



Color is Not a Reliable Indicator of Safety



Check with a Food Thermometer



Microwave to Safe Temperatures

Cook to Safe Temperatures



Safely cooking food is a matter of temperature. Foods need to reach a high enough internal temperature to kill bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

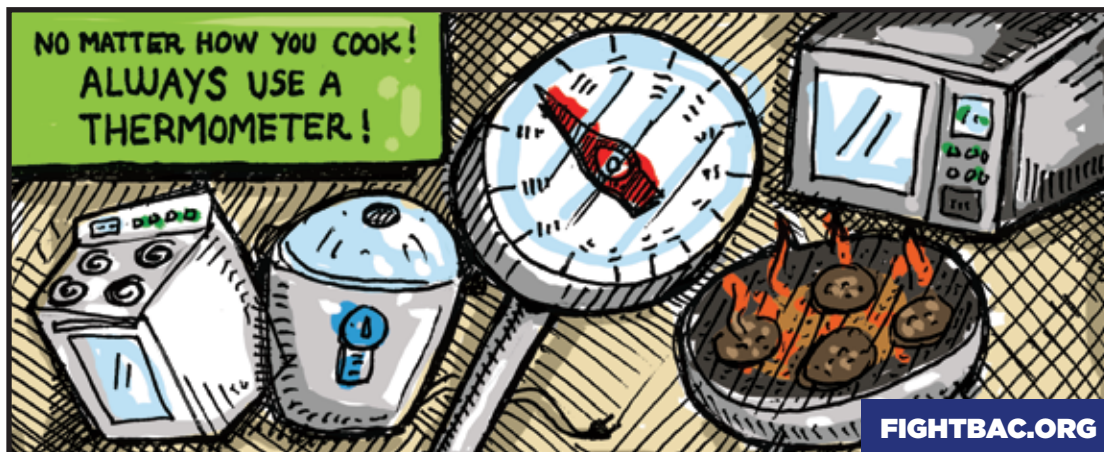


Color is Not a Reliable Indicator of Safety

- Color and texture are not reliable indicators of whether food has reached a high enough internal temperature to destroy pathogens.
- According to USDA research, **1 in 4 hamburgers turns brown before reaching a safe internal temperature.**
- The best way to ensure safety is to use a food thermometer.

Check with a Food Thermometer

- **Use a food thermometer** to ensure that meat, poultry, seafood, egg products, leftovers and casseroles are cooked to safe temperatures to destroy any harmful bacteria.
- Compare your thermometer reading to the chart to make sure food has been cooked to a safe temperature.
- Food thermometers should be placed in the **thickest part of food**, making sure not to touch bone, fat or gristle.
- **Clean your food thermometer** with hot water and soap after each use.
- For information about calibrating your food thermometers, check out the **Thermometers and Food Safety Web page** from the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service.



Microwave to Safe Temperatures

Read and follow package cooking instructions.

- Most prepared convenience foods are not ready to eat right out of the container.

Know when to use a microwave or conventional oven.

- Sometimes proper cooking requires the use of a conventional oven, not a microwave.
- Some convenience foods may be shaped irregularly or are thicker in some areas and may not cook evenly in a microwave oven. It is important to use the appliance and the method recommended on the label.

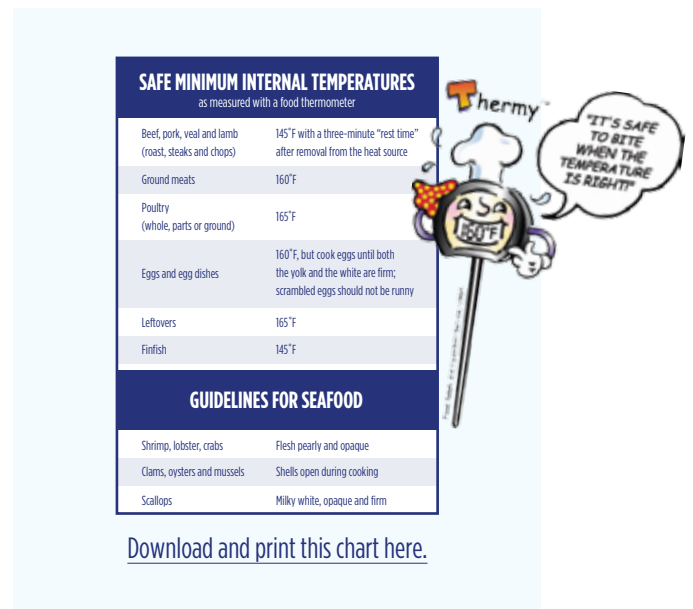


Know your microwave wattage before microwaving food.

- If your microwave's wattage is lower than the wattage mentioned in the label's instructions, it will take longer than the instructions say to cook the food to a safe internal temperature.

Always use a food thermometer to ensure a safe internal temperature.

- Use a food thermometer to test food in several places to make sure it has reached a safe internal temperature.
- For more information on microwaving foods to safe temperatures, check out the **Cook it Safe! fact sheet** at fightbac.org.



SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURES
as measured with a food thermometer

| | |
|---|---|
| Beef, pork, veal and lamb (roast, steaks and chops) | 145°F with a three-minute "rest time" after removal from the heat source |
| Ground meats | 160°F |
| Poultry (whole, parts or ground) | 165°F |
| Eggs and egg dishes | 160°F, but cook eggs until both the yolk and the white are firm; scrambled eggs should not be runny |
| Leftovers | 165°F |
| Finfish | 145°F |

GUIDELINES FOR SEAFOOD

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Shrimp, lobster, crabs | Flesh pearly and opaque |
| Clams, oysters and mussels | Shells open during cooking |
| Scallops | Milky white, opaque and firm |

Download and print this chart here.

Important Cooking Tips to Remember: Entertaining and On-the-Go Foods

- When entertaining and serving hot food buffet-style, use a chafing dish, warming tray or slow-cooker to keep food hot.
- When bringing hot foods to a party or traveling with hot foods, transport them in insulated thermal containers. Keep containers closed until serving time.

THE FOUR WAYS TO FIGHT BAC!

CLEAN



SEPARATE



COOK



CHILL

