

Kitchen Management and Basic Food preparation

When you're in the food service or hospitality industry, one of the most important things you can do is keep your kitchen running smoothly. A kitchen operations checklist is a valuable tool that can help you do just that. This checklist will prove useful to executive chefs, duty managers, or anyone responsible for kitchen operations.

This guide will show you how to create a kitchen operations checklist that will keep your kitchen running like a well-oiled machine. That way, you can focus on delivering stellar customer service and preparing great food without consistently worrying about kitchen mishaps.

What Are Kitchen Operations?

The term "kitchen operations" refers to the management of all kitchen-related tasks, such as safety, food quality, cleaning, staff hygiene, customer service, and inventory. A fundamental component of kitchen management is ensuring that menu items are prepared according to standard operating procedures (SOPs) and supervising the opening and closing of the kitchen or restaurant.

Who is Responsible for Kitchen Operations?

The executive chef is primarily responsible for kitchen management and operations; however, every staff member also plays a role in its success. The executive chef's assistant (if they have one) will also step in as the kitchen manager whenever the executive chef is occupied with food quality or safety concerns.

What Does a Kitchen Manager Do?

The kitchen manager is responsible for ensuring that the kitchen runs seamlessly and efficiently on a day-to-day basis. They are in charge of opening and closing the kitchen, supervising staff, managing inventory, and maintaining kitchen equipment. Additional duties may include menu planning, kitchen budgeting, and food cost analysis.

Important Kitchen Procedures That Need Monitoring

Operating a commercial kitchen can be daunting, especially when it requires staff to perform various tasks and procedures frequently. It can be difficult to know where to focus your efforts. Here are the top four procedures you should focus on to guarantee a successful kitchen operation:

Kitchen Opening

The kitchen opening is one of the most important procedures since it significantly impacts how subsequent operations are done. Kitchen opening procedures include:

- Turning on basic utilities (e.g., lights, ventilation, water source, etc.)
- Pre-heating kitchen appliances before use (e.g., ovens, grills, broilers, etc.)
- Checking and recording the temperatures of refrigerator and freezer compartments
- Examine the entire kitchen to see if the previous shift executed proper closing procedures. (e.g., cleanliness and orderliness, equipment malfunctioning, and proper storage and waste disposal)
- Receiving and storing food supplies (e.g., labeling, proper wrapping, indicating dates, and proper storage)

Food & Kitchen Service Preparation

Maintaining food safety should be a key focus in every kitchen. Prioritizing food safety will help keep customers safe from food-borne diseases and firms from being sued or shut down. Commercial kitchens, in particular, should implement preventative measures such as ensuring that kitchen workers follow all hygiene and safety procedures.

Dishes should also be produced in accordance with standard recipes and served in a timely and pleasant manner. In addition, kitchen staff should be properly trained on how to use kitchen equipment and appliances.

Kitchen Cleaning

To comply with health department rules, kitchen facilities should be clean and well-maintained. Keeping the facility clean encourages food safety and improves productivity and efficiency for kitchen staff.

The kitchen should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each day and in between shifts. Use a kitchen cleaning checklist to track everything and anything that has to be cleaned in the kitchen, then use it to plan your cleaning schedule.

Kitchen Closing

The kitchen closing procedure is just as crucial as the kitchen opening procedure. This process involves storing leftover food overnight and securing the facility before leaving. However, it's easy to overlook a simple precaution such as unplugging kitchen appliances, which may result in fire and other potential dangers. That's why it's important to double-check to ensure everything is in order before leaving the building.

Kitchen closing tasks include:

- Check for any perishable foods that have been left out.
- Making sure that all refrigeration equipment is working and secure

- Cabinets are secured, and keys are properly stored.
- All heating equipment and other utilities should be turned off.
- Checking if the alarm system is turned on and operational.
- Locking up the kitchen and facility.

What is a Kitchen Operations Checklist?

A kitchen operations checklist is a tool chefs use to ensure that all stages of the kitchen's operation are completed across shifts. Whether before opening, during service hours, or closing, a kitchen operations checklist is helpful to any facility that prepares food.

