



Basic safety rules include precautions and practices that avoid injuries and accidents.

- Many kitchen fires start from overheating oils or fats. To extinguish a fat fire, cover it with a fire blanket or damp cloth and turn off power or gas. Foam or powder extinguishers can also be used but NEVER water. Never try to move the burning pan or pot.
- Steam can also cause burns. Make sure hot pans or pots have a cloth or oven glove on the lid or handle to warn others that the surface is hot.
- Use dry and well insulated oven mitts or pot holders. Never use them if they are wet, as the heat turns the dampness to steam and can burn.
- Aprons do more than keep your clothes clean. They also protect you from possible hot oil or grease splatters.
- Make sure you know how to properly and safely use kitchen equipment and appliances. Read instructions. Use appliance blades or accessories safely and properly.
- Keep hair tied back or use a hair net. Never cook in loose clothes to avoid the risk of fire as well as anything getting into the food you are preparing.



Two of the highest risks in the kitchen include knife cuts and burns. A fire extinguisher should always be easily accessible in the kitchen.

- If you cut yourself, treat it immediately. If the cut is shallow, wash it under cold water. Dry the skin around the cut with a clean cloth and cover with a waterproof dressing.
- If the wound is deep, apply pressure to slow the bleeding down. Sit or lie down so the wound is above the heart and call for medical help.
- Burns or scalds should be placed under gently running cold water. Wrap ice in a plastic bag and place gently on the affected area. This may help reduce blistering.
- Steam can also cause burns. Make sure hot pans or pots have a cloth or oven glove on the lid or handle to warn others. Apply cold water or ice on a burn, making sure you don't break the skin.
- If hot liquids spill on clothing, do not remove the clothing. Wash under cold water and call for medical help. Removing the clothing may also remove a layer of skin.



Get into the habit of “cleaning as you go” when you cook. This frees up valuable work space and also avoids cross-contamination of surfaces, utensils and foods.

- ❑ A **pathogen** is anything that can cause a foodborne illness. Symptoms can include stomach cramps, nausea, fever, diarrhea and vomiting. Foodborne illnesses are caused by foods that are contaminated.
- ❑ Food is most likely to become cross-contaminated during preparation. Work areas and cutting boards used for raw foods should be kept separate from those used for fresh foods.
- ❑ Bacteria that cause food poisoning grow best in warm foods. Perishable foods should be kept in the refrigerator and at the appropriate temperatures. Careful handling and storage of foods with an egg base, milk products, raw poultry and seafood is essential.
- ❑ Hot dishes should be cooled rapidly before being put in the refrigerator. Otherwise, a hot dish will warm up the fridge temperature, affecting everything else in there.
- ❑ Foods should be kept covered and promptly refrigerated to prevent exposure to mould spores in the air. Mould can also be avoided through clean and sanitary kitchen practices.
- ❑ Viruses can be transferred from a person to a food through poor sanitation practices. It is essential that hands are washed thoroughly before and after handling foods.



Get into the habit of “cleaning as you go” when you cook. This not only frees up valuable work space, but avoids cross-contamination of surfaces, utensils and foods.

- Start with a clean kitchen.
- Make sure that you have trash, compost or recycling containers or bins close at hand so it's easy to sort and get rid of different types of garbage as you cook. Have paper towels available for clean up and dish towels for spills and hand washing.
- Dispose of cooking oils and fats by collecting them in a jar. Do not pour hot oil or fat down the drain. Do not recycle the jar of fat.
- Consider ways to use leftovers instead of throwing them away.
- Keep a jar of warm water for stashing sampling spoons after you've used them. Do NOT reuse spoons.
- Wipe counters, cutting boards and utensils after you've used them.
- Rinse and place dishes in the dishwasher as you use them.
- Put ingredients away when you're finished with them.



The right tools and equipment in a well-equipped kitchen make cooking easier and safer.

- Organize tools and equipment before you start cooking so you're not searching for the right tool while you are handling food.
- A good set of kitchen knives is a basic and necessary tool. While many knives can be washed in the dishwasher, they last longer if washed by hand. When washing any sharp kitchen utensil in the sink, be sure to wash them one at a time and do not dump them all in the water. Place them tip down in the dishwasher to avoid handling the blade.
- Cutting boards should be cleaned right after use. Place a damp dishcloth under the board to prevent it from sliding while you use it.
- Heavy pots can distribute heat better, but can be very heavy to lift when full. Light weight cookware or pots with double handles will avoid strain.
- Oven mitts or pot holders should be within reach to move or handle any hot items. Make sure pot handles are kept away from the front of the stove.
- Only use containers, utensils or dishes appropriate for the equipment you're cooking with, including microwavable containers in the microwave and oven safe containers in the oven.
- Keep electric equipment away from sinks. Never use electric equipment with wet hands.



Hand washing is an important habit to get into. It's the best way to prevent germs from spreading and avoiding cross-contamination. If you don't wash your hands frequently, germs can transfer to cooking utensils, dishes, cutting boards, countertops and the food.

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food and after using the bathroom, changing diapers and handling pets.
- Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food.
- Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces.
- If you use cloth towels, wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.
- Check out the *Fight Bac! Clean Fact Sheet* for more tips at [www.fightbac.org/storage/documents/flyers/clean\\_fightbac\\_factsheet\\_2010\\_color2.pdf](http://www.fightbac.org/storage/documents/flyers/clean_fightbac_factsheet_2010_color2.pdf)