The five most common mistakes that stop you getting a Level 5 Food Hygiene Rating...

and how to avoid them.

from the

Food Safety Guru

Level 5 Food Hygiene Rating Guaranteed

1. Storage

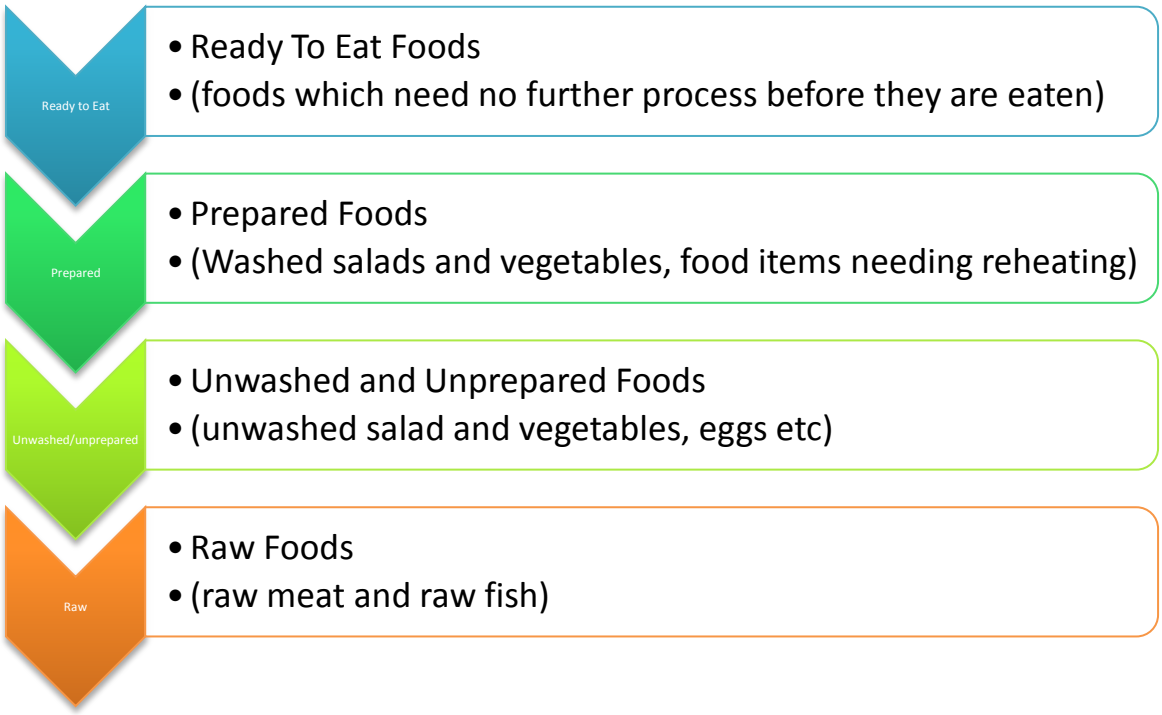
MISTAKE - Storing raw foods with ready to eat foods.

This is **THE** most common mistake made by catering businesses and ruins your chance of a Level 5 Food Hygiene Rating.

TOP TIP - Raw foods does not just include raw meat and fish, it also includes unwashed and raw vegetables. Vegetables and salad items can be contaminated with E.coli and many other bacteria. It is essential that there is a storage system in your kitchen that eliminates any potential cross contamination of raw with ready to eat.

Check out the Storage Hierarchy below for a guide on storing food as detailed in our Food Safety Management System.

Storage hierarchy



MISTAKE - Storing food directly on the floor (even if packaging is intact) and storing open bags of flour, spices, sugar etc in the dry stores

TOP TIP - All food items (including boxes and packaged items) to be kept off the floor on racks. This includes dry stores, walk in fridges and freezers.
The floor must be kept clear for ease of cleaning. Decant all opened items into plastic lidded containers.

MISTAKE - Storing unlabelled and out of date foods

TOP TIP - All food items must have a date label. Unopened foods should have a manufacturer's date label. Once packs are open, you need to put your own date label on. Our Food Safety Management System recommends "day dots" – coloured day dots with a space for writing day of preparation. Use the coloured day as the 'Use by Day' as it is visually easier to manage.
Check your fridges and stores daily to ensure you do not hold any out of date food items

EXTRA TOP TIP - Need to store food in a shed or cellar? No problem, just decant food into plastic lidded containers and store on a shelf (not on the floor) and it is safe from pests – simple!

