

WORKING WITH FOOD?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU START

It is easy for you to spread bacteria to food without realising. These bacteria are invisible and could make customers ill. Your personal hygiene is important. This is what you need to do to keep food safe:

BEFORE YOU START WORKING WITH FOOD



Always wash your hands



Wear clean clothes



Wear an apron if handling unwrapped food



Tell your manager if you have vomiting or diarrhoea and do not work with food



Take off your watch and jewellery



It is a good idea to tie hair back and wear a hat or hairnet



WHEN YOU ARE WORKING WITH FOOD



No smoking



No eating or drinking



Avoid touching your face, coughing or sneezing over food



Cover cuts with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing

WASHING HANDS EFFECTIVELY



Step 1: Wet your hands thoroughly under warm running water and squirt liquid soap onto your palm



Step 2: Rub your hands together palm to palm to make a lather



Step 3: Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers. Repeat with the other hand



Step 4: Put your palms together with fingers interlocked and rub in between each of the fingers thoroughly



Step 5: Rub around your thumb on each hand and then rub the fingertips of each hand against your palms



Step 6: Rinse off the soap with clean water and dry your hands thoroughly on a disposable towel. Turn off the tap with the towel and then throw the towel away

WHEN TO WASH HANDS



Before touching or handling any food, especially ready-to-eat food



After going to the toilet



After every break



After touching raw meat, poultry, fish, eggs or unwashed vegetables



After touching a cut or changing a dressing



After touching or emptying bins



After any cleaning



After touching phones, light switches, door handles, cash registers and money

HOW TO USE THIS PACK

Welcome to Safer food, better business for retailers

IS THIS PACK FOR ME?



This pack is for small retail businesses that have registered with the Local Authority as a food business, and that sell food, including any food that needs to be kept cold to keep it safe, e.g. milk, dairy products, cooked meats, salads, desserts or sandwiches.

Retail businesses that sell any food must comply with food law.

Do you sell food that needs to be kept cold to keep it safe?

Yes No

If Yes, is your business one of these? (please tick)

- Small convenience store
- Confectioner, tobacconist and newsagent (CTN)
- Health food shop
- Delicatessen
- Other – give details:

This pack is not suitable for specialist retailers including butchers, fishmongers and bakers. This is because these types of businesses are involved with foods that present additional risks which are not covered in this pack. For more information contact your environmental health department.

If No (you do not sell any food that needs to be kept cold) this pack could be more than you are required to do by law. But you can still use the pack if you want to.

If you are not sure if this pack is suitable for your business, contact the environmental health department at your local authority.

HOW DOES THIS PACK HELP ME COMPLY WITH THE LAW?

Food safety and hygiene regulations say that you must be able to show what you do to make sure the food you make and sell is safe to eat and have this written down. The pack helps you do this.

This pack is based on the principles of HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control point), but you will not find words such as 'HACCP' or 'hazard' in the pack because we have cut out all the jargon.



WHAT IF I ALSO DO SOME PREPARATION OR COOKING OF FOOD?

The 'Cooking and Preparation' section in this pack is designed for retail businesses that do certain types of cooking and preparation.

Do you...

- prepare ready-to-eat food, e.g. sandwiches?
- 'bake off' bought-in products e.g. sausage rolls and pasties?
- reheat food, or keep it hot, e.g. reheating bought-in cooked pies?
- cook bacon, sausages or eggs?
- cook rotisserie chicken or ham?

If you do one or more of the above, you should work through the relevant safe methods in the 'Cooking and Preparation' section.

But if you do any cooking or preparation of food that is not listed above, contact the environmental health department at your local authority for advice.

WHO SHOULD TAKE CHARGE OF THE PACK?



The person who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the business is the best person to work through this pack.

It is a good idea to involve other staff to help the pack work in your business.

HOW DOES THE PACK WORK?

The pack contains sheets for you to work through and complete. These are called 'safe methods'.

It also contains a diary for you to fill in every day and write down anything different that happens, including anything that goes wrong.

HOW TO USE THE SAFE METHODS

Front

The **'Safety point'** column highlights things that are important to make food safely.

The **'Why?'** column tells you why the safety point is important.

The **'How do you do this?'** column is for you to write down what you do.

In some places you only need to tick a box and in other places write a small amount.

Pictures help to illustrate the safety points.

SAFE METHOD:

FROZEN STORAGE AND DISPLAY

It is important to handle, store and display frozen food safely to stop harmful bacteria growing.



| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|--|---|---|
| Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to position, use and maintain freezing equipment. | It is important to use equipment properly to make sure food is kept cold enough. The positioning of equipment e.g. next to doors, heaters or in direct sunlight may stop it working effectively. | Do you follow the manufacturer's instructions for using your frozen display and storage equipment? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If not, what do you do? |
| Put frozen food in a freezer as soon as it is delivered. If you collect food from shops or suppliers yourself, make sure it is kept at the correct temperature when you transport it and put in a freezer as soon as possible. | If frozen food starts to defrost, harmful bacteria could grow. | Is frozen food put in a freezer or frozen display unit as soon as it is delivered or collected? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If not, what do you do? |
| Make sure equipment is at the correct temperature before you put frozen food in it. See the 'Check it' section on next page. Products should be displayed in a way that allows air to circulate and not above load lines. | If you overfill equipment and food is above load lines it might not be kept cold enough. | How do you keep track of when food should be removed from sale? |
| Ideally, food marked with a 'best before' or 'best before end' date should be removed from sale by the end of that day. Make sure you know how long food has been in the freezer, and older stock is used first. | When food has passed its 'best before' date it might not be as good to eat – for example the taste or texture could change. If you do not know how long food has been in the freezer, you might end up using new stock first, before the old. | How do you keep track of when food should be removed from sale? |

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Back

Some safe methods have a **'Check it'** section, which tells you what to look for to make sure your method has worked.