Creating a kitchen operations checklist can be as simple as making a list of all the tasks that need to be completed during each shift. Once you have your list, you can add more detail by including specific instructions for each task.

If you're unsure where to start, plenty of kitchen operations checklist templates are available online. You can also find kitchen cleaning checklist templates that you can apply for your purposes.

Conclusion

While a kitchen operations checklist is valuable, it's important to remember that it's only as good as the kitchen staff's ability to follow it. That's why regular kitchen walkthroughs are essential to ensure that procedures are followed and that the kitchen runs smoothly. With a little planning and effort, you can keep your kitchen running smoothly and efficiently.

Kitchen Organization Structure

Kitchen Organization Structure refers to the flow of authority from top to bottom within a hotel or food service establishment and in respect to the kitchen. It also refers to the flow of authority commencing from the executive chef and to the bottom. Kitchen Organization Structure refers not only assigning the positions but also full-filling them with the suitable employees. Kitchen Organization Structure also tells us the actual strength of the employees working at different levels.

Staff Brigade of kitchen: (IN ENGLISH WORDS)

Executive Chef

the head honcho, or executive chef, in charge of the entire kitchen (basically the general)

Executive Chef Job Description, Salary and Career Information

Souse Chef

the under-chef, second in command. Supervises and coordinates the various station chefs (chef de parties). Second in command when the chef de cuisine is absent. Also acts as an expediter (aboyeur) during service (usually in training to become head chef)

Chef-de-Parties

various station chefs which have responsibility for a certain part of meal, which are divided according to the ingredients they specialize in, or the method of cooking. A chef de partie usually has several demi-chefs (assistant station chefs) and commis (attendants) working under them.

Demy Chef-de-Parties

assistant station chef. Does most of the actual preparation of the food in the specific station they are assigned, as supervised by the station chef (chef de partie). In charge of the station if the station chef is absent.

Commis-I/II/III

attendants assigned to a particular station and given the grunt work, or lower-skill work. Usually in training to become a demi- chef.

Apprentices

lowest man on the totem pole and given the heavy lifting work while studying the culinary arts and in training to become a commis and then move up from there. Works through all the various stations in order to become prepared to move up.

Staff Brigade of Kitchen: (IN FRENCH WORDS)

Executive Chef Chef-de-Cuisine

Is responsible for overall management of kitchen; supervises staff, creates menus and new recipes with the assistance of the restaurant manager, makes purchases of raw food items, trains apprentices, and maintains a sanitary and hygienic environment for the preparation of food.

Exe. Chef Souse- Chef

Receives orders directly from the chef de cuisine for the management of the kitchen, and often serves as the representative when the chef de cuisine is not present

Sauce Cook Chef-de-Saucier

Prepares sauces and warm hors d'oeuvres, completes meat dishes, and in smaller restaurants, may work on fish dishes and prepare sauteed items. This is one of the most respected positions in the kitchen brigade, usually ranking just below the chef and sous-chef.

Soup Cook Chef-de-Potager

Prepares soups and other dishes not involving meat or fish, including vegetable dishes and egg dishes.

Roast Cook Chef-de-Rotisserie

Manages a team of cooks that roasts, broils, and deep fries dishes

Grill Cook Chef-de-Grillardin

In larger kitchens, prepares grilled foods instead of the rotisseur.

Cook Chef-de-Entremetier

In larger kitchens, also reports to the entremetier and prepares the vegetable dishes.

Fish Cook Chef-de-Poissonnier

Prepares fish and seafood dishes.

