TRAINING EXPRESS

Free kitchen chart · Print and display

UK FOOD SAFETY TEMPERATURES

Temperature Danger Zone Chart

Bacteria that cause food poisoning multiply fastest between **8°C and 63°C**. Keep cold food cold, keep hot food hot, and move food through the danger zone as quickly as you can.



70°C+
core temperature

63°C+
or above

8–63°C
avoid this range

8°C
or below · fridge 5°C

-18°C
or below

Cook and reheat

- **Cook** until the centre reaches 70°C for 2 minutes (or 75°C for 30 seconds, or 80°C for 6 seconds).
- **Reheat** until steaming hot, at least 75°C for 30 seconds (82°C in Scotland).
- Only reheat food once.

Hot holding

Keep hot food at 63°C or above until you serve it. Only put food in the hot cabinet once it's already piping hot.

DANGER ZONE

Bacteria multiply quickly in this range, fastest at around **37°C** (body temperature). Food can look, smell and taste fine and still make someone ill.

Keep food out of the danger zone, or get it through as fast as you can.

Chilled

Keep chilled food at 8°C or below. Set fridges to **5°C or below** for a safety margin, and check them every day.

Frozen

Freezing pauses bacteria but doesn't kill them. Defrost food in the fridge, never on the worktop.

How long can food be out?

ON DISPLAY OR SERVICE · ONCE ONLY

Hot food below 63°C: up to 2 hours. Then cool it to 8°C or below, or throw it away.

Cold food above 8°C: up to 4 hours. Back in the fridge if it's been out less than 4 hours. After that, throw it away.

Cool it fast

IDEALLY IN 90 MINUTES

Split food into shallow containers, use an ice bath or blast chiller, then refrigerate.

Check your probe

CLEAN IT AFTER EVERY USE

Iced water: -1°C to 1°C
Boiling water: 99°C to 101°C

Time limits and the 8°C legal limit apply in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Scotland has some different rules, so check Food Standards Scotland guidance. Sources: GOV.UK food hygiene guidance for businesses; Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013; Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006; FSA Safer Food, Better Business.