The bridge technique is used to cut ingredients into smaller, more manageable pieces. Form a bridge over the ingredient with your hand, making sure the arch is nice and high so there’s plenty of room for the knife to fit underneath. Hold the item securely with your fingers on one side and your thumb on the other. Now pick up the knife with the other hand – get the children to check the blade is facing downwards – and guide the knife under the middle of the bridge.

Cut into the middle of the ingredient by pressing down and sliding the knife back towards you out of the bridge. Then take one half at a time and place them flat-side down. Repeat the bridge over each half one at a time and cut into quarters. Keep going until you’ve got the number of pieces you need. Never rush – it’s important to take your time – stop between each slice to check your fingers are out of the way.

The claw technique is used to slice ingredients into strips. Place the item onto the board, flat-side down. Make a claw by partly curling your fingers closely together, making sure you tuck your fingertips and thumb out of the way.

Pick up the knife with your other hand, check the blade is facing down and place your claw on top of the ingredient, with your fingers facing the knife. Keep the tip of the knife on the board and slowly slice through the item, sliding the knife back towards you. To make your next slice, move your fingers back along the item, keeping your fingers together and keeping a grip on the top. Remember, stop between slices to look at where your knife is and make sure your fingers are tucked out of the way – it’s not a race.

When children are learning, don’t encourage them to chop all the way to the end of the item – it’s better to have safe fingers than get that extra bit of carrot or celery.