Pastry Cook (Chef-de-Pâtissier)

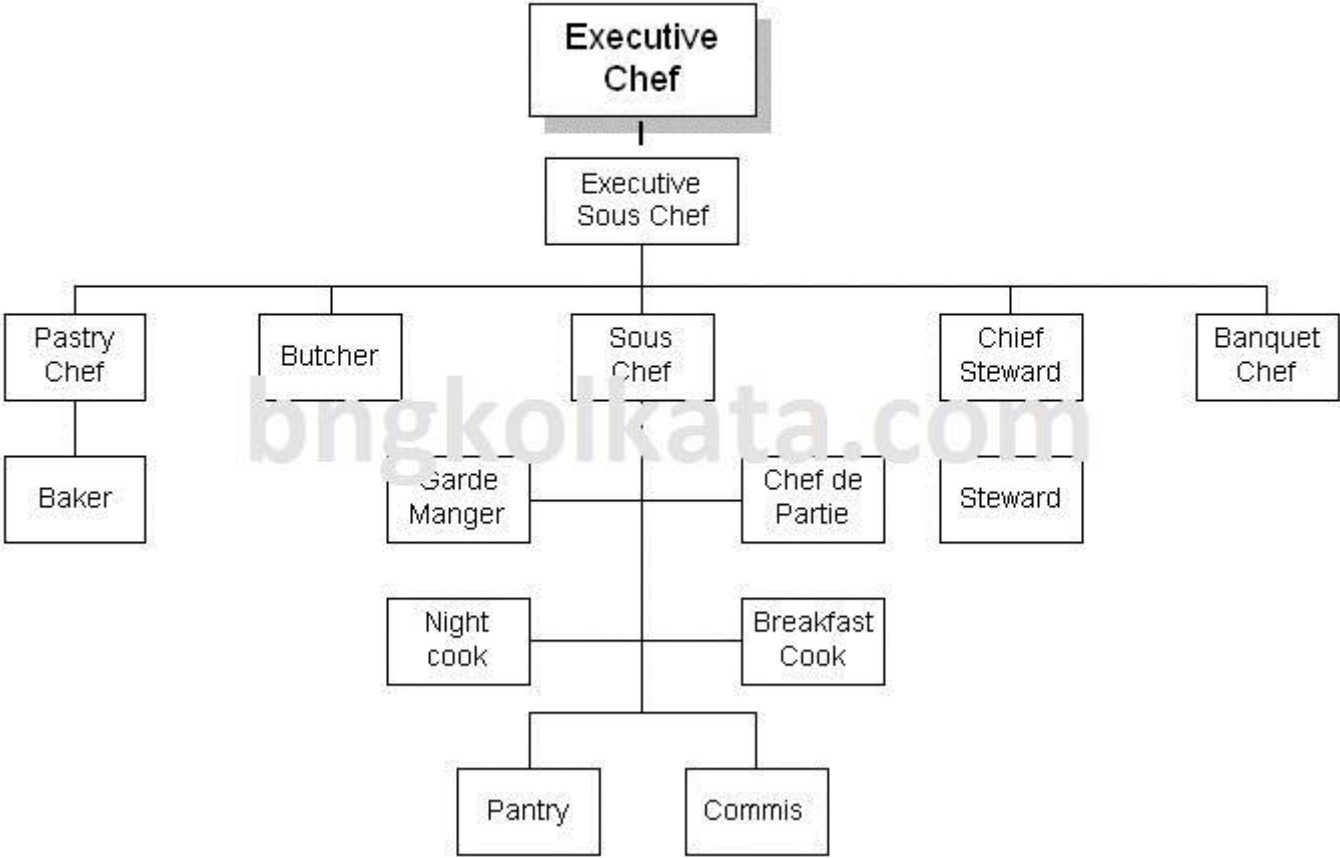
Bakery Cook (Chef-de-Boulangier)

Ice Cream Cook (Chef-de-Glacier)

Break Fast Cook (Chef-de-Petite-de-gunner)

Staff Cook (Chef-de-Communer)

Kitchen Organization Chart



Want more: An interesting article on [The Kitchen Brigade: Who's Doing What?](#) by – Serena Lissy

4 Main Sector of Kitchen

Kitchen anatomy is the most crucial aspect of any restaurant and may be considered as the heart and soul of any restaurant. It dictates the working and the movement within the kitchen. Defining the different sections of the kitchen helps to increase the ease and productivity to the safety of the kitchen staff, when it pertains to food production.