Make sure you have a written policy on Storage so you can prove your management and control measures are in place. Our Food Safety Management System has a separate policy for each element of kitchen management including storage.

2. Preparation – kitchen flow (cross contamination)

MISTAKE – Washing raw and ready to eat foods and dishes in the same sink

TOP TIP – If you have separate sinks - great but if you only have one sink, plan your day so ready to eat foods are washed first, then raw vegetables next. Have separate time slots for dishwashing and food prep and stick to them. Use a colander to drain cooked veg so the finished item does not come into contact with the sink. Sanitise the sink after washing raw fruit and veg and after dish washing. You must document your procedures so you can prove that you do what you say you do!

MISTAKE - using same preparation space for raw and ready to eat foods

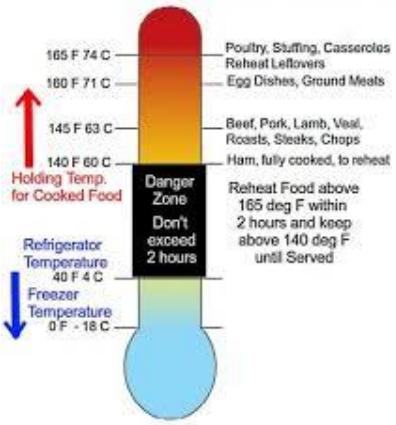
TOP TIP - If your kitchen is big enough to have separate work areas, split them as raw meat, raw fish, raw veg and ready to eat preparation. Don't worry if you have a small kitchen with no space to have separate areas, just plan your day and tasks to avoid cross contamination. For example – if you make homemade burgers, make them first thing in the morning, then clean and sanitise all utensils used **and** the work area before starting on the next activity and so on. During the busy service time, keep a separate area for raw and ready to eat. Use colour coded chopping boards……

MISTAKE – Leaving ready to eat foods out in the kitchen for prolonged periods of time

TOP TIP – Kitchens are hot places so aim to keep you prepared food out of the "Temperature Danger Zone".

Prepare your food then either chill or cook immediately. If cooling, cool food to below 8°C within 90 minutes – use a blast chiller or decant into smaller portions and cool in a bath of ice.

Manage the temperature of your food at all times.



3. Cleaning

MISTAKE – Your kitchen handwash basin is dirty and no antibacterial soap or blue roll to dry hands

TOP TIP - A vital part of your food safety is making sure your kitchen staff have 'clean' hands. So ensure that your handwash basins in your kitchen (and toilets) have antibacterial hand wash soap and blue roll to dry hands (held in a dispenser above the sink).

Make sure the sink is cleaned daily including the handles and bases of the taps.

MISTAKE - Using non disposable cleaning cloths and tea towels in the kitchen. Dish cloths harbour 6 times more bacteria than toilet handles and 6 out of 10 dishcloths harbour life threatening bacteria such as E.coli.

TOP TIP - "Ditch the Dishcloths" – use blue roll and sanitiser to clean your work surfaces as cloths that are used more than once spread bacteria causing cross contamination.

Make sure your sanitiser conforms to BS EN1276 or BS EN13697 to ensure it is effective against E.coli.

MISTAKE – No Cleaning Schedule in place. Your kitchen is cleaned as needed and left to discretion of staff. This results in routine cleaning being missed, bad habits forming with your staff and a general build up of dirt in your kitchen.

TOP TIP - A simple Cleaning Schedule like the one on the right (included in our Food Safety Management System) is the easiest way to make sure routine cleaning jobs take place and the standard of cleaning in your kitchen is consistent.

