



Core Principles of Food Safety

The Four Pillars of Food Safety

- Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate.
- Cook:** Cook to proper temperatures.
- Chill:** Refrigerate promptly.

Hand Hygiene

- When to Wash**
- Before, during, and after food preparation.
 - Before eating.
 - After handling raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs.
 - After touching garbage.
 - After using the restroom.
 - After sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose.

- How to Wash**
1. Wet hands with clean, running water.
 2. Apply soap.
 3. Lather for at least 20 seconds (sing "Happy Birthday" twice).
 4. Rinse thoroughly under running water.
 5. Dry hands with a clean towel or air dry.

Preventing Cross-Contamination

- Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meats, poultry, seafood, and ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash cutting boards, utensils, and countertops with hot, soapy water after each use.
- Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- Store raw meats, poultry, and seafood on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator to prevent drips onto other foods.

Safe Cooking Temperatures

Minimum Internal Temperatures

Poultry (whole, ground)	165°F (74°C)
Ground Meat (beef, pork, lamb, veal)	160°F (71°C)
Beef, Pork, Lamb, Veal (steaks, roasts)	145°F (63°C) with a 3-minute rest time
Fish & Seafood	145°F (63°C) or until flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork
Eggs	160°F (71°C) - Cook until yolk and white are firm
Leftovers	165°F (74°C)

Using a Food Thermometer

- Place the thermometer in the thickest part of the food, away from bone, fat, or gristle.
- Clean the thermometer with hot, soapy water before and after each use.
- Check the temperature in several places to ensure even cooking.

Safe Handling of Specific Foods

Eggs

- Buy eggs only if sold from a refrigerator or refrigerated case.
- Check that eggs are clean and the shells are not cracked.
- Refrigerate promptly.
- Cook eggs until both the yolk and the white are firm.
- Use pasteurized eggs for recipes that call for raw or lightly cooked eggs (e.g., Caesar salad dressing, homemade mayonnaise).

Raw Produce

- Wash all raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water before eating, cutting, or cooking.
- Use a clean produce brush to scrub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables.
- Remove and discard the outermost leaves of leafy greens.
- Dry produce with a clean cloth or paper towel.

Baking Ingredients

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| Flour | Store flour in a cool, dry place. Be aware that raw flour can contain bacteria; do not consume raw dough or batter. |
| Dairy | Keep dairy products refrigerated. Do not leave milk, cream, or butter at room temperature for extended periods. |

Refrigeration and Storage

Safe Refrigeration Practices

- Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F/32°C).
- Keep your refrigerator at or below 40°F (4°C).
- Use a refrigerator thermometer to monitor the temperature.
- Don't overpack the refrigerator; cold air needs to circulate to keep food safe.

Proper Food Storage

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| Containers | Use airtight containers or wraps to prevent cross-contamination and maintain food quality. |
| Labeling | Label and date all stored food to keep track of shelf life and prevent spoilage. |

Freezing Guidelines

- Freeze food quickly to maintain quality.
- Use freezer-safe containers or wraps.
- Label and date all frozen food.
- Thaw food safely in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Never thaw food at room temperature.