The Receiving section:

This is the area of the kitchen layout is where the entire food and beverage product are delivered. This part is key in that when it is well designed then the efficiency of delivery will be increased and as a result reducing spoilage during offloading.

The Storage section:

This section of the kitchen is designed in two; the cold storage area and the dry storage area. The cold storage involves areas occupied by the freezers and the commercial refrigeration systems. The dry storage area is that section that the dry foods are stored also known as the shelving unit. This kitchen section should enable stacking such that the boxes of food and other ingredients do not fall or even cause injuries.

The preparation and production section:

In a kitchen layout, this is the area where food is prepared and it comprises the areas where the ovens, steamers, microwaves among other preparation equipment are installed. This section should be well spaced to prevent collision between the employees in the kitchen.

The service section:

This part is where the flatware, the dishes, drink ware as well as the serving trays among other serving equipment are placed. This section should be easily accessible to the kitchen staff. This part also includes the hot holding areas for restaurants that serve hot food.

The dishes and cleaning section:

This is one of the most important sections in any kitchen layout. This part should have a three compartment sink that can be used for washing, rinsing and also for sanitizing. It also includes the area where the mops, dusters and cleaning materials and chemicals are placed. This area should also have a trash and waste area where the waste bins are put.

What does a kitchen manager do?

A kitchen manager maintains the efficiency of the overall operations for the kitchen area of a restaurant. A kitchen manager's goals include complying with safety regulations and managing the workflow of all aspects of food preparation. A kitchen manager's responsibilities include:

- Ordering food and overseeing food deliveries
- Creating menus
- Monitoring staff scheduling
- Overseeing kitchen staff
- Managing food storage standards
- Driving guest satisfaction through quality control and efficiency

Though kitchen managers are often required to have culinary experience, food preparation is not always among their main responsibilities. A kitchen manager focuses on using their skills and professionalism to efficiently lead kitchen activities to drive the competitive advantage and financial success of a restaurant.

Related: Kitchen Manager Resume Examples and Templates

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Kitchen manager requirements

Obtaining a position as a kitchen manager may involve certain requirements depending on the level of jobs for which you're applying, including:

Education

Kitchen managers are typically required to have at least a high school diploma or equivalent, though many beneficial degree programs are available to study. An aspiring kitchen manager can take courses such as marketing, food costs, vendor contracts and management to gain the hard skills needed to obtain their desired position. Those who aspire to own a restaurant may also opt to study disciplines such as accounting, communication and business administration to learn management skills.

Related: [21 Skills of a Good Manager](#)

Training

Most kitchen managers learn the skills and knowledge they need for their role while on the job, including culinary skills, communication and adaptation to a fast-paced work environment. While this training can be part of the onboarding process, many kitchen managers are trained as line cooks, sous chefs or similar roles before advancing into kitchen management.

Management training often includes shadowing a current kitchen manager until the trainee is comfortable enough to complete tasks on their own. Aspiring kitchen managers with previous kitchen experience may transfer skills such as inventory management and communication to work for a new employer.

Related: [Top 12 Careers in Food](#)

Certifications

Professional certifications allow kitchen managers to gain more practical knowledge of their duties, sharpen their management and culinary skills, and run an efficient kitchen. Here are the most common certifications for this occupation:

ServSafe Manager Certification

Administered by the National Restaurant Association Solutions, this certification is widely recognized in the food service industry. To earn this certification, you must complete an instructional course and pass the ServSafe Manager Certification Exam with a score of at least 75%.

You must also meet your state or company's regulatory requirements, such as food safety training. The course and exam are available online or in a classroom setting. Though the length of time for which a ServSafe certification is valid can vary depending on geographical location, the generally accepted length of time between recertifications is five years.

Food Safety Manager Certification

Administered by the National Registry of Food Safety Professionals, this certification is accredited under exam standards set by the Conference of Food Protection and meets regulatory requirements throughout the U.S. This certification's exam is available in several languages, requires a passing score of at least 80% and is valid for up to five years.

