

# How to Ripen and Cut Avocados Safely



**TIP:** See step 1 directly below to determine avocado ripeness (they usually come to market underripe and too firm to eat). If your avocado(s) is/are already ripe, skip to step 2 for step-by-step picture book directions showing how to cut ripe avocados as safely as possible.

## Needed

**Avocado(s)**

Large Sharp (Chef's) Knife

Cutting Board

Spoon (optional, as shown in step 2)

Paper Bag (to ripen underripe avocados as quickly as possible - the bag shown in the insert has seen a lot of ripening service)



**1. Determining avocado ripeness and how to ripen an avocado:** Avocados usually come to market underripe and firm. Avocados are ripe when you can press on the avocado skin with your thumb using a little more pressure than you'd use to grip a pencil firmly (left photo) and leave an indent where your

thumb was as shown in circled area in the picture on the right.

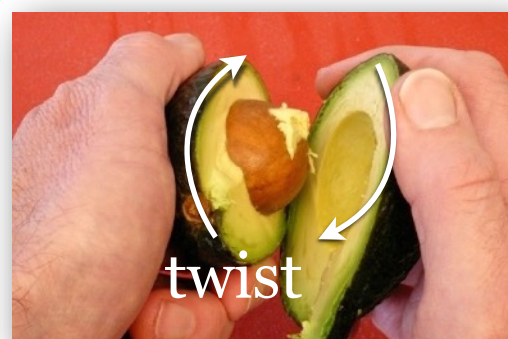
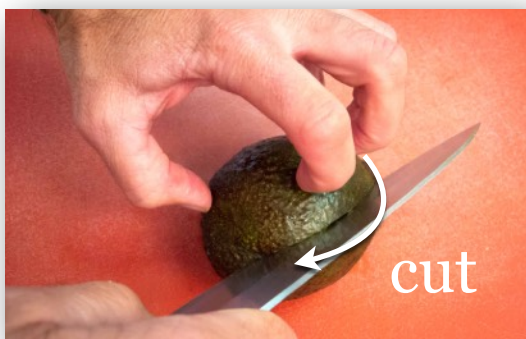


To ripen **firm avocados** as quickly as possible at home, place them in a paper bag (NOT plastic bag - plastic bags don't allow for the air exchange needed for ripening; paper bags do), close the bag loosely, and store them out of direct sunlight at room temperature for 1-2 days - or longer for **extremely firm, unripe avocados**. (I prefer to keep bagged fruits on the top of the refrigerator to ripen as shown in the third picture below so that they're in sight and in mind and don't get left accidentally to over-ripen.)



