

Reclaim Your Kitchen

1. Use a Tray

- **Pour drinks over the tray to catch spills that might otherwise trickle onto the floor.**
- **Make your snack or set your cutting board on the tray to catch crumbs or the carrot slices that might roll away.**
- **Keep a small bowl on the tray to collect scraps. Then simply throw it all in the trash when you are done.**



- Use a specific corner of the tray for small items like measuring spoons, spice bottle lids and garlic cloves. This way you won't have to keep searching for them.

2. Take Control of the Pantry

- Buy food packages that are distinct in shape, size and color. You won't have to ask what's in the package if you are familiar with it.
- Label with large print on a scrap of paper taped to the box if that works for you. Or consider labels that don't need reading such as a rubber band wrapped around the package or a magnet stuck on top of a can. You can even tear the label on the mushroom soup to differentiate it from the cream of chicken.



- **Only buy what comfortably fits in your pantry. Over-stocking can cause items to be stuck anywhere there is room — this leads to chaos!**
- **Designate a specific spot for each item in your cabinets and pantry: beans are on the right side of the second shelf. Or consider using bins for similar items. You can purchase bins or simply use empty boxes. Label the containers with large print labels and use torn labels or rubber bands to differentiate the items within the box: red beans have rubber bands and black beans do not.**

3. Confront the Fridge

- **Limit the number of condiments and keep your favorites separate from everyone else's.**
- **Stay on top of your leftovers by keeping them in one of the drawers or a large plastic tub. If it's in the tub, it needs to be eaten or used up.**

- **Store common items in the same spot. “Milk on the left and orange juice on the right of the top shelf.”**

4. Adapt Your Workspace and Tools

- **Keep a binder of your favorite recipes by having them produced in large print. Use a photocopier to enlarge them or type them into a computer (or find a volunteer who can) and print in large print. Explore audio and digital cookbooks. Find a website that has recipes you enjoy.**
- **Add better lighting and use more color contrast to help you make your kitchen workspace as easy to work in as possible.**
- **Expect to take more time and use more concentration. Clear the kitchen of distractions. Work carefully and plan ahead**

where you will set hot items, messy spoons and ingredients.

5. Safety First!

- Sharp knives are safer than dull ones. Store in a knife block instead of loose in a drawer. Temporarily stick dirty knives behind the kitchen faucet with the blade down and the handle towards the right (if you are right-handed).**
- Consider using a slighter larger pot or mixing bowl than needed if you are concerned with liquids boiling over or if you have trouble telling if you are keeping things level when you pick them up.**
- Don't hang a towel on the oven door — it might get caught in the oven door and catch fire.**

- **Don't leave the kitchen if you have a pot on the stove — always keep your attention fully on what you are doing.**

For best results, seek out instruction from a vision rehabilitation professional to keep cooking confidently and safely in your kitchen. Cody Froeter at Second Sense can teach you the skills you need to get back in the kitchen. Send Cody an email or give him a call at 312-236-8569 to discuss your training needs.