FOOD SAFETY

Safe Cooking Temperatures Chart

The minimum internal temperatures for meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers, in Fahrenheit and Celsius, and how to measure them.

Colour and texture are unreliable signs of doneness. A thermometer is the only way to know food has reached a temperature that kills harmful bacteria. The figures below are the safe minimum internal temperatures published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Safe minimum internal temperatures

Food	°F	°C	Notes
Poultry: whole, pieces and ground	165	74	Chicken, turkey, duck
Ground meat	160	71	Beef, pork, veal, lamb
Beef, pork, veal, lamb: steaks, chops, roasts	145	63	Then rest for 3 minutes
Fish and shellfish	145	63	Or until the flesh is opaque and flakes
Egg dishes	160	71	Casseroles, quiches, stratas
Leftovers and casseroles	165	74	Reheat until steaming throughout

How to take a temperature

1. Insert the probe into the thickest part of the food, away from bone, fat and gristle.
2. For thin pieces such as chicken breasts or fish fillets, insert the probe sideways so the tip sits in the centre.
3. Check more than one piece; pieces in the same pan cook at different speeds.
4. Clean the probe with hot, soapy water after each use.

Keep cold food cold

- Keep your fridge at 40°F (4°C) or below and your freezer at 0°F (−18°C).
- Refrigerate cooked food within 2 hours, or within 1 hour if the room is above 90°F (32°C).
- Thaw frozen food in the fridge, in cold water changed every 30 minutes, or in the microwave if cooking immediately. Never thaw on the counter.

Source: USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, safe minimum internal temperature chart. Check your local food-safety authority for guidance where you live.