12 Steps to Keeping Foods Safe

1 Wash hands often during preparing and cooking food.

2 Clean kitchen counters and other surfaces that come in contact with food with hot water and detergent or a bleach solution.

3 Use a clean meat thermometer to make sure meat, poultry and casseroles are cooked all the way through.

4 Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator.

5 Do not leave perishable foods at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

6 Keep hot foods hot—above 140°F.
Keep cold foods cold—below 40°F.

7 Don't cross-contaminate
- use a different cutting board for raw products
- separate raw meat from other foods in grocery cart

8 Choose canned goods that aren't dented or bulging.

9 Check your refrigerator temperature often—is it below 40°F?

10 Never taste leftover food that looks or smells strange—when in doubt, throw it out!

11 Don't eat raw or partially cooked eggs—not even cake batter or cookie dough!

12 Use a different spoon for stirring and tasting.

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