

## Preparing to Cook

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1. **Handwashing** – It is important to wash your hands with hot soapy water before and after preparing food. Rewash your hands regularly, especially if handling raw meat.
2. **Create a clean working space** – Clear a section of your table or countertop. With soap and hot water, clean the area well. Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and other ingredients.
3. **Read the recipe** – Before you start cooking read the entire recipe through. Clarify any steps you are unsure about. Make sure you have all ingredients and have enough time to cook the dish.
  - Did you know? Ingredients are typically listed in order of use.
4. **Gather your equipment** – Gather the kitchen equipment used to prepare the meal. Make sure everything is clean and in good working order.
5. **Cook!** – Great cooking skills develop over time. Mistakes happen, don't put too much pressure on the outcome of the dish.
  - Cooking is a great way to spend time as a family. Involving kids in meal preparation from an early age increases their food skills and the variety of foods they enjoy. For more on what skills to get started with, view our resource [Cooking with Kids](http://ow.ly/LzAJ50Dpizl). (<http://ow.ly/LzAJ50Dpizl>)
6. **Clean up** – Properly dispose of all organic waste, recycling and garbage. Wash surfaces and kitchen equipment. Wash dishes. Always unplug slow cooker when finished.

## Knife Skills

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Holding your knife properly is the first step to cooking. [The linked video](https://youtu.be/G-Fg7l7G1zw) (<https://youtu.be/G-Fg7l7G1zw>) is a great introduction proper knife use.

Knife skills can take time to develop. Don't worry if your diced pieces aren't perfect, just enjoy the process and keep trying!

## Recipe Glossary

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Sometimes reading a recipe can feel like reading a different language! Use the definitions on the next page as a guide while you prepare the slow cooker recipes.



1. **Chop** - Chop is less precise than a dice. Chopped items don't all have to be even, but aim for about 1 inch (2.5 cm).
  - **Finely chop** - Size of a corn kernel
  - **Roughly chop** - Size of a peanut

2. **Core (apples)** - Remove the seeds and core from an apple by cutting four big sections off. Leave center core intact.

3. **Debone** - Remove all bones from meat, chicken or fish. Make sure to look for small bones that could be a choking hazard.



4. **Dice** - Dice means to cut something into small uniform squares. Diced items are usually ½ inch (about 1 cm), or roughly the size of dice.



5. **Mince** - Mince is a very small dice. Cutting an item into as small of pieces as you can, usually ⅛ inch (about 0.5 cm).

6. **Peel** - Remove enough of the outer skin to reveal the fruit or vegetable inside. This can be done with a vegetable peeler or knife.



7. **Sear and Brown** - This is a term used in cooking meat. It means to brown the surface of the meat by cooking at medium to high heat for a short amount of time.
  - After browning the meat, it is not fully cooked. This step enhances flavour and colour.
  - First, heat your pan with a small amount of oil on medium to high. When oil is sizzling add the meat. Let it sit uninterrupted for a few minutes before rotating or turning. Make sure you use a pan large enough for the cut of meat you have.
  - If you are browning ground beef, stir and break apart the meat until it is all brown in colour.

8. **Seed** - Cut the vegetable in half. Scoop or cut away all seeds inside.



9. **Slice** - Cut long thin strips.

10. **Stir** - Mix ingredients together using a circular motion.