

Safe Food Practices

Freezing

Method:

1. Food must be at least room temperature or colder.
2. Place food in a bag and get all air out and seal tightly.
3. On the container, label what it is and the date that you place it in the freezer.
4. Do not freeze anything acidic, like tomatoes, in aluminum pans or containers.

Refreezing

Number of Times: 2

Only If: It hasn't been temperature abused.

Meaning:

1. No more than 1 hour in a 90-degree environment.
2. No more than 2 hours at room temperature.

Thawing Food Properly

1. Refrigerator

Speed: Slow

Number of Days: 2-5

Determined By: Size of the item

Example: Whole Turkey 10 lb, 4-5 days

Method: Place the item in a pan in the refrigerator until thawed.

2. Cold Water

Speed: Fast

Number of Days: 1

Time: 30 mins – 1 day

Determined By: Size of the item

Example: Chicken tenderloins, following method 1, 30-45 mins.

Method 1: Place the food in a bowl under cold running water.

Method 2: Place the food in a leak-proof plastic bag, then put it in a bowl or container with cold water. You will need to switch the water out at least every 30 minutes until the food is thawed.

3. Microwave

Speed: Fast

Number of Days: 1

Time: 30 minutes or less

Determined By: Size of the item

Example: A pound of ground beef will take about 10 minutes under the defrost setting.

Note: This option is only good if you plan to cook the food right away, because the food tends to heat up during the defrost process. If you do not plan to cook the food immediately, use the cold water or refrigerator method.

Things to keep in mind: Thawing out food in the cabinet or on the counter is **never** the way to go, because harmful bacteria are more likely to grow. This puts your health and your family's health at risk.



Cooling Down Food

Method:

1. Divide food into small batches.
2. Use an ice water bath to cool down food. An ice water bath is equal parts ice and cold water. This will quickly cool down your food.
3. Place the food in a container, then place that container in the ice water bath. Make sure that the food is in a container that water will not be able to get into once added to the water bath.
4. The food must reach 42 degrees F or below before refrigerating. Doing this will reduce the amount of bad bacteria growing on your food.

Note: If you do not have any ice, still divide the food into smaller portions to allow the food to cool down faster.

Reheating Food

1. Always reheat food until it is steaming hot or 165F.
2. Never consume food that has not been properly heated.
3. Always eat your food in the temperature that it is supposed to be at: hot food should be eaten hot, and cold food should always be eaten cold. Food should never be eaten lukewarm.