

## Reheating Food

- Reheat casseroles, soups, sauces, gravies and foods containing meat or poultry to a temperature of **165°F (74°C)** or hotter.



Use a food thermometer to verify the internal temperature of the food.

- If you are reheating food in the oven, set the oven temperature at **325°F** or higher.
- Do not reheat food in slow cookers or chafing dishes, because the food may stay in the "Temperature Danger Zone" between **41°F-135°F (5°C-57°C)** long enough for illness causing bacteria to grow. You can use them to maintain the temperature of food that is already hot.
- When reheating food in the microwave oven, cover and stir or rearrange food for even heating. Check plastic ware to make sure it is microwave safe. Always allow 2 minutes standing time before checking the internal temperature of the food.

## Keep it Clean

- Harmful bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get onto cutting boards, utensils, and countertops causing cross-contamination - the transfer of harmful bacteria to a food from other foods, cutting boards, utensils, surfaces, or hands.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, fish, and their juices away from other food — especially foods that won't be cooked before being eaten.
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, and countertops with hot, soapy water **after** preparing each food item and **before** you go on to the next item.
- After cutting raw meat, poultry, and seafood, wash cutting boards, knives, and countertops with hot, soapy water.

## Leftovers

The two hour rule applies to leftovers taken home from a restaurant. Discard perishable foods if they have been left temperature longer than 2 hours, 1 hour if the air temperature is above **90°F (32°F)**. Cut or slice whole roasts, hams, and turkeys into smaller pieces or portions before storing them in the refrigerator or freezer. Refrigerate or freeze leftovers in shallow containers. Wrap or cover the food.



Refrigerator storage at **41°F (5°C)** or colder:

Cooked meat or poultry	3 - 4 days
Pizza	3 - 4 days
Deli meats	3 - 5 days
Egg, tuna, potato and macaroni salads	3 - 5 days
Raw meat—chops, steaks, roasts	3 days
Ground meat (hamburger, etc.)	1-2 days
Raw poultry	1-2 days
Fresh fish	1-2 days
Raw eggs	3-5 weeks
Hardboiled eggs	1 week
Bacon —opened	1 week

Foods stored longer may begin to spoil or become unsafe to eat. Do not taste. This may be enough to make you sick.

. (Adapted from USDA Program Aids)

# Food Safety

## Tips for College Students



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## Prepare With Care

Perishable foods can cause illness when mishandled. Bacteria that can make us ill reproduce rapidly between **41°F-135°F (5°C-57°C)**. Proper handling of food and leftovers is essential to ensure the food is safe for you to eat.

**Q. I am living in an apartment this year. My roommates and I will be preparing our own meals. What do we need to know to cook food safely?**

**A. Food safety starts at the grocery store.**

Purchase cold foods last. Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood separate from other foods in your cart to prevent cross contamination. Put perishable foods away immediately. Freeze raw meat, poultry and seafood if you will not cook it within two days.

## At Home

- Keep your refrigerator at **41°F (5°C) or lower**.
- **Thaw foods in the refrigerator**, not on the counter. Do not allow raw meat, poultry or seafood juices to drip onto other foods.
- **Wash your hands** before and after preparing foods. Wash used cutting boards and utensils in hot, soapy water.
- **Use a food thermometer** to check internal food temperatures and clean the thermometer after each use.



**Refrigerate leftovers right away after serving.**



**Q. We eat a lot of salads and fresh fruit. What can we do to make sure they are prepared safely?**

**A.** Don't cross contaminate. Always wash cutting boards, counters, utensils, and dishes that come in contact with raw meat, fish or poultry in hot, soapy water before using them to prepare fresh produce. Wash hands with warm water and soap before and after handling fresh produce. Wash fresh fruits and vegetables with cool tap water before cutting. NEVER use soap or detergents. Scrub firm produce such as melons and cucumbers with a clean hard bristle brush under cool running tap water. Cut away any bruised or damaged areas with a clean knife.

## Using a Food Thermometer

**Is it done yet?** Color and texture are not reliable indicators of doneness. Use a digital or instant read dial thermometer that has a temperature range from **0°F-220°F (13°C-103°C)**. Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the food, but not touching bone, fat or gristle. If using a dial thermometer, insert up to the dimple on the thermometer stem. Compare the thermometer reading to the safe minimum temperatures in this brochure. Clean the thermometer after each use with hot soapy water. Some thermometers can be calibrated using ice water. Check the manufacturer's instructions.



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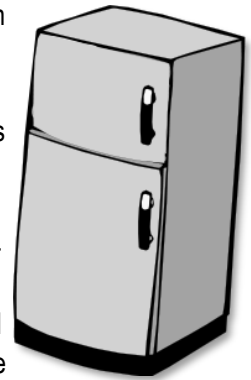
## Take-out or Delivered Food

Consume or refrigerate take out food within two hours of purchase or delivery.

- If you are getting food for a party or other event, plan to pick up the food or have it delivered right before your event starts. If you plan to eat at a later time keep hot foods hot (at an internal temperature of **135°F (57°C)** or above) by using a preheated oven, chafing dishes, preheated warming trays, or slow cookers. Just keeping the food warm, between **41°F** and **135°F (5°C -57°C)** is not safe because bacteria grow fastest in this temperature range. Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the food.
- Cold foods should be kept at **41°F (5°C)** or colder in the refrigerator. Keep foods cold at parties or events by setting serving dishes in bowls of ice. Or use small platters and replace them with fresh refrigerated platters of food, rather than adding fresh food to a serving dish that has already been on the table.
- At a picnic, BBQ, or sporting event a cooler with ice is a practical alternative to a refrigerator. Pack the cooler with plenty of ice or frozen gel packs. Keep the cooler in the shade whenever possible.

## Two Hour Rule

To keep hot foods safe, keep them at **135°F (57°C)** or higher. Cold foods must be kept at **41°F (5°C)** or colder. Discard perishable foods such as meat, poultry, eggs, casseroles, cooked rice, cooked pasta, deli salads, pizza, and fruit platters, if they have been left at room temperature longer than 2 hours; 1 hour if the air temperature is above **90°F (32°C)**.



**When in Doubt, Throw it out!**