

Food Safety at Home

When buying food

Always check use by and best before dates of food stuff before purchasing food.

Do not purchase damaged food.

Try to buy chilled or frozen foods last, and pack them all together, preferably in a cool bag

Make sure that raw meat is completely wrapped and kept apart from ready to eat foods eg cooked meats, dairy products

Transporting food

Take chilled food straight home especially during the summer and do not leave food in the car for too long.

Refrigeration

Keep your fridge between 0 and 5 oC, defrost it regularly and don't overload it as this will impair its efficiency

Make sure that perishable foods are kept chilled

Food should be kept covered in the fridge

Store raw meat at the bottom of your fridge to prevent drips falling onto other food

Cooking

Cook food thoroughly. Follow instructions on packets and make sure food is piping hot all the way through.

Make sure the centre of meat is well cooked and that the juices run clear

Cleaning

Wash hands thoroughly before preparing food, after handling raw meat, visiting the toilet, touching pets or any other activity which could lead to your hands being contaminated.

Keep dish cloths clean and change hand towels and tea towels regularly

Keep your kitchen clean and keep pets away from food dishes and worktops. Use an antibacterial cleaner on work surfaces to kill bacteria.

Defrosting

Make sure meat and poultry has been fully thawed before cooking

It is recommended that food is defrosted in the fridge rather than room temperature or under hot/cold running water as these practices encourage the growth of food poisoning bacteria

Preparation

Prepare raw/uncooked food and cooked foods separately. Clean utensils and equipment thoroughly using hot water and detergent before preparing different foods.

Where possible separate knives and chopping boards should be used for raw and cooked meats and vegetables. Where this is not possible knives and chopping boards should be cleaned and thoroughly disinfected between handling each type of food.

Serving

Do not leave food in a warm room before eating. Serve hot food as quickly as possible to prevent them from cooling down.

Cold foods should also be served as quickly as possible after removing them from the fridge this is to prevent them getting too warm and allowing bacteria to grow.

Leftovers

Leftovers should be covered and refrigerated as quickly as possible

Additional Information

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) also provides information on food safety in the home. Topics include:

- [BBQ Safety](#)
- [Christmas Turkey Tips](#)
- [Keeping food Safe](#)
- [Eggs](#)