

# Tips to find the right knife for you

Okay, so we managed two weeks of relatively healthy recipes before we felt the need to revert to some butter and cheese! For those French onion soup lovers out there, you should give this recipe a whirl!

Some of you dread cooking dinner every night. And there are a couple of common reasons why. One of those reasons is that it takes too long. Well, I'm here to argue that part of the reason that it takes a long time is that you are not using your kitchen tools properly. Chopping is one of the biggest tasks in cooking. If you could come home and someone had done all of your prep for you and your counter looked like those TV shows where all the lovely little ingredients are cuddled up nicely in their own little bowls, then I think you'd find the cooking itself quite simple— maybe even enjoyable! But, who is going to do the prep?

First of all, there is no law that says that prep and cooking must be done on the same day. If it is all just too much for you, then do some of your chopping the night before and put in plastic bags. I do it all the time, especially if I'm cooking for a crowd.

But most importantly go get yourself a proper knife. I have seen many of you trying to chop up an entire meal's worth of ingredients and you have a tiny little paring knife in your hand. Holy cow— at that rate it would take all day to make dinner!

Go get a chef's knife— one that fits your hand. Most women like an 8-9" blade, most men go for the 10-12" blade. It has to do with your height and your centre of balance. When you are at the store, wrap your whole hand around the handle of the knife, then rest the blade on the counter. If your knuckles are touching the counter now, then the "tang" (the width of the blade) is too small for your hand. Get a wider blade. If your knuckles are slightly off the counter, then the tang is just right.

Make sure to get a knife where the steel extends all the way down through the handle. If the knife is cheap, there's a good chance the steel ends where the handle begins. Bad knife. The balance will be all wrong the handle and blade will separate long before the blade wears out.

You do not have to spend hundreds of dollars on a good knife. You can go to a restaurant supply store and spend \$80-\$100 and get a perfectly good one.

Then, go to a cooking class and learn how to

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use it! Your whole kitchen experience will be so much easier. Have fun and keep cooking!

Questions and/or comments email Lori and Gerry at [whatscooking@theifp.ca](mailto:whatscooking@theifp.ca)

## Registration for SK/JK underway

Halton District School Board is accepting registrations for Junior and Senior Kindergarten for September. Parents are asked to register their children by Feb. 17.

Bring original documents when registering:

- Proof of address: lease or purchase agreement or current property tax bill.

- Proof of age: birth certificate, passport or baptismal/faith document for your child.

- Proof of citizenship: birth certificate or passport or Record of Landing (IMM 1000) or Permanent Resident card.

- Proof of immunization, or philosophical or religious exemption forms.

- If you are not the child's parent, or if you have sole custody, bring proof of custody.

JK children must be 4 and SK children must be 5 by Dec. 31, 2012. Info: [www.hdsb.ca](http://www.hdsb.ca).



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## French Onion Casserole

Serves 8-12

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp butter
- 3 large sweet onions, sliced
- 2 cups shredded Swiss cheese, divided
- 1 can cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 2/3 cup milk
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 6-8 thick slices fresh bread, buttered on both sides



### Method

1. Melt butter. Sauté onions until clear and golden over medium low heat.
2. Layer onions, two-thirds of the cheese in a 2-quart casserole dish.
3. Heat and blend soup, milk and soy sauce. Pour into casserole dish.
4. Top with bread and bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.
5. Press bread down into sauce slightly, sprinkle with remaining cheese and bake 15 more minutes.

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