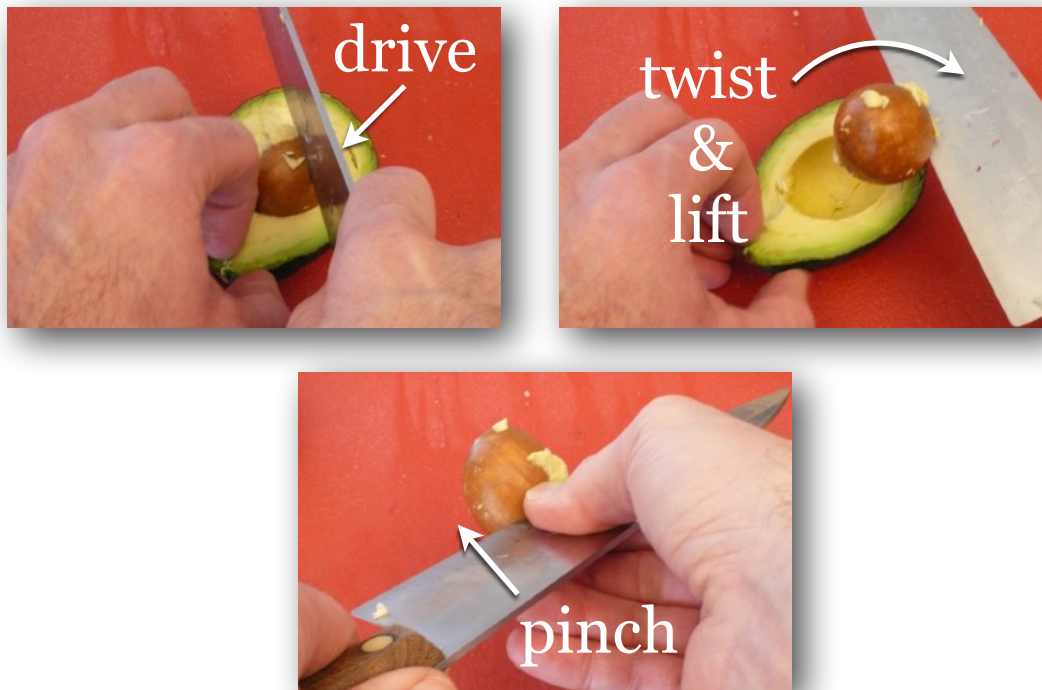


2. Cut a **ripe avocado** in half lengthwise around its **seed**, and twist the **two avocado halves** apart.



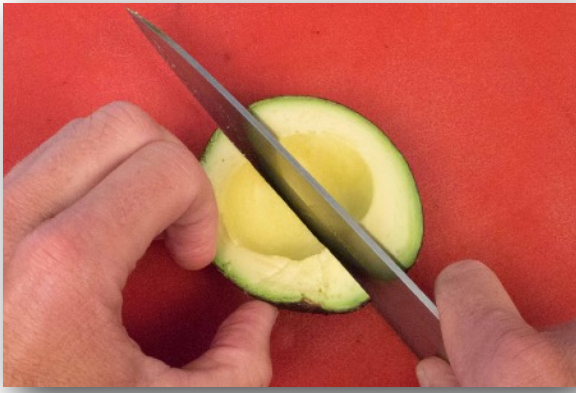
Remove the **seed** by holding the **avocado half** with the **seed** still attached seed-side-up on the cutting board - making sure your fingers are not in the intended knife path.

Then drive the long, sharp edge of the knife blade into the **seed**. Twist and lift the **seed** from the **avocado half**. Remove the **seed** from the knife by pinching down on the **seed** from the back, dull side of the knife blade as shown in the third picture below.

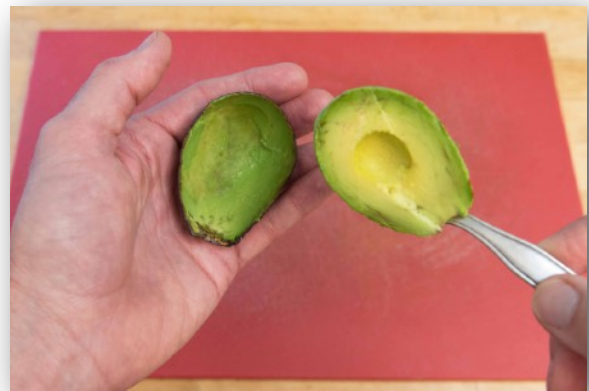


Choose one of the two methods to remove the **avocado skin** shown below.

A. Cut each **avocado half** in half again lengthwise into quarters and peel off the **skin** (I use this method most of the time).

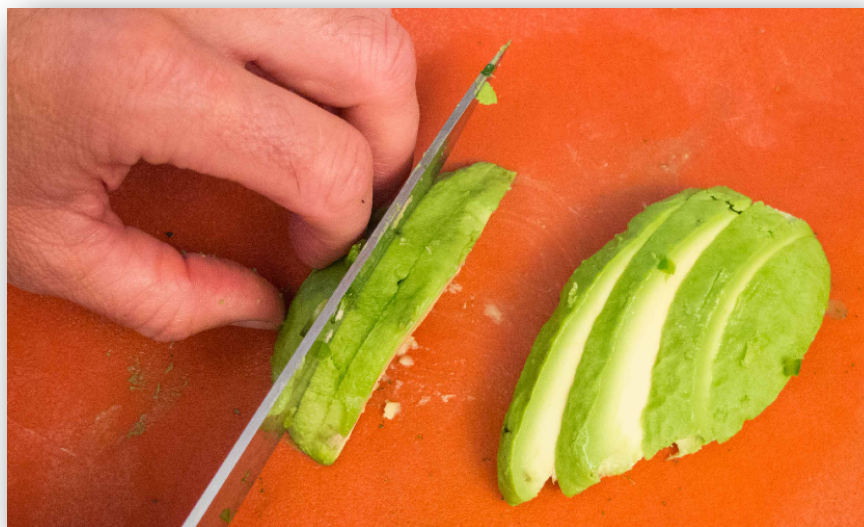


B. Keep the **avocado half/halves** intact and scoop the **avocado flesh** from the **avocado skin** with a spoon. (I use this method when I get the sense the skin might be tough to peel. You'll get that sense soon just through practice.)



Cut each **avocado half/quarter** lengthwise into slices  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (6-12 mm) wide.





To cut the **avocado** further into cubes, cut the **avocado slices** in cross section into pieces also 1/4 - 1/2 inch (6-12 mm) wide.

