

Food hygiene for your business

Food hygiene requirements for your business.

Good food hygiene is essential to make sure that the food you serve is safe to eat. It helps prevent food poisoning.

When you are [setting up a food business](#), you need to introduce ways of working that will help you ensure good food hygiene is right from the start.

The 4Cs of food hygiene

The four main things to remember for good hygiene are the 4Cs:

- [Cleaning](#)
- [Cooking](#)
- [Chilling](#)
- [Cross-contamination](#)

You can use the 4Cs to prevent the most common food safety problems.

To manage food hygiene and safety procedures in your food business, you should follow [Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point](#) (HACCP) principles.

Storing food safely

It is very important to store food properly to keep it safe, to protect it from harmful bacteria, chemicals and objects falling into food. You'll need to store different types of food by storing in:

- containers you keep in cupboards or on shelves - such as pasta, rice and flour
- a fridge
- a freezer

You can find more information on how to [Chill food correctly in your business](#).

Transporting food safely

When you [transport food](#), from your premises to another venue or the cash-and-carry to your premises, you must prevent it from becoming contaminated, for example with dirt or bacteria.

It is especially important to make sure that:

- food is transported in packaging or containers that protect it from contamination
- chilled and frozen foods are kept at the right [temperature](#) (some businesses use cool bags and boxes, or refrigerated vans)
- raw and ready-to-eat foods are kept apart

Staff training

By law, food business operators must ensure that food handlers receive the appropriate supervision and training in food hygiene, which is in-line with the area they work in and will enable them to handle food in the safest way. In the UK, food handlers don't have to hold a food hygiene certificate to prepare or sell food.

The skills taught in official training programmes can also be learned by:

- training on-the-job
- self-study
- relevant prior experience

We have [free online food safety training courses](#) for businesses, including [allergen training](#).

Personal hygiene

To keep food safe, it is essential for you and your staff to have high standards of [personal hygiene](#).

Personal hygiene covers:

- handwashing
- clothing
- fitness for work
- training

Inspections and food hygiene rating

Authorised officers from your local council will [inspect your premises](#) to check if your business is complying with food law and producing food that is safe to eat.

If you serve or supply food direct to the public, you may be covered by the [Food Hygiene Rating Scheme](#).

Your rating will be based on what is seen on the day of inspection and you may be given a hygiene rating from 5 (very good) to 0 (urgent improvement is required), based on the food hygiene standards found at the time.

Displaying the rating sticker at your customer entrance is mandatory in Wales and Northern Ireland. It is voluntary in England.

[Guidance is available to assist businesses](#) with displaying their rating online or on social media.

By putting your rating on display in your premises or online, you can show your customers how good your hygiene standards are.

Food industry guides

For more information of hygiene for your business, you can purchase and read our guides from The Stationery Office's website.

Making and selling sandwiches

- [Food Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: Sandwich Bars and Similar Food Service Outlets](#)
- [Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: Sandwich Manufacturing](#)

Retail business

- [Food Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: Retail](#)
- [Best Practice Guidelines for the Production of Chilled Foods - Fourth Edition](#)

Other industry guides to aid your business

- [Catering Guide: Industry Guide To Good Hygiene Practice](#)
- [wholesale distributors](#)
- [whitefish processors](#)
- [vending and dispensing](#)
- [bottled water](#)
- [mail order food](#)
- [drinks and alcohol](#)
- [watercress](#)