

KITCHEN CHECK

ARE YOU READY TO COOK SAFELY?



Most people don't believe the food they cook at home can make them ill, but the meals you prepare for yourself, your family and friends can be a source of food poisoning.

Take the Kitchen Check to find out if your hygiene habits mean you're cooking up a storm, or if they're putting you in hot water.

Go through each cooking stage and tick the circles next to all of the actions that best describe your kitchen habits, then check out how well you're doing.



KITCHEN CHECK TIPS

CLEANING

- Hands are one of the main ways germs are spread. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water before cooking and after touching the bin, going to the toilet, handling pets or handling raw food.
- Wash or change dish cloths, tea towels, sponges and oven gloves regularly and let them dry before you use them again. Dirty, damp cloths are the perfect place for bacteria to breed.

CROSS CONTAMINATION

- Cross contamination occurs when harmful germs are spread between food, surfaces and equipment. Help to prevent this by removing clutter that you don't need and washing worktops before and after cooking.
- Always use a chopping board. Wash the board and other utensils in hot, soapy water when you've finished using them and in between preparing raw foods (meat, poultry, eggs, fish and raw vegetables) and ready-to-eat food. Better still, use a separate chopping board for each.

CHILLING

- Make sure your fridge is set between 0°C and 5°C, using

a fridge thermometer to check. This is to prevent harmful germs from growing and multiplying.

- Don't overfill your fridge. This allows air to circulate and maintains the set temperature.
- Store raw meat and poultry at the bottom of the fridge and properly wrap or cover it to avoid raw juices contaminating other foods.

COOKING

- Cook food thoroughly until it is steaming hot in the middle. This will kill any harmful bacteria that may be present.

'USE BY' DATES

- 'Use by' dates are typically found on perishable products (dairy, meat and fish) and are based on scientific testing to determine how long these foods will stay safe. After that date, food could be unsafe to eat even if it is correctly stored and looks and smells fine.
- 'Best before' dates are used on foods that have a longer shelf life and tell us how long the food will be at its best. After that date it is normally safe to eat, but its flavour and texture might have deteriorated.



FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME

Check the hygiene standards of your local food shops and restaurants by visiting food.gov.uk/ratings.

HOW DID I DO?

Add up how many actions you ticked.

More than 25: Hygiene Machine

You're doing the right things so keep it up and share your knowledge with others. You can brush up on your kitchen habits using the Kitchen Check tips.

Between 20 and 25: Kitchen Cavalier

There's always room for improvement. Some of the things you do in the kitchen could be putting you or your family at risk from food poisoning. Our Kitchen Check tips will help you improve your food safety.

Below 20: Sloppy Joe

You could be putting yourself and the people you cook for at risk. Take a good look at our tips to make sure the food you cook and eat is safe.

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For more information on safe eating in the home visit food.gov.uk/kitchen-check

Scan using your smart phone, and access our interactive content.




✔ Tick all that apply to you

1 CLEARING SPACE

Before I start cooking, I:

- remove things I don't need from the surfaces
- get pets out of the way
- clean surfaces with hot, soapy water or disinfectant
- place my clean chopping board on the work surface



2

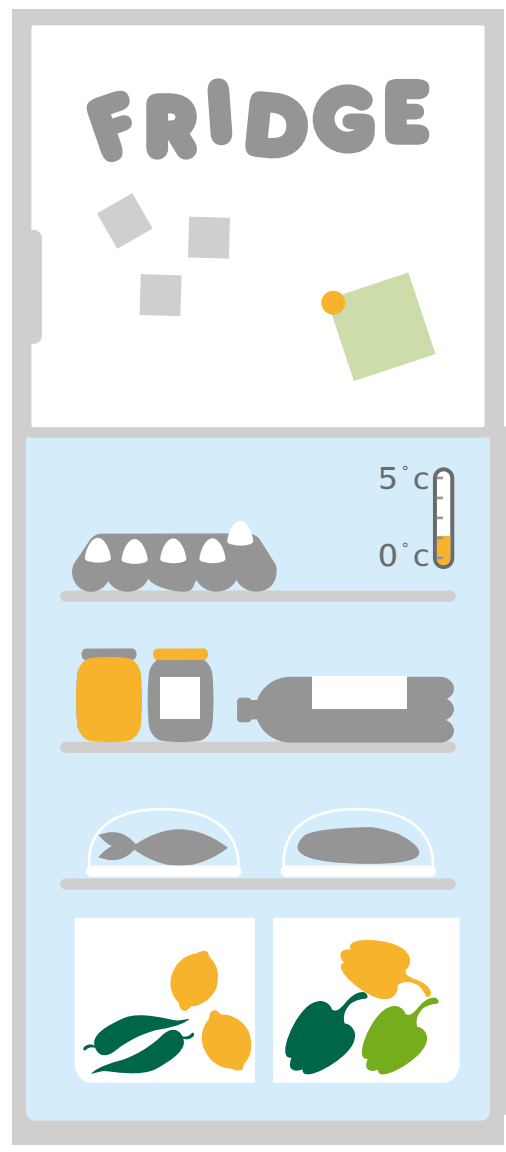
HAND WASHING

I always wash my hands:

- before I start cooking
- after touching raw food
- after I've touched the bin
- after going to the toilet
- after touching pets



3




FRIDGE

TOP TIP
Don't wash raw meat or poultry. It's not necessary as thorough cooking will kill any germs on the surface. Washing meat can spread germs to other surfaces through the splashing of water.

In my fridge:

- the temperature is between 0 °C and 5 °C
- no food is past its 'use by' date
- everything is well organised and not crammed in
- raw meat and poultry are in covered containers on the bottom shelf



FRIDGE

3

4 CHOPPING BOARD AND FOOD PREPARATION AREA


When it comes to chopping boards:

- I wash mine using hot, soapy water
- I use different chopping boards for meat and ready to eat foods



5

5 CLEANING



6

- At least once a week, I change or wash my:**
- tea towels
 - sponges
 - dish cloths
 - hand towels
 - oven gloves
 - aprons
- I make sure my kitchen is clean by:**
- cleaning as I go
 - using hot, soapy water or disinfectant
 - always using products that are meant for use in the kitchen
 - giving it a thorough clean and disinfecting it on a regular basis

7 COOKING

I make sure my food is properly cooked by:

- following the cooking instructions on the label and making sure that the food is steaming hot all the way through
- checking it with a temperature probe
- when cooking poultry, cutting in to the thickest part and checking that it is steaming hot with no pink meat and that the juices run clear
- when cooking burgers, cutting into the middle and checking that they are steaming hot and cooked all the way through, with no pink meat or blood
- checking that pork is steaming hot and cooked all the way through with no pink meat



TURN TO THE BACK TO SEE HOW YOU'VE DONE →