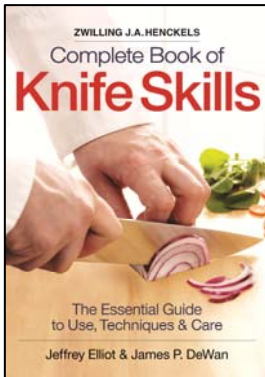




Promoting a world of culinary talent



ZWILLING J.A. HENCKELS COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIFE SKILLS
The Essential Guide to Use, Techniques & Care
By Jeffrey Elliot and James P. DeWan
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“Every recipe starts with a knife.” – Jeffrey Elliot

Now more than ever, there is a return to cooking in the home. Home cooking is not only affordable but it allows us to eat better. If you asked, most home cooks would agree that the one ingredient missing in their kitchens is basic knife skills. Most of us have a favorite knife we like to use but how much do we really know about it or how to use it properly? Now culinary experts, Jeffrey Elliot and James P. DeWan have combined their talents to create **ZWILLING J.A. HENCKELS COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIFE SKILLS: The Essential Guide to Use, Techniques & Care**, (Robert Rose Inc.; October 2010; Hardcover/\$34.95; ISBN: 978-0-7788-0256-3), the must-have cutlery reference book for everyone who loves to cook.

“Anyone who wants to cook needs to know how to use a knife. Learning how to hold and use a knife correctly will not only help you work more safely, but will also enable you to work faster and cleaner with less waste, making you much more efficient in the kitchen,” says author Jeffrey Elliot. “Plus food will look and taste better.”

Knowing everyone learns skills differently, Elliot and DeWan, both experienced chefs and culinary teachers; incorporated a variety of useful tips to make **COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIFE SKILLS** easy to use and easy to understand. Each of their techniques and tips contain:

- Concise and detailed written instructions
- Step by step photographs
- Directed Focus (graphics to help keep you on track)

Deciding what knife to use for a specific ingredient or technique can be confusing. For each technique and ingredient in the book, the authors recommend the knife or knives they feel most appropriate for the task.

Whether a novice in the kitchen or a master chef, **COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIFE SKILLS** provides valuable information about an essential kitchen tool we use every day. This book covers everything you could ever want to know about cutlery, from basic vegetable cuts to creative garnishes to boning meat and everything in-between. There is even a chapter that provides background information and photos on all the types of knives available, how they are used and how to care for them.

In addition, **COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIFE SKILLS** contains:

- More than 1,200 color step-by-step photos clearly illustrating each technique
- A concealed wire binding that lies flat, keeping a cook's fingers on the knife where they safely belong
- Clearly labeled full-color illustrations throughout
- Concise, detailed, and easy-to-understand instructions on how to:
 - o Hold a knife
 - o Basic cuts
 - o The proper techniques for cutting poultry, fish, meats specific fruits and vegetables, and garnishes

Some examples of what readers will learn include:

- How to set up your work station
- Basic knife safety measures
- How to hold a chef's knife
- How to hold your guide hand
- How to use a chef's knife
- Other knife grips
- Chiffonade
- Rondelles
- Cutting a chicken into eight pieces
- Boning a leg of lamb
- Scaling fish
- Shucking oysters

Good knife skills allow home cooks to cut food uniformly. This is an important skill to master because food that is cut into same-size pieces will cook consistently. For example, you want to cook home fries (diced potatoes sautéed in hot fat with a little onion and garlic), and you cut your potatoes into a random collection of shapes and sizes, the small pieces will cook more quickly than the large ones. When the small pieces are done, the large pieces will be undercooked. Worse, by the time the larger pieces are done, the small ones will be burned. If you read **COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIFE SKILLS** and cut your potatoes into beautiful, nearly perfect 1/2-inch (12 mm) dice, not only will they cook together perfectly, but they'll look fantastic, too.

Another reason to cut ingredients into uniform sizes and shapes: presentation. There's a definite elegance to perfectly cut, perfectly sized ingredients that simply cannot be attained with rough cuts. When cooking at home making food look beautiful will certainly wow your guests and your family.

Practice makes perfect, especially with knife skills. The authors recommend readers practice the techniques outlined in the book as much as possible. **COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIFE SKILLS** is the go-to reference book for every kitchen.

Jeffrey Elliot is a firm believer that "If you know your ingredients *and* you know your methods and techniques, you'll be able to cook virtually anything."

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jeffrey Elliot is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and has been a chef at Le Cirque and Le Bernardin in New York. He worked for Share Our Strength, a non-profit organization dedicated to eradicating childhood hunger in North America, organizing Taste of the Nation events in 20 cities across the US and Canada. Since 2007, he has been the Director of Culinary Relations for Zwilling J.A. Henckels, Demeyere, and Staub, as well as the Executive Chef of Zwilling J.A. Henckels USA. Jeffrey is a regular on the Holland America cruise ship line as part of their celebrity chef program and is a regular instructor at DeGustibus in New York City.

James P. DeWan is a chef, culinary instructor and award-winning food writer. His *Chicago Tribune* column, Prep School, is now in its fifth year and he serves on the culinary faculty at Kendall College in Chicago. He lives in Chicago.