Please note that none of the companies mentioned in this article are affiliated with Indeed.

Related: [38 Interview Questions for Food Safety](#)

Skills

Kitchen managers require a range of skills to succeed in a kitchen setting, including:

Organization: This skill involves creating simple methods to manage complex tasks and create order in the workplace. Kitchen managers use organizational skills to accurately file documents, filter incoming and outgoing communication, and establish processes for completing daily responsibilities.

Time management: Kitchen managers use time management to plan their days, weeks, months and quarters to complete tasks efficiently. They also use this skill when performing calendar management for the executive or administrator they support to best schedule meetings, travel and other appointments each day.

Communication: A good manager of any industry must possess exceptional communication skills. A kitchen manager uses verbal and nonverbal communication to interact with vendors, resolve conflicts, interview potential employees, create menus and write schedules.

Interpersonal skills: Working in a fast-paced, often hectic environment, it's a kitchen manager's responsibility to remain calm under pressure and to encourage others to do the same. Kitchen managers often use their interpersonal skills for conflict management and teaching kitchen staff the responsibilities of being part of a successful team.

Technical skills: Kitchen managers are required to use software for inventory tracking and ordering, as well as timekeeping programs for employee payroll and the restaurant's point-of-sale system. Some additional technical skills may include working with accounting or payroll software, using email and generating reports.

Related: [Roles for Kitchen Staff in Hierarchical Order](#)

Average salary of kitchen managers

Most kitchen managers are full-time employees, though some may alternate between franchise locations as needed. Salaries for kitchen managers can vary depending on work experience, skills, education and certifications, and a company's size, location and level of service. The average salary for kitchen managers in the U.S. is \$42,761 per year.

For the most up-to-date salary information from Indeed, click on the link(s) provided.

Related: [16 Highest-Paying Restaurant Jobs \(With Salaries and Duties\)](#)

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Kitchen manager work environment

Kitchen managers work in kitchen settings with the following elements:

Monitoring kitchen activity for extended periods

Utilizing available tools and technology to ensure the smooth operation of the kitchen

Effectively communicating with staff, upper management, vendors and restaurant guests

Staying calm in a high-pressure, high-temperature and fast-paced environment

Managing supply ordering, receiving deliveries, and verifying quality and accuracy of delivery contents

The skills and experience of kitchen managers are often transferable to a variety of industries, including catering, health care food service, human resources and public relations.

Check out the basic kitchen operations and customise your own system.

The principles and standards of food preparation isn't just about knowing how to cook a meal – it's also about having a fundamental understanding of kitchen operations.

What is Kitchen Operations?

In broad strokes, this term refers to the overall management of a kitchen. This can include anything from organizing your staff to familiarizing yourself with all the time-saving equipment needed to store, prep, and cook food exceptionally well. Now that we've laid the foundation for what kitchen operations is, let's go into the finer details.

Kitchen Department & Organization

This is a typical kitchen organization chart seen in hotel and restaurant operations that shows the usual kitchen department. Some of the positions here may not apply to smaller-scale operations, but understanding the organizational chart will allow you to create a system that best suits your type of establishment. Keeping this chart in mind can also strengthen your basic knowledge of kitchen departments and facilitate smooth kitchen operations management in the long term.

Kitchen Operations Department

The kitchen is usually divided according to the following responsibilities:

- The kitchen or brigade de cuisine headed by the chef de cuisine or executive chef (in Asian kitchens, the head chef is called the chef or the chief cook).
- The sous chef who supervises menu preparation at the different stations under the chefs de partie.
- The pastry chef is in charge of baked goods such as bread and desserts. Under him is the baker. The pastry area or cold kitchen area is separate from the hot kitchen area.
- The butcher takes care of butchering requirements.
- The chief steward is in charge of the kitchen's cleanliness. Below him is the steward.

- The banquet chef heads banqueting and functions.
- The garde manager is in charge of cold food.
- The assistant chef or assistant cook prepares the menus at the different stations.

