Four Steps to Food Safety

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Mission Statement

The UC Master Food Preserver Program’s mission is to keep Californians safe and well as they use culturally appropriate, research-based practices to safely preserve food in the home, reducing food waste, increasing food security, and providing engaging ways for Californians to explore healthy food.
STEP 1: CLEAN

Lather up
Before eating, wash your hands with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds. Count to 20 slowly or sing the “Happy Birthday” song to yourself twice.

Create a safe cooking space
Wash countertops, cooking surfaces, and insides of the refrigerator, freezer, and microwave frequently with hot, soapy water.

Eat clean
Rinse fruits and veggies under running water. Slicing or dicing? Scrub ‘em anyway—germs can jump from rinds to the insides during cutting and peeling.

Clean it before you crack it open
Wash food packaging, especially lids of cans and jars, before opening.

Rules for tools
Wash cutting boards, knives, and other cooking utensils in hot, soapy water or the dishwasher after each use.

Find more Quick Tips on the 4 Steps to Food Safety: Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill at www.fda.gov/food
STEP 2: SEPARATE

FOOD SAFETY QUICK TIPS

No touching
Raw meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, and flour should never come into contact with produce or any food that is ready-to-eat—keep them separate while shopping, storing, and cooking.

Double up
If you can, use a separate set of cooking tools for raw meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, and flour. If you can’t, wash them thoroughly in hot, soapy water between cooking with produce and cooking with meats, eggs, or flour.

Put a lid on it
Place raw meats in sealed containers or plastic wrap on lower shelves of the fridge or freezer.

Serve it safely
When grilling, barbecuing, or cooking meat, use different plates for raw and cooked meat.

No yolking around
Storing eggs on the fridge door can expose them to uneven temperatures. Keep them on lower shelves instead, in their original carton.

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STEP 3: COOK

FOOD SAFETY QUICK TIPS

Heat it before you eat it
Use a food thermometer to check that your food has reached a safe temperature.
- 145 °F for seafood
- 145 °F with a 3-minute rest time for beef, pork, and ham
- 160 °F for ground meat, meat mixtures, and egg dishes
- 165 °F for poultry, microwaved foods, and reheated leftovers

Doughs are don’ts
Eggs and flour are not safe to eat unless fully cooked.

Turn the tables
When microwaving, make sure to rotate food to allow for even heating. Always follow directions for cooking and standing time.

Dish it out
When eating at restaurants, avoid foods that contain raw or undercooked egg, meat, poultry, or seafood. Ask the server if you aren’t sure.

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EVE RYDAY FOOD SAFETY

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**STEP 4: CHILL**

**FOOD SAFETY QUICK TIPS**

**Check the App**
USDA FoodKeeper can tell you how long foods and drinks are safe to keep in the refrigerator or freezer.

**Shop, and don’t stop**
At the grocery store, pick up perishable foods last and take them straight home.

**Let it breathe**
Leave space for air to circulate between containers in your fridge and freezer.

**Stay chill**
If bringing cold foods on-the-go, pack them with ice in an insulated container.

**Keep your cool**
Chill groceries, leftovers, and food delivery items within 2 hours, or 1 hour if exposed to temperatures above 90 °F. Use an appliance thermometer to set fridge to 40 °F or below and freezer at 0 °F or below.

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