

KEEP FOOD SAFE

WHEN BUYING AND STORING

■ KEEP FOOD CLEAN

When shopping, keep packages of raw meat separate from other foods, particularly foods like lettuce and other salad ingredients that won't be cooked before eating. Use plastic bags to keep raw meat, poultry, or fish from dripping on other foods. This helps to prevent cross-contamination.

Select packages of precooked foods only if the package has no tears. Buy unpackaged deli meat, cooked poultry, and cooked fish or seafood only if it is not in contact with other foods, especially raw meat, poultry, or fish products.

Don't buy cans or glass jars with severe dents, cracks, or bulging lids. These defects are a signal that the food may contain food-poisoning organisms.

Keep all storage areas including the refrigerator and freezer clean. Bacteria need very little food and water to survive and multiply.

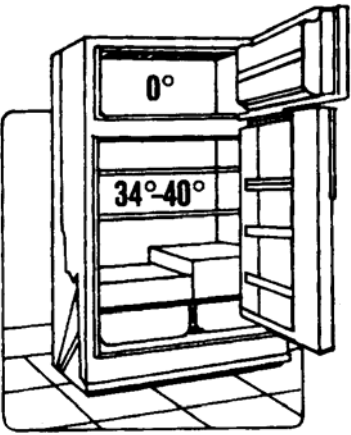
During storage, keep raw meat, poultry, and fish separate from other food items. Use plates, plastic bags, or covered containers to keep meat, poultry, or fish juices from dripping on other foods or refrigerator surfaces.

Store food items and nonfood items in separate areas. This included insecticides and cleaning supplies. Some of these items could be mistakenly used as food – insecticide spray for nonstick vegetable spray, for example.



Use plastic bags to keep raw meat, poultry, or fish from dripping on other foods. This helps to prevent cross-contamination.





Store foods at the proper temperature.

■ KEEP FOOD COLD

Buy frozen foods only if they seem frozen to the touch. Purchase products labeled “Keep Refrigerated” only if they are stored in a refrigerator case. This includes cartons of shell eggs.

Shop last for meat, poultry, and fish. Put these items and any frozen foods in an ice chest. Commercial ice packs are a convenient way to keep foods cold in a cooler.

Maintain refrigerator temperature at 40°F or below. Keep the freezer 0°F or below. Use a thermometer to check the temperature of these areas on a regular basis.

Read the labels of all products carefully. Look for information like “Keep Refrigerated” or “Keep Frozen.” Some canned hams, for instance, must be refrigerated. Also, some foods must be refrigerated after opening. If the lettering is difficult to read, keep a magnifying glass handy to survey the labels, especially on new food products.

If the refrigerator or freezer fails, keep the door closed and find other cold storage. Meat or poultry still containing ice crystals may be refrozen, or cook and serve the food.

■ KEEP FOOD HOT

Bacteria multiply rapidly at room temperature. Under ideal conditions, bacteria can divide every 20 minutes. The more bacteria food contains, the more likely it will cause foodborne illness.

If food is only lukewarm, ideal conditions exist for bacteria to grow. Eating this food may cause foodborne illness.

If food is delivered to you, be there to receive it. Don't ask the deliverer to place it on the front steps, porch, or other areas.

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