AS A FAMOUS CHEF ONCE SAID,
"FAILING TO PREPARE IS LIKE PREPARING TO FAIL." MISE EN PLACE IS MORE THAN JUST PREPARATION HOWEVER, IT IS ALL OF THE ELEMENTS THAT BRING A CULINARY ENDEAVOR TOGETHER, PHYSICAL (STATION PREP), MENTAL (ORGANIZATION AND PRACTICE), AND EMOTIONAL (PROFESSIONALISM, CALMNESS AND CONFIDENCE). WITHOUT THESE FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS, CULINARY SUCCESS IS UNLIKELY OR UNATTAINABLE.
1. MISE EN PLACE GENERAL TIPS

2. MISE EN PLACE “ON THE GO”
   - COMPETITIONS
   - PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION
   - ACF CERTIFICATION EXAM
COMPLETE
A VISUAL WALKTHROUGH OF FACILITY

- Make sure all equipment is in order
- Ensure all food is ready for daily production and was properly stored from prior day
- Make a check off list

PRACTICE MENU ITEMS FOR UPCOMING DEMOS, COMPETITIONS OR PRACTICAL EXAMS
Mise en Place
MODEL THE BEHAVIOR EVERYDAY

- ARRIVE ON TIME AND BE PREPARED FOR THE DAY AHEAD
- DRESS PROFESSIONAL AT ALL TIMES
- BE PROFESSIONAL IN ALL YOU DO
- PLAN YOUR DAY, "MISE EN PLACE", WORK THE PLAN
- DEMONSTRATE AND ENFORCE PROPER SANITATION AND SAFETY STANDARDS
Mise en Place
SHOWCASE PROFESSIONALISM

- WHITE CHEF COAT
- WHITE TOQUE (IF YOU SWEAT A LOT AVOID PAPER, OR PACK EXTRA)
- BLACK OR BLACK AND WHITE CHECKERED PANTS
- LEATHER SHOES OR CLOGS (CLEANED AND POLISHED)
- CLEAN APRON
- CLEAN SIDE TOWELS (PACK EXTRA, FOLDED AND READY TO USE)
- MEN, MAKE SURE YOU SHAVE
- REMOVE JEWELRY
- PROPERLY RESTRAIN HAIR
Mise en Place “On the Go”

PREPARING FOR COMPETITIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND PRACTICAL EXAMS

- Read the rules
- Develop standardized equipment lists that can be easily customized for any event
- Keep your knives sharp and organized at all times
- Know what is expected at each event before you go
Mise en Place “On the Go”

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

DO YOUR RESEARCH AHEAD OF TIME

- Know the rules or expectations
- Talk to others who have been successful in similar events
- Know the layout of the kitchen
- Stick with your strengths:
  - Anytime you are going to showcase your skills, make sure it is in fact a skill
- Develop new skills in between events
- Practice, practice, practice
Mise en Place “On the Go”
DEMONSTRATIONS & COMPETITIONS

MAKE A LIST OF EQUIPMENT

• WRITE A CHECK LIST FOR YOUR EQUIPMENT SPECIFIC TO YOUR MENU
• DO NOT BRING EVERY PIECE OF EQUIPMENT YOU HAVE “JUST IN CASE”
  • This shows poor planning and mise en place and makes your work station look cluttered and unorganized
• NEATLY PACK AND ORGANIZE YOUR EQUIPMENT AS IF YOU WERE TRAVELING, EVEN IF YOU PRACTICE IN YOUR OWN KITCHEN
• MAKE SURE ALL YOUR EQUIPMENT IS IN GOOD WORKING ORDER
• SHARPEN YOUR KNIVES
• EVEN THOUGH THE HOST SITE DOES PROVIDE SOME EQUIPMENT, YOU MAY WANT TO USE YOUR OWN TO ENSURE:
  1. You have it, and you are familiar with it
  2. You leave nothing to chance and do not have to look for anything the day of the event
Mise en Place “On the Go”
DEMONSTRATIONS & COMPETITIONS

EQUIPMENT EXAMPLES

THINK ABOUT THE SITUATION AND ALL POSSIBILITIES

- Clean uniform, apron, extra apron, hat, side towels, thermometer, neckerchief, pen
- Sharp knives/tool kit
- Spatula, tongs, spoons, rubber spatulas, whips, ladles
- Bain maries/saute pans/sauce pans/half sheet pans/hotel pans/perforated hotel pans
- Cutting boards, skid mats
- Sanitizer and cleaner, spray bottles and tubs/gloves
- Burr mixer/micro plane/chinoise/china cap
- Plates, cups, soup bowls, under liners, napkins to fold
- Extra gas burners
- Extra electric burners
- KitchenAid® mixer and attachments
- Saran™ wrap
- Zip lock bags/tape
- Labels for scrap, etc.
- Sauce bullet
- Speed rack, sheet pans, blue tray for knives
- Butcher’s twine
- First aid
- Timer
ORGANIZE AND PACK

