



Food Safety Rules Every Cook Must Follow

KS2 DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

PSHE

Ages 9-12 ⌚ 3 min read

Why Food Safety Rules Matter

When you prepare food, you're responsible for keeping it safe to eat. **Food poisoning** happens when harmful **bacteria** or **germs** get into food and make people very ill. Following simple rules stops this from happening. Think of food safety rules like the safety rules in a swimming pool — they protect everyone.

Think of it like... keeping your bedroom clean. If you leave dirty socks under the bed, mould and nasty smells grow. The same thing happens with food if you don't keep it clean!

The Golden Rules of Food Preparation

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water before you start cooking and after touching raw meat, vegetables, or your face. Germs are invisible, so you can't see them — that's why washing is so important. Wash your hands for at least **20 seconds**, which is about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.

Keep raw and cooked foods separate. Raw chicken, beef, and fish can contain dangerous bacteria. Never let raw meat touch vegetables, fruit, or foods that are already cooked. Use different chopping boards and utensils for raw meat and other foods.

Cook food to the right temperature. Heat kills harmful bacteria. Chicken must be cooked until it's completely white inside, and ground meat should be brown throughout, never pink. Always use a **food thermometer** to check — the safest temperatures are printed on packaging.

Store food properly. Keep meat and fish in the fridge at **below 4°C**. Don't leave cooked food sitting out at room temperature for more than **2 hours** — bacteria multiply quickly in warm conditions. Frozen food keeps dangerous germs from growing.

Think of it like... a library due date system. Just as books need to be returned on time or they're overdue, food needs to be used by its expiry date or it goes bad.

Cleanliness Counts

Clean all surfaces, chopping boards, and utensils with hot soapy water after preparing food. **Cross-contamination** — when germs spread from one food to another — is one of the biggest causes of food poisoning. Wipe down your workspace, and never touch your hair, face, or phone while cooking.

These rules might seem like a lot, but they become habits quickly. Every professional chef follows them, and so should you!