# COOKING SAFELY

Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria.

SAFETY POINT	WHY?
Follow the manufacturer's cooking instructions for food products, where appropriate.	The manufacturer has tried and tested safe cooking methods specifically for its products.
Preheat equipment such as grills and tandoor ovens before cooking as per manufacturer instructions if available. Read more in 'Cooking Safely'.	If you use equipment before it has preheated, food will take longer to cook. This means that recommended cooking times in recipes or manufacturer's instructions might not be long enough.
Do not let raw food touch or drip onto cooked food e.g. when adding raw meat to the tandoor oven. Never use the same utensils, plates or containers for raw, cooked or ready-to-eat food.	Raw food can carry harmful bacteria, which could spread onto cooked or ready-to-eat food and stop it being safe.
Make sure liquid dishes, e.g. gravies/sauces/curries, are stirred regularly and heated to a safe temperature (see 'Prove it').	This is to make sure the food is hot enough to cook it thoroughly and kill bacteria. Stirring helps to make sure the food is the same temperature all the way through, with no cold spots.
Cut meat / poultry into pieces of a similar size before cooking.	This is to make sure that all the pieces of meat / poultry take the same amount of time to cook.
If you serve lamb or beef rare (whole cuts such as steak only), make sure all of the outside surfaces are fully cooked, e.g. by sealing in a pan or grill.	This will kill harmful bacteria on the surface of the meat. Pork and rolled joints should not be served rare. Whole cuts of meat, such as steaks and joints, only ever have bacteria on the outside surface of the meat.

CHECK IT – USE THESE CHECKS TO TELL IF FOOD IS PROPERLY COOKED.
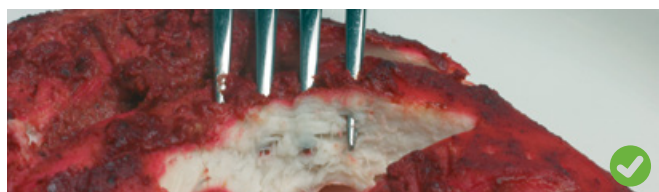
Check that pieces of poultry are cooked to a safe temperature in the centre (see 'Prove it'). The meat should not be pink or red and the juices should not have any pink or red in them.
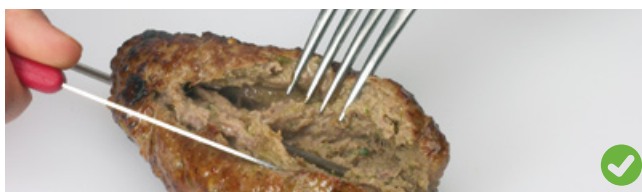
If you are cooking a whole bird, check the meat in the thickest part of the leg.

The largest piece of meat in curries etc. should be cooked to a safe temperature in the centre with no pink or red (see 'Prove it').

Stir liquid dishes regularly and check they bubble rapidly and are heated to a safe temperature in several places before serving (see 'Prove it').

Check that minced-meat products, such as Seekh and Shammi kebabs, Keema naan and koftas, are cooked to a safe temperature in the centre with no pink or red meat (see 'Prove it').

Check that combination dishes, such as biriyani, are cooked to a safe temperature (see 'Prove it'). If you are cooking a large dish or batch, check in several places.
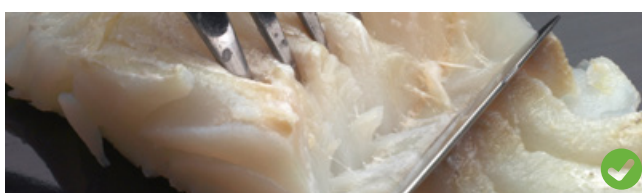
Check fish is cooked to a safe temperature in the centre and the colour and texture has changed (see 'Prove it'). Some fish (e.g. tuna) may be served 'rare' as long as they have been frozen beforehand to kill any parasites and are fully seared on the outside to kill any harmful bacteria that may be present. Further guidance is available at **the FSA website**.

PROVE IT

Use a disinfected temperature probe to check dishes are properly cooked or reheated.
Examples of safe time/temperature combinations for cooking include:

80°C for at least 6 seconds	70°C for at least 2 minutes	60°C for at least 45 minutes
75°C for at least 30 seconds	65°C for at least 10 minutes	

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

- Cook the food for longer.
- Speed up the cooking process, for example by dividing the food into smaller quantities, or using different equipment.

HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN

- Review your cooking method. You might need to increase the time or temperature, or use different equipment.
- Repair or replace equipment.
- Train staff again on this safe method.
- Improve staff supervision.

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