

## FACT SHEET

## Thermometer Use



# Thermometer Use

## WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

According to the Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 – Food Safety Practices and General Requirements, food businesses that handle potentially hazardous food (PHF) must have an accurate and accessible thermometer to ensure that the food is maintained at the right temperature for safe consumption (i.e. below 5°C or above 60°C).

The thermometer must be accurate to within 1°C and easily accessible in the food premise (e.g. in an unlocked drawer in the kitchen).

## WHICH THERMOMETER IS BEST?

- A digital probe thermometer is usually best for measuring food temperatures. They are inexpensive and are available from catering and kitchen supply shops.
- Infrared 'gun' thermometers are useful for quick checks and for packaged food – but only measure the surface temperature.
- Temperature gauges on equipment like bain maries and refrigerators measure the equipment's temperature – but to be sure of the actual food's temperature you should use a probe thermometer

## CHECKING YOUR FOOD'S TEMPERATURE

- Food needs to be received, stored, displayed or transported to ensure the temperature does not fall within the danger zone (above 5°C or below 60°C) for bacterial growth.
- Cooling and reheating food needs to be done to certain temperatures within time limits (refer separate Temperature Control fact sheet)

## BEST PRACTICE

- Ensure that the probe thermometer is cleaned and sanitised before and after each use – the use of a single use alcohol wipe is the most effective method.
- Measure from within the thickest part of the food and wait until the temperature stabilizes before taking the reading.
- For existing or new stock, measure packaged chilled food by placing the thermometer length-wise along or between packages.
- Take measurements of different foods within your refrigerator or display unit to identify any spots where the food may not be at the correct temperature.
- Don't rely on fixed temperature gauges on equipment – instead use your thermometer to measure the food.
- Regularly check your thermometer to ensure that it is repaired or replaced if it breaks, calibrated regularly and that the batteries are replaced when flat.
- Using a log sheet to record your temperature findings ensure evidence of meeting requirements can be provided.

## NEED MORE INFORMATION?

More information can be found on the Food Standards website – <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au> or you can contact Council.

### How can you contact us?

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