

How to Cut Onions

A Culinary Education Sheet provided by the National Onion Association

STEP 1.

Cut off the stem/top of the onion. Peel off the outer layers of skin. Dispose of skin and trim root end if necessary. Make sure not to contaminate the cutting surface and clean the knife before proceeding.



STEP 2.

Cut the whole peeled onion in half, from root end to stem end.



STEP 3.

Place the onion halves onto the cutting surface cut-side down. For dicing and mincing, make evenly spaced lengthwise cuts from root end to stem end, leaving the root end intact.



STEP 4.

Make one or two cuts through the width of the onion parallel to the cutting surface. Again, be sure to leave the root end intact.



STEP 5.

Make crosswise cuts at the same intervals as the first parallel cuts, working from stem end towards the root end.



STEP 6.

The more uniform the onion pieces, the more evenly they will cook. For large dice, the pieces may be 3/4-inch or larger. For medium dice, the pieces should be 1/2-inch. For small dice, the pieces should be 1/4-inch. To mince, cut into fine pieces (1/8-inch or smaller).



For Cutting Onion Wedges and Rings.

For perpendicular slices (wedges), cut whole peeled onion in half from stem end to root end. Make evenly spaced cuts along the grain.



For onion rings, place a whole onion on its side and slice crosswise every 1/4 to 1/2-inch. Separate each slice into individual rings. Save the centers for dicing and mincing.



Tips for Cutting an Onion without Tearing:

When an onion is pierced, a chemical reaction takes place releasing organosulfur compounds. These compounds may irritate the eye and cause tearing.

To reduce tearing:

Chill onion about 30 minutes before cutting.

Always use a sharp knife.

Begin cutting at the top, leave root end uncut as long as possible as it contains the highest concentration of sulfur compounds.

For more information and recipes, visit www.onions-usa.org.



NATIONAL ONION ASSOCIATION