This is also known as the commis.

The person in charge of the pantry handles the dry goods and stored items, and the commis is an assistant chef working under the chef de partie.

Common kitchen equipment

Apart from knowing the roles of different persons in the kitchen, one should also be familiar with the different pieces of equipment used. In general, there are 3 broad types of equipment: storage, production, and cooking equipment.

1. Storage equipment

Chillers – Where food items that do not require freezing are stored. Items that should be kept cold but not frozen include vegetables, because their quality will deteriorate.

Freezers – An example of food items that are stored in freezers are frozen meats. This is important to prolonging the shelf life of the meat.

Warmer – These are temporary storage equipment where finished products or dishes are stored until served.

2. Production equipment

Mixers – For combining ingredients in large batches. Mixed ingredients are usually of the solid form. This can be for cake and pastry ingredients or ground meat mixes. Mixers come with different attachments depending on the use, such as the paddle attachment to mix ingredients, or whisk attachment to whip ingredients through incorporating air and making food fluffy. 2 types of mixers are the table top (smaller ones such as the KitchenAid) and floor (large industrial ones).

Slicers – For slicing meats and baked products

Choppers – One example is a food processor. This is used for chopping various ingredients into smaller pieces, such as vegetables.

These items help chefs prepare food faster, rather than doing things by hand.

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A grill pan with grilled chicken surrounded by fresh ingredients like tomatoes, cheese, and dill

3. Cooking equipment

Steam cooking – These are steam kettles, steamers, combination cookers and microwave ovens. This type of equipment makes use of steam for cooking.

Dry heat – Dry heat cooking equipment makes use of cooking methods without liquid or oil. Examples include ovens and stoves.

Grills – Also use dry heat, but by exposing food to open flame.

Fryers – Make use of oil for cooking. An example is a deep-fryer.

Aspects of kitchen layouts

There are two aspects of kitchen layouts. Before deciding on a suitable kitchen layout, you should also know what type of kitchen is needed. These kitchen types are classified in terms of special equipment, stations or logistics/transportation needs as follows:

Quick service restaurant

Characterized by speed and high-volume activity

Hotel food service

A huge kitchen that prepares high-volume banquet service, with satellite kitchens

Hospital kitchen

Requires the highest standard of sanitation

Mid-scale restaurant

Medium-sized; the size of a hotel kitchen station

In-flight food service kitchen

Commissary-type; operates round the clock and usually located very near the airport

Cruise ship kitchen

Has large storage units to keep enough food for the duration of the cruise

Kitchen layout flow

The layout should flow as such:

Receiving and storage area should be close together

Next to storage should be the mise en place and production area

Once ready, food should move quickly to the plating and pick-up area near the dining room.

Criteria for a well-designed kitchen

The kitchen layout should be designed according to your menu to ensure the right equipment, workspaces and capacity are available. Consider these criteria and how they fit your restaurant concept and menu:

Division of areas for proper distribution of labour

Smooth traffic flow

Sanitary and hygiene standards

Equipment selection

Determining capacity

Purchasing system

And that's a wrap! Next time you need a refresher on proper kitchen operations, remember to pull up this handy guide. It's here to help you run your kitchen a whole lot smoother.

What Is Food Preparation?

Food preparation is defined as the actions undertaken to ensure food is safe for consumption or has the required flavor during its assembling process. Formally, food preparation refers to the process of acquiring raw ingredients and making them ready for consumption. Also, it entails any portioning, packaging, assembling, and processing that alters the form of food. Food preparation involves various techniques such as baking. This technique involves prolonged cooking through dry heating the food using an oven via convection. The blanching technique consists of preparing food by plunging it into boiling water and then injecting it after the timed intervals. Food preparation is a crucial activity among humans since it ensures the following:

Separation of the inedible parts of the food from the edible parts. This is enhanced through peeling, shelling, and husking.

The food is digestible, for example, through grinding, soaking, and pounding to ease the chewing process.

