

Wooden Cutting Board Care

Before using a new wooden cutting board, season it to prevent staining & absorption of food odors & bacteria. Proper surface treatment is important to guard against germs and/or mold growth on both new and older boards.

Mineral oil is a popular choice as it is the cheapest pure food grade oil you can buy. DO NOT use vegetable or olive oils because they can turn rancid. Mineral oil remains safe throughout its life and is available at your local grocery, hardware or drug store.

Caution must be taken when using any type of cutting board. The following are some safety tips to keep in mind:

- Before applying oil to a wooden cutting board warm the oil slightly. Apply oil with a soft cloth, in the direction of the grain, allowing oil to soak in for a few minutes. Then remove all surface oil with a dry, clean cloth.
- **HOT WATER & SOAP** – Scrub board with hot water & soap. Rinse and dry thoroughly. NEVER submerge cutting boards in a sink of water and NEVER put the board in a dishwasher! Wood is porous and will soak up water causing the cutting board to crack when it dries.
- **VINEGAR** – To disinfect and clean your wood cutting boards or butcher block countertop, wipe them with full strength white vinegar after each use. The acetic acid in vinegar is a good disinfectant.
- To eliminate garlic, onion, fish, or other smells from your cutting board:
 - Coarse salt or baking soda – Rub the board with coarse salt or baking soda. Let stand for a few minutes and wipe salt or baking soda from board and then rinse.
 - Lemon – Another easy technique is to rub fresh lemon juice or rub a cut lemon over the surface of the cutting board to neutralize onion and garlic odors.
- **RE-SEASONING** – Wooden boards need oiling or re-seasoning once a week to seal the grain against bacteria. Also an oil finish helps to prevent the wood from cracking or pulling apart at the seams.

All cutting boards, and other food surfaces, should be kept dry when not in use. Resident bacteria survive not more than a few hours without moisture. Beware of moisture collecting beneath the board if you leave it on the counter. If you can, prop one end up when not using your board. Replace cutting boards that become deeply scratched, carved or grooved.

