

QUICK FACTS: HOW TEMPERATURE AFFECTS FOOD

About the Two-Hour Rule*

Have you ever cooked food and then forgotten it? Or, maybe left the milk out too long (like, all night) and then just put it back in the fridge, not giving it a 2nd thought? Have you been to a party where the food sits out all evening? Is there any real harm with leaving food out longer than two hours?

Temperature plays an important role in keeping food safe and keeping you free from the perils of foodborne illness. Hot or cold foods left out at room temperature (Below 90° F) for 2 hours or more are a veritable breeding ground for harmful (and possibly deadly) bacteria like *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Campylobacter*, *E. coli* O157:H7, and *Salmonella*.

KEEP FOOD OUT OF THE TEMPERATURE DANGER ZONE (40°F - 140°F) The Danger Zone is the where bacteria grow fastest. At room temperature, the numbers of bacteria that cause foodborne illness can double every 20 minutes!

SET THE FRIDGE + FREEZER TO THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE One of the most basic and important ways to make sure your food is safely stored is using a thermometer to set your refrigerator (40°F) and freezer (0°F) to safe temperatures. Bacteria either doesn't grow, or grows very slowly, at these temperatures.

COOK FOOD TO SAFE TEMPERATURES Just because food looks done doesn't mean it is. Color and aroma are not good indicators of doneness. The only way to know if your meat, poultry, and egg dishes are safely cooked is to use a meat thermometer.

KEEP HOT FOODS HOT (AND COLD FOODS COLD) Hot foods should be kept at an internal temperature of 140°F or warmer. Cold foods should be kept at 40°F or colder. Use a thermometer to check.

REHEAT FOOD THOROUGHLY Using a food thermometer, reheat leftovers to a minimum safe internal temperature of 165°F. (Steaming hot all the way through.) Covering food retains moisture and helps ensure even cooking on the stove or in the microwave. Bring sauces, stews, soups, and gravies, to a rolling boil.

Foods are fully cooked when they reach these **SAFE** minimum internal temperatures

Whole Cuts of Meat (Including Pork): 145°F (63°C)
and let rest 3 mins before carving or serving

Burgers & Ground Meat (Except Poultry): 160°F (72°C)

Chicken & Poultry (Including Ground): 165°F (74°C)

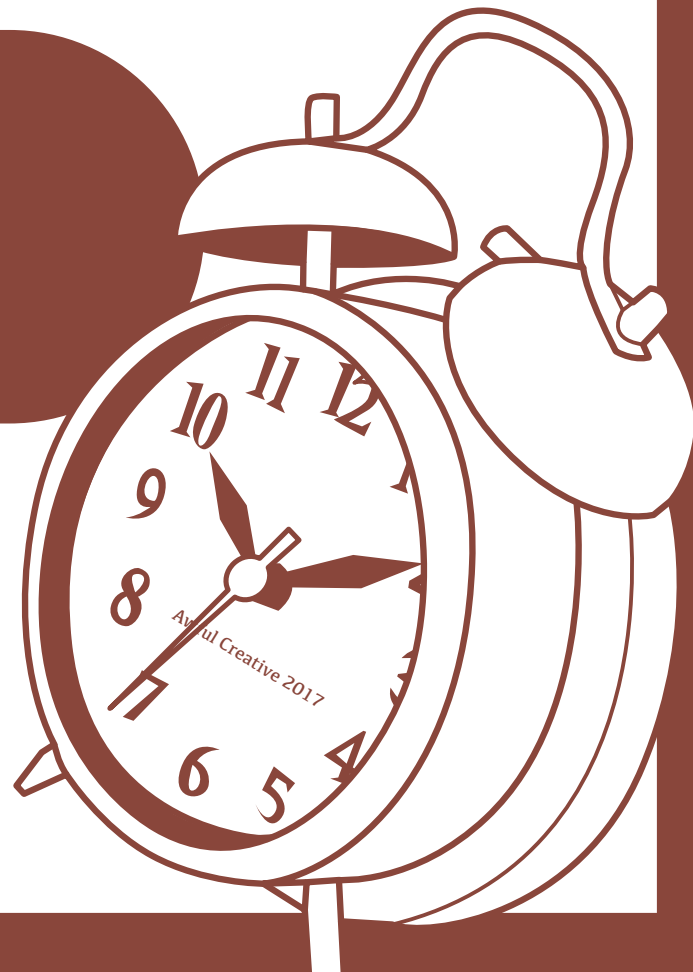
Fish & Shellfish: 145°F (63°C)

Leftovers: 165°F (74°C)

DON'T LET LEFTOVERS LINGER

The sooner (within 2 hours) leftovers are transferred into shallow containers (for quicker cooling) and placed into the fridge, the better. Four days in the fridge is the limit. After that, leftovers must be thrown out, or frozen.

*Please Note: For temperatures ABOVE 90° F – food can only be left out for 1 hour.



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Foodborne
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