

HYGIENE AND SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN



Kitchen and food safety is about managing everything that happens in the food area to reduce the risk of burns, cuts, falls, food poisoning and food allergy or intolerance. Those in charge of food activities must think about, carry out and manage food safety procedures and check that they are operable.

Managing Risk

It is essential to find out about the needs of participants before they start cooking – allergies, food intolerances, special requirements.

A risk assessment must be completed prior to cooking sessions and great care taken throughout the activity and clearing away process in order to minimize risk. Risks should be categorized into high / medium / low and the assessment applies to everyone attending the cooking session whether they be the leader, observer/visitor or the participants. Here is an example of how you might set out a risk assessment document:

Hazards	Who could be harmed	Level of risk (H/M/L)	Precautions and control measures	Check by tick	Notes and further action required

An easy way to remember the principles of kitchen safety and hygiene is to think of The Four Cs.

Cleaning, cooking, chilling, cross-contamination

HYGIENE AND SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN



Cleaning

Follow the rule 'clean as you go'

- Before touching any food, wash hands in hot soapy water. Dry them with a paper towel and dispose of in foot-operated bin. Re-wash after visiting the toilet, handling raw ingredients, cleaning bins or going outside.
- Keep surfaces clean by spraying with anti-bacterial spray before and after cooking and leaving to dry naturally.
- Check that utensils and equipment are washed thoroughly before putting away – be particularly vigilant with equipment that has a number of parts and hidden corners.
- Always use clean tea towels.
- Chopping boards need special care. Scrub them on both sides with a sink brush, rinse and air-dry (in a rack if possible). Don't put a stack of damp chopping boards back in the cupboard – they will develop a nasty smell and may go mouldy.
- Wear clean protective clothing, tie hair back and remove rings for all cooking activities,
- Wipe up spills immediately

Cooking

Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria in foods.

- Never serve food that isn't cooked properly, especially chicken. A food probe can be used to check internal temperature. The Food Standards Agency recommends that food is cooked to a temperature of 70°C for 2 minutes or an equivalent temperature and time e.g. 75°C for 30 seconds. It is recommended that you record cooking or reheated food temperatures. If you don't have a food probe, check meat is cooked by inserting a skewer into the thickest part – if juices run clear then it's cooked.
- Be careful with rice; always refrigerate left-overs as quickly as possible and if reheating, do so thoroughly and only reheat once.
- Once food is cooked, either serve it immediately or keep it warm at 63°C or above until serving.
- If preparing cooked foods in advance, always cool and then chill them quickly. Place cooled food in the fridge.

Chilling

Chilling food prevents the growth of bacteria. Some foods need to be chilled to keep them safe to eat, e.g. fresh fish, cooked foods for re-heating and ready to eat foods like salads.

- Refrigerators should operate at a temperature between 2-5°C.
- Cool cooked food as quickly as possible, ideally within 1 hour, then refrigerate for a maximum of 24 hours at 5°C or below

HYGIENE AND SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN



- Check the fridge temperature regularly and make sure it doesn't exceed 5°C (use a fridge thermometer)
- Regularly clean fridge surfaces using an anti-bacterial spray.
- Make sure there is enough fridge storage space for the activity and all participants.

Cross contamination

This occurs when bacteria is spread between food, surfaces and/or equipment. Keep raw and cooked foods apart.

Cross contamination is most likely to occur if:

- raw food touches or drips onto other foods, equipment or surfaces;
- raw meat is cut on a chopping board that is then re-used without thorough cleaning for a different task like slicing tomatoes. The bacteria from the meat will then be spread onto the tomatoes;
- hands are not clean. Touching raw food and not washing hands will spread bacteria to other food, equipment and surfaces.

Keep food covered wherever possible to prevent objects falling in or dripping in.

Don't prepare food for other people if you are vomiting or have diarrhoea.

Keep animals / pets out of the kitchen.

Always use clean spoons for tasting especially if you are cooking for others.