

# Home Food Inspection Checklist

What can you do to protect yourself and your family from potential foodborne illness at home?

Remember these 5 simple rules!



## Rule #1: Wash Your Hands.

- Always wash your hands before handling food, after touching your hair or any part of your body and after touching raw food.
- How to wash your hands:  
Wet your hands with warm water, add soap, lather and rinse for about 10-15 seconds by singing the alphabet or the happy birthday song and dry hands with a paper towel. Cloth towels tend to harbor bacteria and are not recommended to use.

## Rule #2: Clean and Sanitize.

- Always disinfect counters before AND after preparing food to eliminate any existing bacteria.
- Mix 1/2 teaspoon of bleach with 2 cups of water in a spray bottle.
- After handling raw food, make sure that counters, knives and cutting boards are properly washed and disinfected after each use.
- Always use clean containers / utensils when preparing food.
- Always use hot water to wash dishes.



## Rule #3: Know Your Temperatures.



- In order for your food to last longer, you should routinely monitor the temperature inside your refrigerator. A safe temperature to keep in mind is 41 °F or less. Placement of a thermometer in the warmest part of the refrigerator (near the door) is recommended.
- Keep in mind that when cooking food products, the longer the food boils, the fewer harmful bacteria survive. Cooking foods, like beef or fish at a minimum temperature of 145 °F and chicken at a minimum temperature of 165 °F, will go a long way to prevent you and your family from getting sick. Having a cooking thermometer handy will help in this endeavor.

## Rule #4: Leftovers.



- When you have leftovers after a meal, divide them into small and/or shallow containers so the food will rapidly cool in the refrigerator. Do not stack foods one on top of the other so cool air can circulate around all surfaces of the container.
- Do not leave leftovers inside the refrigerator for several days; consume them as quickly as you can.
- Reheat leftovers to at least 165 °F and enjoy.

## Rule #5: Protect Food From Contamination.



- Do not store any raw food (uncooked beef, chicken or eggs) along with or above ready-to-eat food (fruit and vegetables) or cooked food (leftovers).
- Protect your food from potential contamination at all times.

## ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- When shopping, buy food needing refrigeration last and go straight home.
- Once home, immediately store all perishables in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Do not leave food inside a hot car.
- Avoid buying canned foods with severe dents, bulging lids or missing labels.
- Defrost / thaw food inside the refrigerator, in the microwave (on defrost mode) or under cold running water. Avoid leaving perishable foods like meats on the counter or in the sink for an extended length of time.



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO  
**Environmental Health Services**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



[www.sbcounty.gov/dehs](http://www.sbcounty.gov/dehs)

**Rancho Cucamonga (909) 948-5058**  
**San Bernardino (909) 387-4608      Hesperia (760) 995-8154**