

Welcome to part two of our lesson on Texture. In the last video we learned a lot about how the different textures affect our mood and enjoyment of the meal. Today we're going to get more hands on and look at 6 cutting techniques for veggies and leafy greens, plus how to easily cut up 5 of the trickiest fruits. Let's get started!

The first technique we're going to learn is called a chiffonade. And you can use this technique for any kind of leafy greens. It is very popular for teeny tiny leaves as well as nice big ones. When we're doing a chiffonade, we want to take all o four leaves and layer them on top of each other so we have a nice little pile. And then we're going to take this pile and fold it in half, and down on the cutting board we're going to roll this up into a log. Then we take our knife and make nice even cuts. You can see I have my fingers holding the log in place and my front finger is down and bent so that the knife can rest against the knuckle. This will guide each cut. And as I cut the leaf I'm going to move my fingers back, still using my knuckle as a guide. So when you're done you get these nice ribbons of basil. Now we can do the same thing with these big leaves. So we've got some really beautiful Swiss chard here. And I'm going to remove the stems. We have all of these stems going through it and I'm going to break those apart one by one. It almost feels like you're unzipping the leaf so that you remove the central stem. So what we have here are piles of leaf halves. I'm going to flip one pile on top of the other and just like with our basil, roll the leaves up into a big log. And just like we did with the basil, we're going to use our fingers as a guide and cut all the way down the roll. We have a couple of options here, we can go super thin to make small ribbons or nice and thick so you get these big chunky pieces. And it really depends on your preferences and what you're looking for.

Now the next technique we're going to learn is shredding. And I'm not talking about using a cheese grater to shred some carrots, we are going to shred cabbage and Brussels sprouts. Now cabbage and Brussels sprouts are related, they are basically cousins. And these little Brussels sprouts really are just like teeny tiny cabbages. Let's go ahead and shred this big cabbage and get it ready for a salad. Just like we did for the basil, we are going to get a firm grip on our cabbage and we are going to use our knuckles just like a guide. So I'm going to do some nice small cuts. Some will go all the way down but you can also get a nice shaving off the top. What this does is create nice small strips of cabbage so you get a shredded texture.

So let's go ahead and try that with our tiny Brussels sprout. Now when we're working with Brussels sprouts, first we want to cut off the end. This little stem pieces is a little woody and very chewy. So what we're left with is this little piece of Brussels sprout. Because t his is so small and round and can easily roll around, I'm going to cut it in half and then flip it on to the cut side. And again, we use our fingers as a guide, palm down on the cutting board for stability, fingers holding the Brussels sprout in place, and knuckles guiding the knife to make nice thin slices. So what we end up with is this shredded texture. And you continue this with all of your Brussels sprouts. You can see how nice this texture is in a salad. You absolutely can eat Brussels sprouts raw. Of

course they are delicious roasted with a little salt and olive oil, but they're also a really lovely flavor and texture in a salad. You can also pull the slices apart into their layers.

The next technique we're going to learn is how to julienne whole carrots and bell peppers, perfect ingredients for a nice bite of crunch! Now carrots and bell peppers are very common veggies, so playing around with the size, shape, and quantity can bring some new life into these old stand buys. So first let's cut up this bell pepper into julienne strips. So first we cut off the top and the bottom. Then make a slice into the side and pull it apart so it's laid out flat. Then pull out all of the membranes and the seeds. So once we have it laid out flat, it's just a matter of maintaining control, working all the way down the bell pepper, and you can get some lovely strips all the same size. Perfect bite of crunch!

Now let's julienne a carrot. Now carrots are round and easily roll about the cutting board so you definitely want to make sure you have control over these. Just letting your carrot roll around will let your carrot find a nice place to rest and that will be the most stable position for that veggie. So, we're going to cut off the top. Now if you feel like you're moving around a lot and cutting straight down with your knife is causing your carrot to roll, what you can do is put your knife point down on the cutting board and bring the back all the way down. That gives you good control the whole way. When we're julienning a carrot, we want to do small sections at a time. The first thing we want to do is cut off a small slice of the side. Move it on to the cut side, cut off another edge, and work all the way around until we have a square. Then, maintain control, use your knuckles and not the point of your finger as a guide and create nice even strips. Once we have our strips, put them on their side in a pile. Put your knife point on the cutting board before you move it down, since this pile is a little slippery there's a good chance that if you cut straight down something will slip. So maintain control and slice down.

The next technique we're going to learn is how to make ribbons out of veggies. And once these ingredients might surprise you! We are going to make ribbons out of cucumber and asparagus and all we need is a little Y shaped peeler. So let's do this cucumber first. Go ahead do one nice slice to get a layer of skin off, then as you slice farther down you get more of that delicious, crisp, and crunchy cucumber. And as you keep slicing down you'll get wider and wider strips. So you keep doing this until you get down to the really seedy part of the cucumber and then you just flip it onto its side and do the next side. But what you end up with is this nice ribbon that you can make all kinds of shapes and add really great texture. Of course if you find that your cucumber slices are sticking to each other too much, go ahead and dress them in olive oil before adding them to everything else.