Detoxification whereby some food is made safe for consumption, such as cassava and roots containing prussic acid, expelled by cooking and soaking.

Importance of Food Preparation

Food preparation is a key procedure that requires adequate attention, which involves diverse aspects. Also, food preparation deals with measuring the ingredients to be involved in its various stages to promote the smooth running of the process. The importance of food preparation includes:

Prevention of food poisoning — Food poisoning takes place when toxins are available within the food under consumption. Food contamination may occur when the food has been prepared, handled, or stored incorrectly. Thus, the food preparation worker ensures food poisoning is eliminated by embracing numerous steps such as observing hand hygiene during

cleaning and cooking. Also by cooking frozen foods within the recommended duration on their packages and refrigerating perishable foods. Food poisoning can cause dehydration and gastroenteritis.

Prevention of food allergies — Food preparation prevents food allergies, for instance, by labeling the food and promoting awareness of the safe and the unsafe foods. For example, cow milk and soy milk may be labeled differently to eliminate confusion among those members who are allergic to a particular type. Also, food service preparation involves a plan whereby those with allergies to a specific meal are served separately to prevent an allergic reaction.

Promotion of food quality — Food preparation fosters food quality by ensuring that individuals handle and consume safe food items. Hence, this eliminates the dangers of consuming contaminated foods.

Stages in the Method of Preparing Food

The different stages in the method of food preparation are; cleaning, cooking, and assembling. These methods include the processes of acquiring raw ingredients for the consumption of food. Therefore, assembling used dishes and cleaning them is not a food preparation procedure.

Cleaning

Cleaning is applying water and detergents to eradicate various harmful substances from food. These toxic substances include; dust, stains, residual food particles, and dirt. Also, cleaning the equipment and utensils used in cooking is done in this stage.

Cleaning is practiced using the following steps:

- Pre-cleaning to remove harmful substances from food using water to rinse the food.
- Washing the food using warm water and then proceeding to cook the food.

The cleaning stage is important because it aids in the prevention of various foodborne diseases such as campylobacter and Giardia disorders. Effective cleaning ejects the bacteria in the food and those within the surfaces and equipment. Also, the cleaning step aids in the prevention of food poisoning, which commonly arises when the food is contaminated with bacteria. Therefore, maintaining cleaning during food preparation eradicates instances of food poisoning.

Organic produce should always be washed since even fresh organic produce may contain harmful germs that must be eradicated through proper washing.

Cooking

Cooking preparation is a procedure that involves the production of edible and safe food through the preparation and combining of different ingredients in the presence of heat.

Cooking is seen as an action that is more than simply functional since cooking is viewed as an integral practice among many traditions, cultures, and ceremonies. Thus, cooking is an altruistic action that expresses connection and happiness among individuals.

There are various cooking methods, such as moist-heat cooking and dry-heat cooking. The methods utilize heat during cooking.

Moist-heat cooking is a food cooking methodology that primarily relies on the availability of liquid to cook foods. The method is applied in making healthy dishes without adding oil and tenderizing various tough fibers such as meat.

Moist-heat cooking comprises several methods:

- Poaching involves submerging food within hot liquids that range between 140 and 180 degrees. Poaching is used to prepare various foods such as fish and eggs.
- Simmering is a method that uses higher temperatures that are above 180 degrees to generate tiny bubbles. This method is best for cooking rice and meat.
- Boiling is an example of moist-heat cooking that entails submerging the food in heated water to initiate large bubbles. These bubbles maintain the motion of the food while cooking.
- Steaming is used for cooking vegetables through the production of steady steam.

Dry-heat cooking is a method of cooking that does not require water. This method involves various cooking methods:

- Broiling is suitable for cooking cuts of meats such as pork chops.
- Grilling is an example of a dry-heat cooking technique that applies radiant heat in cooking various food such as fish and poultry.
- Roasting is conducted within an oven since the method utilizes indirect heat to cook several foods, like meats and poultry.
- Baking is done under low temperature to prepare pizza and baked foods such as bread.

Referents

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