

**SAFE METHOD:**

**CLOTHS**



**Cloths can be one of the top causes of cross-contamination in the kitchen. It is essential to use them safely to prevent bacteria and allergens from spreading.**

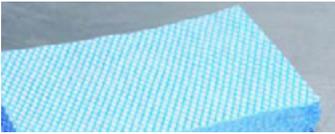
SAFETY POINT	WHY?
Use disposable cloths wherever possible, and throw them away after each task.	This will make sure that any bacteria and allergens picked up by the cloth will not be spread.
Always use a new or freshly cleaned and disinfected cloth to wipe work surfaces, equipment or utensils that will be used with ready-to-eat food.  Cloths can't be used for both floors and other surfaces.	It is especially important to protect ready-to-eat food from bacteria. This is because the food will not be cooked, so any bacteria on the food will not be killed.
Take away re-usable cloths for thorough washing and disinfection after using them with raw meat/poultry, eggs or raw vegetables – and surfaces that have touched these foods.	Raw meat/poultry and eggs are more likely to contain harmful bacteria than other foods. The soil on vegetables can also contain harmful bacteria.
If using re-usable cloths, make sure they are thoroughly washed, disinfected and dried properly between tasks (not just when they look dirty).  Ideally, wash cloths in a washing machine on a very hot cycle. A suitable high temperature can be obtained using a hot cycle of 90°C.  If you wash and disinfect cloths by hand, make sure all the food and dirt has been removed by washing in hot soapy water before you disinfect them. After washing, you can disinfect by using boiling water or a suitable disinfectant, following the manufacturer's instructions (please note bleach is not a suitable disinfectant).	Using dirty cloths can spread bacteria and allergens very easily. Cloths that are not dried properly can increase the risk of bacteria.  A hot wash cycle will clean the cloths thoroughly and kill bacteria (disinfect).  If food or dirt is still on the cloths, this will prevent the disinfection process from being effective, so harmful bacteria might not be killed.

**HOW DO YOU DO THIS?**

How do you clean re-usable cloths?



## DIFFERENT CLOTHS FOR DIFFERENT JOBS

JOBS	THE BEST CLOTH FOR THE JOB	DO YOU DO THIS?	IF NOT, WHAT DO YOU DO?
Holding hot items (e.g. oven trays) – use tea towel or chef’s cloth		Yes	
Washing up dishes – use a dish cloth		Yes	
Use disposable cloths or paper towels for the following jobs:		Yes	
Wiping surfaces			
Mopping up spills		Yes	
Wiping hands		Yes	
Wiping sides of dishes before serving		Yes	
Drying ingredients		Yes	

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG	HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you notice dirty cloths in the kitchen, remove them for cleaning immediately or throw them away.</li> <li>If you think your staff have used a dirty cloth, wash, disinfect and dry any equipment, work surfaces or utensils it has touched and throw away any food that might have been contaminated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider using disposable cloths if you are not using them already.</li> <li>Increase your supply of disposable/clean cloths.</li> <li>Train staff again on this safe method.</li> <li>Improve supervision.</li> </ul>

Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.



MANAGE IT	WHY?	HOW DO YOU DO THIS?
Have a special place in the kitchen for dirty re-usable cloths before they are washed and used again.	This is to prevent them being re-used before they have been washed.	Where do staff put dirty re-usable cloths?
Always keep a good supply of disposable/clean cloths in your kitchen.	Staff are more likely to use clean cloths if plenty are available.	Where do you keep new/clean cloths?