



## Maintaining and Sanitizing Cutting Boards

Cutting boards should be cleaned and sanitized frequently. Some of the various techniques recommended for cutting boards are as follows. You decide which is best.

**Hot water and soap** - Scrub board with hot water and soap. Rinse and dry thoroughly. NEVER submerge cutting boards in a sink of water or put them in the 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, wipe with full-strength white vinegar after each use. The acetic acid in the vinegar is a good disinfectant; effective against such harmful bugs as E. coli, Salmonella, and Staphylococcus. Vinegar is especially good for people with chemical allergies. Keep a spray bottle of undiluted vinegar handy for easy cleaning and sanitizing.

**Hydrogen Peroxide** - 3% hydrogen peroxide can also be used as a bacteria-killer. To kill the germs on your cutting board, use a paper towel to wipe the board down with vinegar and then use another paper towel to wipe it with hydrogen peroxide.

**Bleach** - Sanitize wood cutting boards with either diluted chlorine bleach or a vinegar solution consisting of one teaspoon of liquid chlorine bleach in one quart of water or a one to five dilution of vinegar. Flood the surface with a sanitizing solution and allow it to stand for several minutes, then rinse and air dry or pat dry with paper towels.

**Board Storage** - All cutting boards should be kept dry when not in use. Resident bacteria survive no more than a few hours without moisture. Keep moisture of any type from standing on the block for long periods of time. 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.

### 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 a few minutes and wipe salt or baking soda from board, and then rinse. You may need to re-season after rinsing your cutting board.

**Lemon** - Another very 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. You may need to re-season after rinsing your cutting board.

**Vinegar** - Keep a spray bottle of undiluted vinegar handy for easy cleaning and sanitizing. You may need to re-season after rinsing your cutting board.

## Reseasoning

Wooden boards need oiling or re-seasoning once a week to seal the grain against bacteria. A mineral oil finish seals the pores of the wood blocking the penetration of moisture and helps to prevent the wood from cracking or pulling apart at the seams. Warm the oil slightly before applying. Apply oil with a soft cloth, in the direction of the grain, allowing the oil to soak in. Allow oil to soak in a few minutes and then remove all surface oil with a dry, clean cloth.