KITCHEN CLEANING CHECKLIST

Week commencing:

Area: Kitchen Cleaning

Item	Frequency	Responsible person Name	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Action Required
GENERAL CLEANING			Initial when check carried out							
Cleaning cupboard clean	Daily									
Date Guns/Cling Film Dispenser(s) filled	Daily									
Delivery Bay & Rubbish area swept and clean	Daily									
Doors Sanitised	Daily									
Floor Mopped/Machine Cleaned	Daily									
Floor swept	Daily									
Fridge Freezer Clean Tidy/Date Rotated	Daily									
Fridge Freezer Floors & Doors Clean	Daily									
Hand/Large Sinks/Shelving cleaned	Daily									
Kitchen Bins Emptied, Cleaned & Sanitised	Daily									
Oven cloths washed	Daily									
Soap & Blue Roll Filled	Daily									
Storage Clean Tidy	Daily									
Walls, ceilings and doors cleaned	Monthly									
Work Surfaces Sanitized	Daily									
EQUIPMENT										
Bain Marie cleaned	Daily									
Can Opener (surface mounted)	Daily									
Char Grill	Daily									
Dishwasher Chemicals checked	Daily									
Dishwasher filters canopy cleaned	Weekly									
Dishwashers strip & clean	Daily									
Extraction Filters	Weekly									
Food Processor	Daily									
Fryers emptied & cleaned	Weekly									
Griddle Cleaned	Daily									
Large/Small Mixer Cleaned	Daily									
Meat Slicer Sanitised	Daily									
Microwave Cleaned	Daily									
Oven(s) cleaned	Weekly									
Salamander Grill	Daily									
Solid Top/Boiling range	Daily									
Verified by Manager:										

4. Staff Training

MISTAKE – Why spend money and time on staff training?

TOP TIP - Your staff reflect your business. Food Hygiene Training is essential for the safety of your staff and customers. Online Food Safety providers offer very low cost training in many different languages and the training can be timed around your business needs. We also recommend you train your staff on manual handling and general health & safety awareness to protect your employees and your business from potential claims. Our Food Safety Management System includes staff training and information sheets for manual handling, step ladder use, induction, food safety and health and safety to save you £££s on training courses.

MISTAKE - Thinking everyone knows about food poisoning and how to prepare food safely.

TOP TIP - Food handlers are a major source of food poisoning organisms which can be transferred to food. Without knowledge of food safety procedures and safe systems of work, the risk of contamination is high.

Training should include the following –

- ✓ Specific hazards, risk, preventative and control measures relating to their job
- ✓ Food Hygiene
- ✓ Knowledge and skills of the job
- ✓ Safe systems of work
- ✓ Responsibilities, arrangements, procedures, codes of practice and notices
- ✓ Chemical/COSHH use
- ✓ Manual Handling
- ✓ Working at Heights for any step ladder use

MISTAKE - Believing that once staff are trained, they will remember.

TOP TIP - Refresher training should be given to employees based on identified personal needs and regularly updated as required.

- ✓ New equipment or procedures
- ✓ Yearly procedure refresher training
- ✓ Promotion, changing responsibilities and staff development
- ✓ New legislation

Our Food Safety Management System includes staff training records to help you record all training and remind you when updates are needed.

5. Last but not least - Record Keeping

What is more important, doing the work or recording it? Doing it obviously, but you will not get a Level 5 Food Hygiene Rating unless you record it!

BIGGEST MISTAKE – no record keeping or ad hoc paperwork.

TOP TIP – So, what paperwork do you need to ensure your business thrives, consistently delivers good quality food and achieves and retains a Level 5 Food Hygiene Rating?

We believe The Food Safety Management System from Food Safety Guru is the answer ...it will certainly get you a level 5 Food Hygiene Rating ☺

But to start you off, here is a list of essential paperwork you need for your business.

- ✓ Food Safety Policy
- ✓ HACCP Policy including every policy from Supplier and Delivery through to Managing Food Allergies
- ✓ HACCP Critical Controls Matrix
- ✓ Daily Check Sheets for
  - Deliveries
  - Fridge/freezer temperature
  - Food temperature (cooked/reheating/cooling)
  - Kitchen Cleaning
  - Front of House Checks
- ✓ Health & Safety Policy and Risk Assessments
- ✓ Staff Training files

All of this information - and more - is included in the Food Safety Management System from Food Safety Guru. It is simple, easy to understand and implement and we keep you up-to-date with changes and new legislation so you don't have to worry. If you want to get and keep a Level 5 hygiene rating, Food Safety Guru is your answer.

And remember.....

The secret of getting ahead is getting started!

www.foodsafetyguru.co.uk