

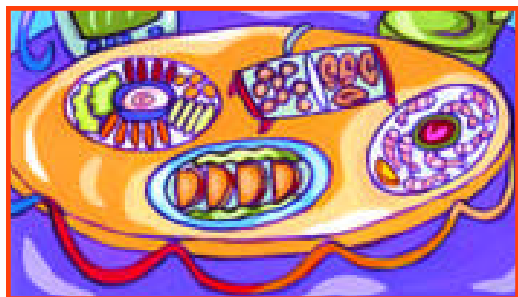
COOK

Cook to Proper Temperatures

Cooking food safely is a matter of degrees! Before delving into these "hot" food safety topics, check out the quiz below and see how your safe cooking know-how measures up.

Cook It Right . . .

Foods are properly cooked when they are heated for a long enough time — and at a high enough temperature — to kill harmful bacteria that can cause foodborne illness. And these temperatures vary, depending on the food.



. . . And Keep It Hot

When serving up hot food buffet-style, remember . . .

- On a buffet table, hot foods should be kept at 140° F or higher. Keep food hot with chafing dishes, crock pots, and warming trays.

When bringing hot soup, chili, or crab dip to an outdoor party . . .

- Keep it all piping hot *before* serving. Before the party, place these foods in insulated thermal containers. Keep containers closed until party time.

Safe Cooking Quiz

- 1. Fill in the blanks:** Bacteria in food can be destroyed by thorough _____.
- 2. What's the best way to make sure meat and poultry are cooked thoroughly?**
 - a. Feel it with your fingers.
 - b. Judge it by its color.
 - c. Use a food thermometer.
 - d. Taste it.
- 3. After you're done checking the temperature of a food, what should you do with the food thermometer before using it again?**
 - a. Wipe it off with a paper towel.
 - b. Place it in another food item and check its temperature.
 - c. Shout "hooray!"
 - d. Wash the food thermometer in hot, soapy water.
- 4. Who Am I?** I'm an All-American favorite, especially among kids. Before eating me, make sure I'm steamy hot. (Hint: I'm also called a weiner.)

- ANSWERS:**
1. cooking
 2. c — You can't tell whether food has been cooked thoroughly by its taste, look, or touch. Always use a food thermometer.
 3. d — Wash the food thermometer in hot, soapy water.
 4. A hot dog.

"Eating Out" Tip of the Day

Choose menu items that are thoroughly cooked. If it appears that any food, such as beef, pork, chicken, fish, or eggs, has not been thoroughly cooked, return the food for additional cooking.





Thermy™ says,
"It's safe to
bite when the
temperature is
right!"

To keep food safe, cook it thoroughly. Always use a clean food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the foods below.

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Safe-Cooking Temperature Chart

Beef/Pork

- Cook **beef roasts** and **steaks** to 145° F for medium rare or to 160° F for medium.
- Cook **ground beef** to at least 160° F.
- Cook **raw sausages** to 160° F.
- Reheat **ready-to-eat sausages** to 165° F.
- Cook **pork roasts, chops, or ground patties** to 160° F for medium, or 170° F for well done.

Poultry

- Cook **whole poultry** to 180° F.
- Cook **chicken breasts** to 170° F.
- Cook **stuffing** to 165° F.

Eggs

- Cook **eggs** until the yolks and whites are firm.
- Don't use recipes in which eggs remain raw or only partially cooked.

Fish

- Cook **fish** until it's opaque and flakes easily with a fork.
- For food safety reasons, avoid eating uncooked **oysters** or **shellfish**. People with liver disorders or weakened immune systems are especially at risk for getting sick.

Leftovers

- When reheating **leftovers**, heat them thoroughly to at least 165° F.



Compliments of The Partnership for Food Safety Education

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3 Sizzling Cooking Tips

1. Thumbs Up for "Thermy™" — Use a clean food thermometer, which measures the internal temperature of cooked foods, to make sure meat, poultry, egg dishes, casseroles, and other foods are cooked all the way through.

2. Microwave Musts — When cooking in a microwave oven, make sure there are no cold spots in food where bacteria can survive. For best results, cover food, stir, and rotate for even cooking. If there is no turntable, rotate the dish by hand once or twice during cooking.

3. Shake, Rattle, and Roll — Bring sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating.



Did You Know?

Only 2% of consumers regularly use a food thermometer when cooking ground meat.

Food Marketing Institute, 1999



If you have questions or concerns about food safety, contact:

- The **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Meat and Poultry Hotline** at (888) 674-6854 or (202) 720-3333 (Washington, DC area). The TTY number for the hearing impaired is (800) 256-7072.
- The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Information Line** at (888) SAFE FOOD.
- The **Fight BAC!** Web site at: www.fightbac.org