The **'What to do if things go wrong'** column gives practical tips on how to tackle problems.

The **'How to stop this happening again?'** column tells you how you can prevent problems.

If things go wrong, write down what happened and what you did in your diary. Each safe method reminds you to do this.

Sometimes the pictures are marked with one of these symbols:



| CHECK IT | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|--|---|
| It is good practice to keep frozen food at -18°C or colder. (Food labelled 'Quick frozen' must be stored at -18°C or colder, or displayed at -12°C or colder.) You should check the temperature of your freezing equipment at least once a day starting with your opening checks (see the diary). To make sure equipment is working properly, check temperatures in-between frozen food too. | Some equipment will have a digital display or dial to show what temperature it is set at. You can use this to check the temperature of your equipment. If you do this, you should check regularly that the temperature shown on the display/dial is accurate, using a freezer thermometer. You could also use a probe (see the 'Prove it - chilled and frozen storage' safe method in the Management section). How do you check the temperature of freezing equipment? Digital display <input type="checkbox"/> Dial Thermometer <input type="checkbox"/> If you do not do this, what do you do? |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| If you find that your freezer or frozen display unit is not working properly, you should do the following things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food that is still frozen (i.e. hard and icy) should be moved to an alternative freezer straight away. Food that has begun to defrost (i.e. starting to get soft and/or with liquid coming out of it) should be thrown away unless it is intended to be sold defrosted, in which case move it to a suitable place to continue defrosting. Always follow the manufacturer's defrosting instructions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food that has fully defrosted (i.e. soft and warm) should be thrown away, unless it is a product designed to be defrosted by you and then sold to the customer at room temperature (or 'ambient') e.g. 'thaw and serve' products such as muffins. Do not sell food that is intended to be sold frozen if it has defrosted, or started to defrost. Do not refreeze food once it has started to defrost, e.g. ice cream – you will have to throw it away. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See what you can do to store and display frozen food more safely, using the front of this sheet. Have equipment serviced regularly and check that it is working properly as part of your opening checks. Re-organise freezers so there is more space and make sure they are kept closed as much as possible. Improve staff training on this safe method. Improve staff supervision. |

Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.



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HOW TO USE THE DIARY



The diary should be filled in every day by the person responsible for running the business. There is also a 4-weekly review so you can look back at previous weeks and identify any persistent problems.

Fill in the date at the start of the week.

Week commencing:

Monday
Any problems or changes – what did you do?

Opening checks Closing checks
Name _____ Signed _____

Our safe methods were followed and effectively supervised today.

Each day, tick here to say you have completed your Opening checks and your Closing checks – see the Management section for more information on these.

Friday
Any problems or changes – what did you do?

Opening checks Closing checks
Name _____ Signed _____

Our safe methods were followed and effectively supervised today.

If anything different happens or something goes wrong, make a note of it under the appropriate day.

Tuesday
Any problems or changes – what did you do?

Opening checks Closing checks
Name _____ Signed _____

Our safe methods were followed and effectively supervised today.

Each day, write your name and sign to say that all the safe methods have been followed.

Saturday
Any problems or changes – what did you do?

Opening checks Closing checks
Name _____ Signed _____

Our safe methods were followed and effectively supervised today.

If you do any Extra checks, (e.g. something you don't do every day such as maintenance of equipment or cleaning the freezer) make a note in the section at the end of the week – see the Management section for more information on these.

Wednesday
Any problems or changes – what did you do?

Opening checks Closing checks
Name _____ Signed _____

Our safe methods were followed and effectively supervised today.

Thursday
Any problems or changes – what did you do?

Opening checks Closing checks
Name _____ Signed _____

Our safe methods were followed and effectively supervised today.

Extra checks
We have performed the following extra checks this week

Name _____ Signed _____

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

Work through the pack one section at a time and complete all the safe methods that are relevant to your business. It will take you about one hour to complete a section.

When you have worked through all the sections, make sure you and your staff:

- follow the safe methods all the time
- fill in the diary every day

HOW DO I USE THE 'WORKING WITH FOOD?' FACTSHEET

Use the 'Working with food?' factsheet to train your staff on good personal hygiene on their first day at work. It has been designed to help overcome language difficulties.

There are also helpful videos available at [food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/training/hygiene-videos](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/training/hygiene-videos)

HOW WILL I BENEFIT FROM USING THIS PACK?

Using the pack in your business will help you to:

- comply with food hygiene regulations
- show what you do to make food safely
- train staff
- protect your business's reputation
- improve your business, e.g. by wasting less food
- improve your food hygiene rating

WILL USING THE PACK HELP ME GET A GOOD FOOD HYGIENE RATING?

Yes. Using the pack can show the methods and checks you are using to prepare food safely. This could help your food hygiene rating.

DO I NEED TO KEEP LOTS OF DAILY RECORDS?

No, you do not need lots of daily records. Once you have worked through the pack and completed all the relevant safe methods, you only need to fill in the diary each day.

This should take just one minute, unless you have something special to write down.

It is a legal requirement to keep a record of what food products you have bought, who you bought them from, the quantity, the date and allergen information (if applicable). Usually the easiest way to do this is to keep all your invoices and receipts.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For more information on food safety, talk to the environmental health department at your local authority or visit [food.gov.uk/business-industry/food-hygiene](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/food-hygiene)

For details of Food Standards Agency publications, visit [food.gov.uk/about-us/publications](https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/publications).

ABOUT THIS GUIDANCE

This guidance follows the Government Code of Practice on Guidance. If you believe this guidance breaches the Code for any reason, or if you have any comments on the guidance, please contact us at **FoodBusinessHygiene@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk**

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