The Food Professional's Guide to Restaurant Safety and Cleanliness
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The Basics of Food Safety

Safe steps in food handling, cooking, and storage are essential to prevent foodborne illness. In every step of food preparation, follow the steps to keep food safe:
- ✓ Clean — Wash hands and surfaces often.
- ✓ Separate — Don't cross-contaminate.
- ✓ Cook — Cook to the right temperature.
- ✓ Chill — Refrigerate promptly.

Storage

- ✓ Store food only in designated storage areas
- ✓ Always refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours—1 hour when the temperature is above 90 °F (32.2 °C).
- ✓ Store raw and ready to eat food separately if possible.
- ✓ Store items in refrigerator in the following top to bottom order when possible: :
    - o ready-to-eat foods, cooked, vegetables
    - o seafood;
    - o whole cuts of beef and pork; ground meat and ground fish;
    - o whole and ground poultry
- ✓ Wrap or cover food prior to storing or use appropriate containers
- ✓ Check the temperature of your refrigerator and freezer. The refrigerator should be at 40 °F (4.4 °C) or below and the freezer at 0 °F (-17.7 °C) or below.
- ✓ Cook or freeze fresh poultry, fish, ground meats, and variety meats within 2 days; other beef, veal, lamb, or pork, within 3 to 5 days.
- ✓ Perishable food such as meat and poultry should be wrapped securely to maintain quality and to prevent meat juices from getting onto other food.
- ✓ Store food and nonfood items at least six inches off the floor and away from walls
- ✓ Canned foods are safe indefinitely as long as they are not exposed to freezing temperatures, or temperatures above 90 °F. Discard cans that are dented, rusted, or swollen. High-acid canned food (tomatoes, fruits) will keep their best quality for 12 to 18 months; low-acid canned food (meats, vegetables) for 2 to 5 years.

Preparation

✓ Always wash hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling food.
✓ Avoid cross-contaminate. Keep raw meat, poultry, fish, and their juices away from other food. After cutting raw meats, wash cutting board, utensils, and countertops with hot, soapy water.
✓ Prepare raw meat, fish, and poultry at different times than ready-to-eat food (when using the same prep table). Do not allow ready to eat foods come in contact with surfaces that have come in contact with raw meat, seafood, or poultry.
✓ Avoid preparing foods with bare hands, use food safe gloves
✓ Make sure work area and equipment are clean and sanitized, clean and sanitize work surfaces and equipment in between products

Thawing

✓ Refrigerator: The refrigerator allows slow, safe thawing. Make sure thawing meat and poultry juices do not drip onto other food.
✓ Cold Water: For faster thawing, place food in a leak-proof plastic bag. Submerge in cold tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Cook immediately after thawing.

Cooking

✓ Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F (62.8 °C) as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.
✓ Ground meats: Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160 °F (71.1 °C) as measured with a food thermometer.
✓ Poultry: Cook all poultry to an internal temperature of 165 °F (73.9 °C) as measured with a food thermometer.

Serving

- ✓ Hot food should be held at 140 °F (60 °C) or warmer.
- ✓ Cold food should be held at 40 °F (4.4 °C) or colder.
- ✓ When serving food at a buffet, keep food hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Keep food cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice or use small serving trays and replace them often.
- ✓ Perishable food should not be left out more than 2 hours at room temperature—1 hour when the temperature is above 90 °F (32.2 °C).

Leftovers

- ✓ Discard any food left out at room temperature for more than 2 hours—1 hour if the temperature was above 90 °F (32.2 °C).
- ✓ Place food into shallow containers and immediately put in the refrigerator or freezer for rapid cooling.
- ✓ Use cooked leftovers within 4 days.
- ✓ Reheat leftovers to 165 °F (73.9 °C).