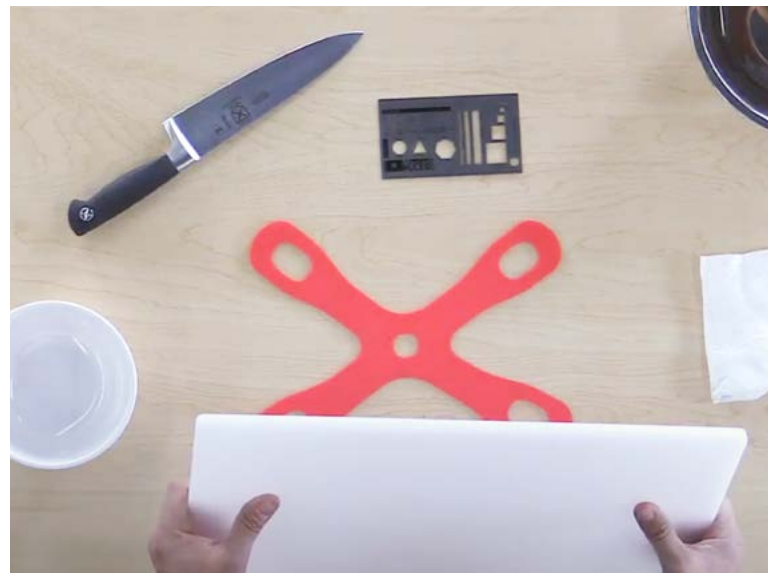


Activity 2: Types of knives

1. Display the “Knife selection guide” slide on **p. 5** and make a printout for each student. Using your demonstration knives, go over each knife, having students pay attention to each knife’s shape and uses.
2. Then, watch this video from Mercer Culinary’s Corporate Chef, Chris Parker: [“Culinary knife skills: Types of knives and their uses.”](#)
3. Next, test students’ knowledge by dividing the class into two teams. Teams should stand in rows in front of your demonstration table. As you hold up a knife, the first player on each team should try to be the first to guess the name of the knife to earn a point. The next two players in line try to be the first to say some uses for that knife. Then, hold up the next knife and continue playing in this manner until you’ve worked your way through all the demonstration knives.
4. Give students an additional assessment using the “Types of knives quiz” on **p. 6**.

