

Dice an Onion like a Professional

Have you ever wondered how chefs manage to chop their onions into neat little dice without accidentally adding julienned finger to the menu? It's actually quite simple once you know the trick.

Before you get started, here are a few helpful hints that will make the whole process easier. Firstly, it's very important to use a sharp knife when dicing fruit and vegetables, as a dull knife can slip off the surface of the food and you may cut yourself. Use a chopping knife or cook's knife rather than a serrated knife for cleaner cuts. To ensure your chopping board doesn't slide across the bench while you chop, place a damp tea towel underneath.

Now you're ready to go. Just follow these three easy steps for a perfectly diced onion every time.

1. First, cut the onion in half from top to bottom. Peel and discard the skin. Take one half and lay it flat-side down. Make three horizontal cuts (holding the knife parallel to the chopping board), being careful not to slice all the way through. This will prevent the onion falling apart while you chop.
2. Turn the onion towards you and make six vertical cuts down through the onion. Again, take care not to cut all the way through the end of the onion. The closer the vertical cuts, the finer your dice will be. While chopping, make sure you tuck your fingertips away from the knife blade.
3. Hold the onion together with your fingers, tucking them away from the blade. Begin with the tip of the knife on the chopping board and slice straight down to form your dice. Continue across the rest of the onion. This technique will produce an even dice.

To get the best from your knives and ensure you can keep dicing onions like a pro, try to keep them in pristine condition. It is important to keep them sharp by running them through your knife sharpener before you begin preparing your food. You should avoid putting your knives in the dishwasher, as the harsh chemicals in the dishwashing detergent can blunt the blade or even pit the edge. Instead, wash your knives in hot soapy water and dry immediately with a soft cloth.

Finally, you should store knives in their protective sleeve, in a knife block, or on a magnetic rack - your knives will thank you for your care, and so will your grandchildren.

About the Author

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