

Module 3



BASIC KITCHEN TOOLS

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Do you think you can't get into the kitchen and cook because you don't have the right fancy equipment? The key is to use exactly what you have in your kitchen right now; you can always purchase new things along the way.

Read on to learn about some of the basic tools and appliances that can help elevate your kitchen to the next level.



TOOLS



KNIVES



- Choose knives that have full tangs, meaning the blade runs all the way through the metal. They'll be more sturdy and more reliable.
- Knife blades are available in a wide variety of materials, including ceramic, carbon steel, high carbon steel, stainless steel, and high carbon stainless steel.
- The harder the material, the stronger the edge will be and the longer it will remain sharp.
- **Santoku knives** are light and small with a straight edge. They're best for chopping, slicing, and mincing vegetables and meats.
- **Fillet knives** are flexible and can be used to fillet and prepare fish.
- **Usuba knives** have thin blades for cutting firm vegetables and other foods with precision.
- **Cleaver knives** have large, heavy blades for splitting or "cleaving" meat and bone.

CUTTING BOARDS



- **Wood** protects the knife blade by separating and closing after contact.
- **Bamboo** is similar to wood but is also eco-friendly.
- **Plastic** is stain-resistant, but be careful that it doesn't chip and leave bits of plastic in your food.
- Clean your cutting board thoroughly after each use with hot, soapy water to avoid bacteria transference.

POTS AND PANS



- **Stainless steel** is the most versatile as it can be used on the stove and in the oven. Stainless steel can also sit in the sink without being damaged.
- **Cast iron** is a good choice because of its durability.
- **Copper** is good for temperature control but requires more upkeep and is often more expensive.
- Do not use metal utensils on nonstick pans as the metal will scrape the hard plastic coating.



STRAINERS



- A medium-sized strainer is great for cleaning vegetables and grains.
- Strainers can also be used as fruit and vegetable bowls since the holes allow air to circulate.

SHARPENING STEELS OR STONES



- Dull knives cause accidents – sharpen knives regularly to keep them (and you!) safe.
- Sharpening tools are typically ceramic, silicone carbide, or standard steel covered with industrial diamond dust.
- Choose sharpening stones that are at least 6" long and sharpening steels that are at least 10" long.



TONGS



- Look for tongs with a lock feature for easier storage.
- Spring-action tongs stay open unless you apply pressure to close them.

SPATULAS



- Perforated spatulas allow excess liquid and fat to drain from foods.
- Look for spatulas with long, heat-resistant handles.
- If needed, choose a material that will not damage nonstick surfaces.



WOODEN UTENSILS



- Wooden utensils are a good option when working with nonstick pans.
- Always wash wooden utensils by hand and refrain from soaking to avoid bacteria growth.

MEASURING CUPS



- Measuring cups can be used with grains, flour, liquids, etc.
- It's best to purchase a set that comes with several different sizes.

VEGETABLE PEELERS



- Peelers make it easy to remove the skin from fruits and vegetables.
- Look for ones with a sharp blade and a comfortable rubber grip.



APPLIANCES



JUICERS



- Juicers separate the fiber and pulp from fruits and vegetables, leaving the juice.
- Juicers allow you to easily consume a large volume of produce.
- Juicer options include centrifugal, masticating, and twin.

SLOW COOKERS



- Slow cookers are countertop electrical cooking pots used for simmering to allow for hours of unattended cooking.
- They are often used for stews, soups, and pot roasts.
- Choose one that has multiple heat settings and a digital timer.

FOOD PROCESSORS



- They can be used to chop, grate, slice, shred, puree, grind, and blend.
- Food processors prepare food with speed and efficiency.
- Look for ones where the bowl locks onto the base, the top locks onto the bowl, and the processor only works when the unit is securely locked.

HIGH-POWER BLENDERS



- High-spinning blades generate enough friction and heat to cook soups and vegetables.
- They are ideal for creating fruit and vegetable smoothies without separating the fiber.



PRESSURE COOKERS



- Pressure cookers cook food up to three times faster than conventional cooking methods and save energy while doing so.
- Pressure cookers preserve the essential vitamins and nutrients of the food.
- Look for pressure cookers with multiple settings to make it easier to regulate cooking.

DEHYDRATORS



- Dehydrators preserve nutrients by removing the moisture from meats, fruits, vegetables, and legumes.
- They can be used to create raw dishes or snacks such as homemade jerky, fruit leathers, and vegetable chips.