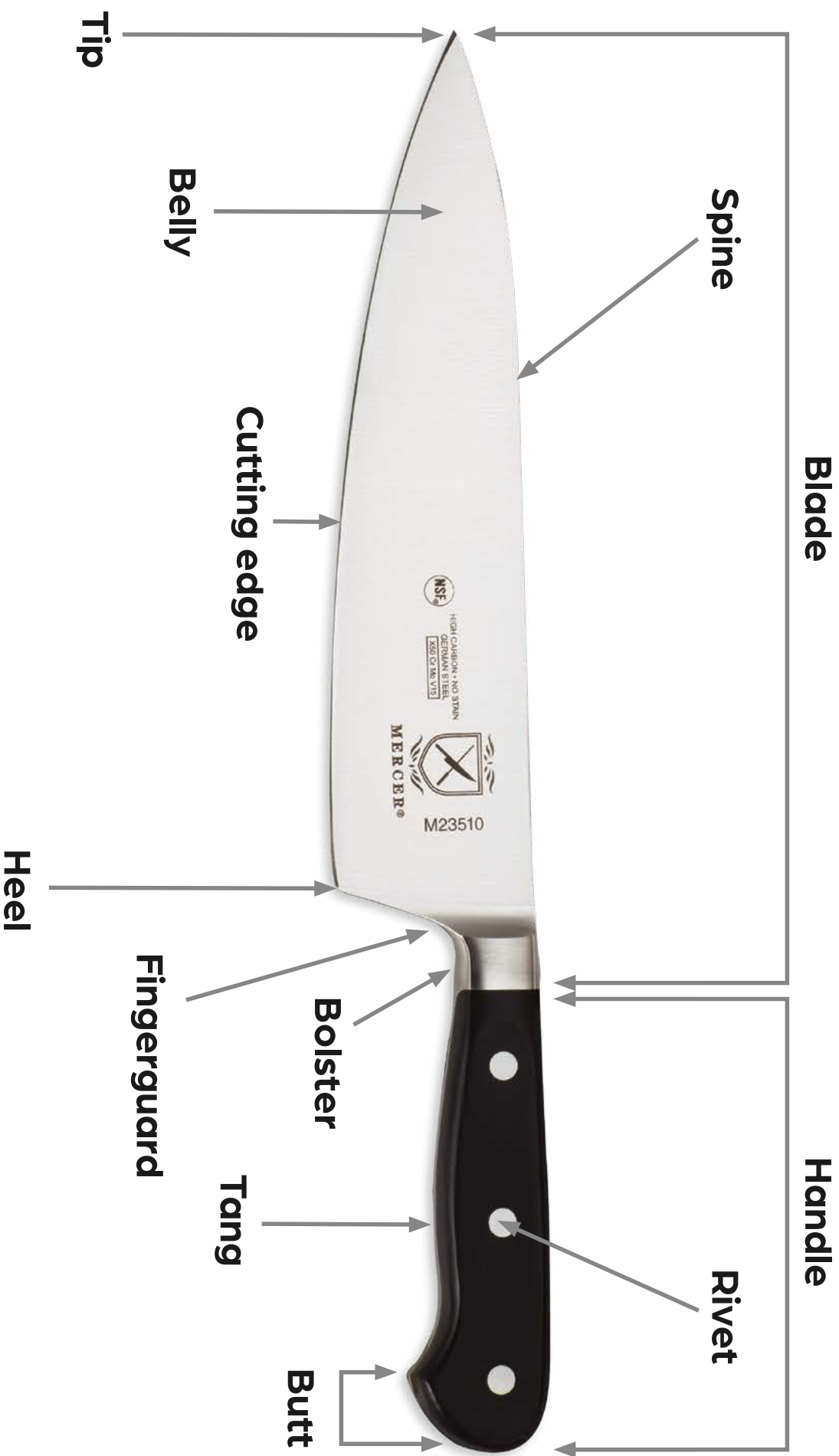
Activity 3: Food prep station setup

1. Start by showing students this video about setting up a kitchen station and safely moving about the kitchen with knives: [“Culinary knife skills: Safe use and storage.”](#)
2. Then, pair up students and have them practice setting up their station and moving about the kitchen. Have each student pair evaluate each using the “Chef station safety scorecard” **p. 7**.



Extension: Knife cuts

- **Video:** [Culinary knife skills: Proper holding and cutting techniques](#)
- **Lesson plan:** [Culinary knife cuts practice](#)
- **Lesson plan:** [Knife cuts](#)



Name _____

Period _____

Date _____



Knife selection guide

Choose the knife specifically designed for the task to provide efficiency with optimum results.

Chef's/Cook's



- Chop, mince, dice, and cut vegetables, fruits, and herbs
- Crush garlic
- Shred cabbage

Santoku



- Chop, mince, dice, and cut vegetables, fruits, and herbs
- Crush garlic
- Shred cabbage

Nakiri



- Chop, mince, and cut vegetables
- Slice vegetables

Slicer



- Cut even slices of roasted meats and fish
- Break down larger fruit and vegetables

Bread



- Cleanly slice without tearing
- Slice tomatoes and fruits that easily bruise
- Cut bread loaves

Boning/Fillet



- Separate meat and fish from the bone
- Trim fat and sinew

Carving



- Cut uniform slices of meat
- Break down larger fruits and vegetables
- Carve meat

Cimeter



- Butcher large pieces of meat
- Remove bones from flesh
- Slice roasted meat

Cleaver



- Cut large pieces of meat
- Cut through thin or small bones
- Slice hard vegetables like squash

Utility



- In-between knife length for regular cutting tasks
- Cut fruit
- Peel fruit
- Cut sandwiches

Tourné



- Make fancy, delicate cuts when carving garnishes

Paring



- Intricate cutting for decorative garnishes
- Seed jalapeños
- Trim beans
- Slice mangoes
- Core tomatoes
- Devein shrimp

Types of knives

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____



Chef station safety scorecard

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Directions: Give one point for each safety measure done correctly.

	Chef is using cut gloves
	Cutting board is clean, dry, and non-slip
	Knife is located at the top of the cutting board and blade is facing away from chef
	Cleaning towel is on the side of you and not in the way
	There are two bowls: one for waste and one for usable food
	When moving about, the blade is facing down and the blade is facing toward the back, or a guard is being used on the knife
	Chef announces “Behind you” or “Behind you sharp” when moving past someone in the kitchen
	Chef holds the knife by the handle and keeps it close to their body when moving about

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