ABOUT ZWILLING J.A. HENCKELS

Zwilling J.A. Henckels, based in Solingen, Germany, was founded in 1731 and today is one of the world's leading manufacturers of premium cutlery, flatware, cookware, scissors and kitchen gadgets. With several brands and product lines, the company offers a tool for everyone, from the occasional home cook to the culinary master. For more information go to www.zwillingus.com.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, ELECTRONIC MATERIALS, AND TO REQUEST A REVIEW COPY OF THE BOOK, CONTACT:

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Excerpt from THE COMPLETE BOOK OF KNIVES

How to Hold a Chef's Knife

While there are many different types and styles of knives, most professional chefs in the West do the majority of their work with a chef's knife. (Japanese chefs routinely use a variety of knives, while Chinese chefs may use a cleaver for even the smallest tasks, such as slicing jalapeños.) The basic grip demonstrated below is the classic Western way of holding a chef's knife. It provides stability, so you are always in control of the blade. It will probably feel awkward at first, but be patient and practice; soon the knife will feel as natural in your hand as a toothbrush.

Throughout this book, we'll be using the terms "knife hand" and "guide hand." Your knife hand, naturally, holds the knife. Your guide hand holds the food you're cutting, while simultaneously guiding the blade. It is most common for people to use their dominant hand as their knife hand. So if you're left-handed, your left hand will be your knife hand and your right hand will be your guide hand.



Pinch the blade of the knife between the thumb and index finger of your knife hand, just in front of the handle.



Index finger above edge of blade

Keep your index finger curled above the edge of the blade and therefore out of harm's way.

How to Hold a Chef's Knife



Curl your remaining three fingers around the handle, holding it snugly but comfortably against your palm. The side of your middle finger closest to your thumb should be against the bolster of the knife (or, if the knife does not have a bolster, around the heel of the knife). This is your basic knife grip. Below are two more angles.



View from above



View from below

Japanese chefs sometimes extend their index finger along the spine of their knives, but we don't recommend this practice. In Japan, meats are generally boneless by the time they reach the kitchen, and the vegetables used tend to be on the soft side, so there is less risk that the chef will lose control of the knife. In the West, we use a lot of hard root vegetables and often cut meats off the bone. Cutting these items requires much more control to prevent your blade from slipping while you're cutting. Therefore, we recommend pinching the blade between thumb and index finger as described in step 1.

Chiffonade

This technique is used to create long, thin strands of certain herbs, such as basil, sage or mint, or leafy vegetables, such as spinach and lettuce. The root, *chiffon*, is the French word for “rag,” and a pile of chiffonaded vegetables does indeed resemble a pile of green rags.

There’s no right or wrong when it comes to the size of chiffonade. Your decision about how thick to make it will depend on how you plan to use it. Very fine chiffonade, for example, looks elegant sprinkled on top of a cold plate, but would wither and shrivel if added to a hot dish. The more you cook, the better you’ll understand how various sizes of chiffonade are used.

Here, we’ll teach you two ways to cut chiffonade. While these techniques produce similar results, close examination will reveal that the individual pieces created using the classic technique are much more precise and beautiful than the pieces created with the “quick and dirty” technique. Which technique you choose will depend on how much time you have and how important the look of the final product is.

When chiffonading, use the thinner, lighter tip of your knife, rather than the heel, to make your cuts. The leaves will end up less bruised and will stay greener through preparation and service.

To practice, we suggest using baby spinach. It’s much cheaper than fresh herbs and has a smooth texture that makes it easier to work with than regular spinach.

RECOMMENDED KNIFE

Chef’s knife or Santoku



Chiffonade cut using the classic technique

Chiffonade cut using the “quick and dirty” technique

The Classic Technique



Lay 8 to 10 baby spinach leaves, top side down, on your cutting board, one on top of another. Don’t bother to pull off the stems; just make sure they’re all pointing the same way, away from where your knife will be.

The tops of most leaves have a waxy coating that helps water roll off while the leaves are on the plant. But that coating also makes your knife more likely to slip when you’re cutting. The underside of a leaf is rougher and grips the knife better, making for cleaner cuts. So always cut leafy vegetables and herbs with the top side down.



Flip the stack over so that the underside of the outer leaf ends up on the outside and roll up the leaves lengthwise, fairly tightly, like rolling a tiny carpet.



Steady the roll with your guide hand in the claw position, close to the end of the roll.



With the knife blade flush against your guide fingers, cut off a piece of the roll to even up the end. Discard this first piece.



Move your guide fingers back toward your grip fingers and cut off a very thin slice. (The less you move your fingers back, the thinner the slices will be.)



Repeat step 5 until you have cut the entire roll (excluding the stems) into a neat pile. Discard the stems.

The "Quick and Dirty" Technique



Grab some baby spinach leaves with your guide hand and crush them into a tight wad. (Pull the stems off first, if you prefer.) Place the wad on the cutting board, anchoring the back with your grip fingers while holding down the front with your guide fingers in the claw position.



With the knife blade flush against your guide fingers, cut off a piece of the wad to even up the end. Discard this first piece.



Move your guide fingers back toward your grip fingers and cut off a very thin slice.

Because the leaves will expand and the wad will come apart as you loosen your grip (and sometimes even if you don't), you will have to constantly readjust your grip on the wad to keep it compact. As your guide fingers are moving back, use your grip fingers to mash down the leaves and force them under your guide fingers. (Imagine that you're forcing the wad under a tiny door and, as each bit squeezes through, you cut it off.)



Repeat step 3 until you have cut the entire wad into a messy pile.

This "quick and dirty" technique will result in bruised greens that will brown quickly as time goes by. But if you're using the chiffonade immediately or cooking it, you'll likely never notice the difference.

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