

Seven Ingredients

Chicagoans are very particular about their hot dogs. To begin with, it has to be an all-beef product, served on a steamed poppy seed bun. But just as important are the essential toppings. If you walk into a proper Chicago hot dog stand and order it "Chicago Style," you'll get exactly these seven ingredients on your dog: yellow mustard, chopped white onions, neon green pickle relish, a dill pickle spear, tomato wedges, sport peppers and, of course, celery salt.

Oh, and if you ask for ketchup, you'll get — at a minimum — rude stares and sarcastic comments. In some joints, you might just be asked to leave.

The reason this is important is that many of you will be heading to Chicago soon for IMTS, which takes place at McCormick Place from September 12–17. The biennial manufacturing trade show is the biggest display of machine tools and manufacturing technology available in America. So if you're in the business of making things, and you want to stay up to date about the latest machines, tools and processes, there's no better event to attend.

But just like a Chicago hot dog, having a successful IMTS experience requires the right combination of ingredients:

- 1. Plan Your Day(s).** The show is overwhelmingly large. The 2016 event will play host to more than 2,000 exhibiting companies covering more than 1.3 million square feet of exhibit space. It occupies all of Chicago's McCormick Place, and you'll wear yourself out going back and forth between the North, South, East and West buildings, each of which will host several pavilions. More importantly, you can be distracted by a lot of exhibits that aren't as relevant to gear manufacturing or to your current needs. Don't just show up and wander the aisles. You'll be lost and won't accomplish anything. We've tried to help you organize your time by putting together a gear manufacturers guide to the show, beginning on page 37.
- 2. Set Up Appointments.** Let the exhibitors know you'll be coming. If you have questions, don't count on the right person being available to answer them when you show up at their booth. Trade shows are extremely busy, and if the expert you need is busy talking to another customer, you could be stuck waiting for an hour or more.
- 3. Divide and Conquer.** If you have the luxury of sending multiple people to the show, do it. Nobody can cover the whole show on his own. Split up responsibilities among your staff and put together a buying team.



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- 4. Expand Your Horizons.** Don't just visit the suppliers you already know. The world of gear manufacturing is constantly changing. New processes and technologies are continually being advanced. This is the best opportunity you'll have to see them up close, ask questions and learn how they might fit into your operation.
- 5. Learn.** IMTS includes a number of educational conferences and meetings that could be important to you. Don't forget to schedule these special opportunities. They are more of a time commitment than booth hopping, but the payoff is worth it.
- 6. Visit Gear Technology (Booth #N-7324).** Be sure to stop by our booth to say hello, chat with our editors or let us know how we're doing. While you're there, please renew your free subscription. We'd really appreciate it.
- 7. Take Advantage of Chicago.** Truly one of the most beautiful cities in the world, Chicago has a lot to offer. If you're making a special trip to the show, carve out some time to take in a museum or go on an architectural tour. Chicago's architectural heritage is second to none. Visit the Museum of Science and Industry, and you'll see the only remaining building from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. And don't forget to eat. Even if hot dogs aren't your thing, you should also try our world-famous deep-dish pizza or have yourself an Italian beef sandwich (dipped, of course) with sweet or hot peppers, or my personal favorite, Polish sausage, Chicago style.

If you follow the recipe, you should have a great IMTS. We hope to see you there. Just remember, forget the ketchup.