So let's go ahead and try this with our asparagus. Yes, you can eat asparagus raw! But of course you can also use this lightly sautéed in butter or gently steamed for a little warmth in your salad. I have not broken off the end of this asparagus so we still have a woody end that is very hard to eat. So I'm going to use that as a handle and use the peeler to create these lovely strips of

asparagus. Now when you're doing this it's important to note that you do want to go from the end towards the top, since we've got all of these bud ends. If you try to slice it from the front, your knife is going to get caught on so many bumps it will be very hard to peel. But from the other end, you get these nice long ribbons of asparagus that you can add into a salad.

Now the next technique we're going to learn is a classic dice. Of course we're going to dice up and onion, but we're also going to dice broccoli, or at least, a broccoli stem. You might be surprised to learn that you can actually eat the broccoli stem. So first, we cut the stem off, save the top for another salad. And as you can see the bottom of the stem is dry, so I'm going to cut off just that bottom inch or so, revealing all of that nice juicy stem next to it. Just like our carrot we want to do this in smaller pieces to maintain control. So I'm going to cut this in half, then we cut each section into smaller pieces. Again the trick, as through all of these veggies, is to use your knuckle as a guide, so that you cut exactly here you want to cut. Once you have it cut into strips, rotate the stems and cut them into squares until we have all of these lovely broccoli stem dice. And you can see we have so much more of that juicy surface area exposed in a dice. This is a great ingredient to add for a lot of chewiness and little bit of crunch.

Now let's do this with our onion. I've already peeled the skin off of this onion. Again, maintaining control with the onion on its side, I've got my palm nice and steady on the cutting board and fingers poised, I'm going to cut off the top. From there, we move the onion on to the cut end and make nice slices into the onion going all the way around. Many people say that if you leave the root end attached, you're much less likely to be exposed to all of the sulfur compounds that make our eyes water. Once you've cut all the way around, you have a couple options, you can just remove the sections, or you can go ahead and do a dice. So I'm going to hold the onion steady, and I'm going to move the knife across the bottom of the onion, going nice and slow. What you end up with is this nice dice of an onion. It's fairly tempting to put the onion on its side and cut downward, but you have to be really in control of this onion since it's cut into so many sections there's a great likelihood of something slipping. Be careful with this, but as you get used to it, you get this lovely dice every time.

Now the next technique we're going to learn is how to do a bias cut on celery and scallions.

Now celery is a classic ingredient. It has been used for thousands of years in so many different recipes. Changing up the texture, the size of it and the shape, can really bring some life back into this very common veggie. So instead of doing a traditional cut where we're just going all the way down in straight lines, we're going to do this on the bias, which pretty much means diagonal. So again, maintain control and do this nice bias cut. Now you can go as much as you want, you can do a small diagonal, but I find the really wide diagonal cuts are the prettiest. You can also do really thin cuts, or you can go nice and thick so you get this big chunk of celery. You can so much more surface area exposed. It's just a different way to chop up a very common veggie and create some interest in your salad.

So let's go ahead and try this with our scallion. Go ahead and cut off the roots on a bias. Discard the end. Then, maintaining control all the way down, we get these nice little cuts. You can keep the slices whole or pull them apart into their individual layers so you get this nice texture.

So those were the six most common techniques that I personally use in my salad.

Next up I'm going to show you how to cut up the five trickiest fruit.

The first fruit we're going to look at is usually considered to be a vegetable, but avocados are indeed a fruit. So just a quick tip when you're at the grocery store and you want to check for the freshness, usually if you squeeze with your fingers, you're going to get bruising underneath the skin. Instead, hold the avocado in your palm and squeeze just a little bit. This will increase the surface area of the pressure, so you don't get those dark spots right under your fingers. So let's check this for freshness. So I'm going to pull the tab off and it's perfect! That green color underneath the tab is the perfect indicator that this avocado is ripe and ready to go. So let's go ahead and cut this up. So I'm going to cut straight down the center, then lift it off the cutting board and roll the avocado around the knife. And you get this perfect line all the way around. Then a quick twist and we've got our avocado cut in half. To take the pit out, thrust your knife into the pit, twist it around and pull up.

What I want to show you with this avocado is how to cut it into a fan shape. So I'm going to peel the skin off instead of trying to remove the avocado from the skin. This does become more difficult the ripper the avocado is. As you get closer to overripe, it will be harder to peel the skin off nicely. So put the avocado cut side down and cut it in half. Then we make small cuts into the avocado lengthwise. Don't cut all the way through to the top, leave part of the top attached. This lets you fan out the slices while holding everything together. So you get this really beautiful presentation. How beautiful is that!