PACK EQUIPMENT FOR TRAVEL
• Using your equipment mise en place check list, gather everything on the list
• Pack like items together and wrap items with plastic wrap if needed to keep them from moving around during transport
• Check list twice

PACK FOOD FOR TRAVEL
• Wrap and pack all proteins in a cooler and be sure to avoid cross contamination. If you must use the same cooler, make sure items are packed according to final internal cooking temperatures with the higher temps on the bottom

ONLY PACK WHAT YOU NEED, EXTRA ITEMS WILL CLUTTER YOUR STATION.
Mise en Place “On the Go”
DEMONSTRATIONS & COMPETITIONS

PURCHASE INGREDIENTS

- Select vendors that offer the highest quality goods and services you can afford
- Identify vendors or sources of food that are local if needed
- Make sure ingredients are as fresh as possible for each practice
- Track your costs so you can budget appropriately for practice sessions
- Measure and pack each ingredient according to the recipes and pack only what you need to complete the event
- Organize your ingredients and pack them according to the recipes every time you practice
- Measure, label, date and pack each ingredient according to recipes
- Locate a grocery store near the testing sites and plan for unexpected costs
Mise en Place “On the Go”

PRACTICAL EXAMS

READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL EXAM REQUIREMENTS

- Visit: ACFCHEFS.ORG to learn more about all levels of certification
- Ask yourself, “Do I meet all of the qualifications?”
- Print a copy of PRACTICAL EXAM CANDIDATE MANUAL from the link at the bottom of the page

www.ACFChefs.org/Download/Documents/Certify/Certification/Practical_Exam.pdf
Mise en Place “On the Go”
PRACTICAL EXAMS

DESIGN YOUR MENU

- Utilize all ingredients listed in market basket
- Write a three course menu
  - Fish Course: appetizer size to include both seafood items
  - Salad Course: as part of a three course meal, tossed and served with extra dressing on the side
  - Main Course: approximately 6-7 oz. protein, with two or more side vegetables, starch and appropriate sauce
    
IncludE:
  - Four classical cuts
  - Four different cooking method
  - An emulsified vinaigrette
  - Two different sauces using two different methods
Mise en Place “On the Go”

PRACTICAL EXAMS

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

- Make sure your uniform is correct
- Stage your equipment and food as if you were arriving at the site
- Roll it to the kitchen you have assigned yourself
- Start the clock to track your setup time
- Wash your hands and clean and sanitize your work station
- Unpack and organize all of your food and equipment at your station according to use
- Refrigerate all foods that require it, organize your shelves to avoid cross contamination
- Check stoves and ovens to make sure they are on and in working order
- You can put your oven thermometer in the oven at this time as well
- Stop the setup clock and make sure you are good on time
- Start the clock and begin preparing your menu
- Work with one product at a time to avoid cross contamination
- If you like to do your butchery first, clean and sanitize your station and tools between each item, then refrigerate for later use as needed.
PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

- Once butchery is done, prepare any vegetables, herbs or other mise en place
- Clean as you go
- Have containers for waste, stock and usable trim (pre-label containers)
- Separate trim and stock according to use. Do not mix everything together
- Begin cooking when the bulk of your mise en place of ingredients is done
- Plate the items within your window according to your menu
Mise en Place “On the Go”

PRACTICAL EXAMS

- Get a mentor to oversee your practice and give feedback if possible.
- Choose a station that meets the kitchen requirements for the exam:
  - Four burner stove with standard oven per candidate (portable burners are not acceptable)
  - 45 sq.ft. usable table/counter working space per candidate
  - Four cubic feet refrigeration space per contestant, at a close proximity to the station
  - Adequate cubed ice supply
  - One hot and cold hand sink per three candidates
  - One hot and cold ware washing sink per four candidates
  - Two power outlets per candidate, located at their work station
  - Ample garbage receptacles placed at every station and a community receptacle within the testing facility
- You must decide if you want to rely on the test site for all your small wares or if you will bring your own, but in general it is best to leave nothing to chance.
Mise en Place "On the Go"

PRACTICAL EXAMS

PRACTICE AND EVALUATE

• Evaluate all aspects of the practice session

• Revise your menu and make changes to improve performance according to requirements

• Remember this is not a competition

• Practice again from the beginning
  • Incorporate all changes for improvement
  • Follow this sequence as many times as needed to perfect your mise en place
  • Everything should be second nature
  • If possible practice in different kitchens that meet requirements

• Evaluate everything according to the ACF Certification Practical Exam Score Sheet

• Have a mentor provide a critique of practice
Final Thoughts...

MODEL
PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR IN ALL YOU DO

PRACTICE
ALL OF THESE THINGS ON A DAILY BASIS

KEEP UP
WITH INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND CURRENT TRENDS

STAY INVOLVED
WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS