

Keep food safe



Store, display and transport potentially hazardous food either

hot (60°C or hotter) or

chilled (5°C or colder)

Remember

- **Prepare food quickly**
- **Cook food thoroughly**
- **Cool and reheat food rapidly**
- **Store, display and transport food either chilled or hot**

Food poisoning

Food poisoning, with its symptoms of vomiting, diarrhoea and stomach cramps, is a very unpleasant illness from which most of us will recover. However, for some people, including young children and the frail elderly, it can be life threatening or can leave sufferers with serious health problems.

One cause of food poisoning is bacteria that have had the opportunity to multiply in food.

Bacteria that have the chance to multiply in food cause food poisoning in two ways. They either multiply in foods to sufficient numbers to make us ill or, as they multiply, they produce poisons in the food that cause illness.

Keeping food at the right temperature will prevent food poisoning bacteria that might be in the food from multiplying.

Essential food safety practices

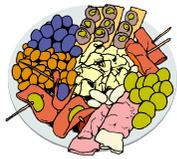
Store, display and transport food at the right temperature

For food safety fact sheets and information on your food safety obligations contact your local government council

Council contact details

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Store, display and transport foods at the right temperature



What temperatures are the 'right' temperatures to keep foods safe?

Keep your chilled food at 5°C or colder in the cool room, refrigerator or on display. Remember– it's the temperature of the food that is important so set the thermostat of your refrigerator or cool room low enough to chill the food and hold it at this temperature. Check that your display unit will hold the food at 5°C or below.

Keep hot food 60°C or hotter. If you are holding food hot in a pie warmer, bain-marie or in other equipment, make sure the food is 60°C or hotter. Check the food and set the thermostat of the equipment to maintain the food hot enough.

Why must foods be kept at the right temperature?

Food poisoning bacteria grow very slowly or not at all at 5°C or colder.

Food poisoning bacteria do not grow and will start to die at 60°C or hotter.

Keep frozen food frozen

Deliveries of frozen food must be frozen. If you store frozen food you must ensure that it stays frozen. There is no temperature for 'frozen' in the Food Safety Standards because food poisoning bacteria cannot grow in frozen food. For quality reasons, store frozen food at about -18°C or refer to storage instructions on the label.

Which foods should I keep at these temperatures?

Bacteria grow in the types of food that are based on meat, poultry, fish, eggs, milk or soy. They also grow in cooked rice, pasta and vegetable dishes. Check the following list of the types of foods that must be kept chilled at 5°C or colder or, if serving hot, held at 60°C or hotter. In the Food Safety Standards these foods are called *potentially hazardous foods*.

Examples of potentially hazardous foods

- Raw and cooked meat and food containing raw or cooked meat such as casseroles, curries and lasagne
- Smallgoods such as strasbourg, ham and chicken loaf
- Dairy products, for example, milk, custard and dairy-based desserts such as cheesecakes and custard tarts
- Seafood (excluding live seafood) including seafood salad, patties, fish balls, stews containing seafood and fish stock
- Processed fruits and vegetables, for example salads and cut melons
- Cooked rice and pasta
- Food containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein-rich food such as quiche, fresh pasta and soy bean products
- Food that contain these foods, for example sandwiches, rolls and cooked and uncooked pizza.

Examples of types of food that are not potentially hazardous

Dried fruit, salted dried meats, fermented dried meats, hard cheeses, dried pasta and other dried foods, breads unopened canned and bottled food, yoghurts, spreads, and some sauces.

These lists may not include every food. If in doubt about a particular food, read the label for storage instructions on packaged food, ask the manufacturer or the Environmental Health Officer at your local council.

Can I store, display and transport food at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C?

You are allowed to keep the food at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C but only if you can show that the time you are holding food at these temperatures is safe. If you leave food too long the bacteria will grow. For information on alternative temperature control systems contact your local Environmental Health Officer.

It is good practice to always store, display and transport your food either chilled 5°C or colder or hot 60°C or hotter.

If your business stores, displays or transports potentially hazardous food you must have a probe thermometer that can accurately measure the temperature of the food to +/-1°C.

Remember to clean and sanitise the thermometer before you use it. A fact sheet on thermometers is available from your local council

There are legal obligations for cooking, cooling and reheating food.

For information contact your local council.