Next up we are going to cut apart a mango. Now the trick with cutting mangos is that there is a pit on the inside about the same shape as the fruit itself. So this isn't like a peach or an avocado where we can just remove the fruit from the inside. So first you want to find the eye, where the fruit used to be attached to the tree. Then place the mango standing up on the cutting board and take our knife and cut just next to the eye by about ¼ inch. And if you feel the pit while cutting through, just scoot your knife a little farther over. And we end up this is nice section. Flip the mango and make the same cut on the other side. Now this center part of the avocado, you can actually see the dark spot where the pit is. There's really just a little bit of fruit along the edge. Now what I usually do with this section is just eat it! So I'll cut off this eye, and that will expose the flesh and then you just peel the skin off with your knife. And you can actually pull the skin off. Then go ahead and just eat this section. The sides are what we'll actually use in a salad. I like to cut these into three sections. Then to peel the skin off, just like we did with the large section, we're going to put our knife just under the skin and use your thumb to guide the skin over the knife blade. You end up with this beautiful piece of mango and just discard the skin.

From here you can do some thin slices so you get these nice tiny slices of mango. Or the classic is just do dice it up into perfect little mango cubes!

Next up, I'm going to show you two techniques to cut apart fresh peaches. Let's start off with dicing a peach. Now a peach, like all stone fruit, has a pit in the center. So we're going to cut right next to that pit. Then place the peach on the cut side and continue slicing next to the pit. Once all of our sides are cut off, it's just a matter of slicing everything into the thickness that you'd like, making little dices, and then deciding what you'd like to add to all of this delicious peach!

Next, let's cut our peach into nice slices. Just like with our avocado, we're going to take our knife and slice all the way around. Again, you can pick the peach up off the cutting board so that you get a perfect line all the way around, letting the pit guide your knife. And we're going to do that again, going at a 90 degree angle from the first cut. So essentially we're making an X all the way across the peach. And just like our avocado, we take our peach and gently but firmly twist it into halves. One half will still be attached to the pit and you just pry it apart and removing the pit. From here, slice the quarters into smaller slices will help if you end up with any funky looking parts. You can definitely salvage any weird pieces if presentation is important to you. So there you go! You've got your peach broken apart and all the nice peach slices.

Now this next one is my favorite technique. We are going to supreme an orange. Now this technique works with any kind of citrus, but an orange is my favorite. So what we do here is cut off the top and the bottom. What we want to do is expose a good amount of the juicy orange. This will give us a guide to see how much pith is around it. So we take our knife and cut all the way down, curving our knife as go along the curvature of the orange. And we continue all the way around the orange, making sure to go just deep enough that we remove all of that pith. So what we have now is tons of pith, which you can candy this if you want to give it a try. And we end up with the insides of the orange, the best part. So now, we cut out each orange section. You can see where the membranes are. First we cut along the inside of the membrane, then the inside of the other side of the segment. And we pull our this beautiful, perfect slice of orange, no rind, no pith, but it all stays together as one piece. How beautiful is that? Just continue to work around your orange cutting out each section one at a time. And if you have a piece with pith attached, you can pull it off or cut it off. You can even pull each orange section into smaller pieces to create nice sections for your salad.

Last on our list of fruit, we are going to cut apart an entire pineapple. Now you can just cut the top off, but I really enjoy manually removing this. Hold the pineapple nice and firm, give the top a good twist, and it pops right off! So let's cut apart this beautiful pineapple. When I first started cooking with whole foods, I found pineapples to be pretty intimidating. But once you do a couple of them, they are so easy to break down and a lot of fun! Plus, you get so much pineapple! So let's break this apart. So first, we put the pineapple on its side and, holding it

firm, cut off the top. You might need to saw through a few times. Then spin the pineapple around and do the same thing with the bottom. Now a quick note, if you aren't sure how to choose a pineapple, you can see how the bottom of this pineapple is yellow, that is an indicator that it's ripe. So when you're at the grocery store look for that yellow bottom and give it a smell, it should smell strongly like pineapple. So cut the bottom off. Then put the pineapple cut side down and just like we did with our orange, we're going to cut all the way down, going with the curvature of the pineapple, and cut off all of the skin. You can cut deeper if you want to make sure that you get all of these seed holes. That's up to you. But if you have a spot where you missed some of the skin, you can always go back through and remove it. No worries. Now let's break this into much smaller pieces. You can see from the top of the pineapple, this slightly darker center, that the pineapple has a core. And that core is very woody, it is not at all pleasant to eat, so we need to remove that. But I find it difficult to core this without one of those fancy pineapple tools, but you really don't need that. This is my favorite way to break this into nice little chunks while still getting rid of that core. So we're going to cut straight down the center, rotate, cut right down the center again, and then two more times, cutting the pineapple into eight sections. Now we've got these nice pieces of pineapple. And we're going to pull out each of these sections and slice that core off. And we have this nice piece, cut it into chunks. And there we go!

Now that we have the tools to easily and quickly chop the most common fruits and veggies, let's talk about salad #4.