



Using A Food Thermometer

Your food thermometer deserves a starring role in your kitchen. The only sure way of knowing if meat, poultry, fish, egg dishes and other foods have reached a high enough temperature to kill bacteria in these foods is to use a food thermometer. Check the internal temperature of the food itself before you taste or serve it. The thermometer must be in the right place in the food, placed in the thickest part of the food away from the bone, fat or gristle, and inserted far enough to be accurate. And the thermometer must be accurate so you know the true temperature.

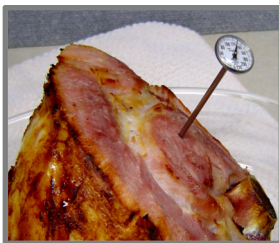
Safe Cooking Temperatures

Food	Minimum Safe Internal Temperature
Ground Meat, Meat Mixtures, and Poultry	
Beef, veal, lamb, and pork	160°F
Chicken and turkey	165°F
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Fresh Pork, Beef, Veal, Lamb	
Chops, Roasts and Steaks <i>Minimum</i>	145°F then rest 3 minutes before carving or serving
Other Choices:	
<i>Medium</i>	160°F
<i>Well-done</i>	170°F
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Ham	
Ham, fresh or smoked (raw)	145°F then rest 3 minutes before carving or serving
Ham, fully cooked (to reheat)	140°F if USDA inspected 165°F all others
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Poultry*	
Chicken & Turkey, whole	165°F
Poultry breasts	165°F
Poultry thighs, wings	165°F
Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird)	165°F
*Consumers may prefer to cook to a higher temperature such as 170-180°F to eliminate pink color and rubbery texture. The 165°F temperature is a <u>minimum safe</u> temperature.	
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Eggs	
Fried, poached	<i>Yolk & white are firm</i>
Casseroles	160°F
Sauces, custards, quiche	160°F
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Fish and Seafood	145°F
	Or flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork
.....	
Leftovers, Casseroles & Stuffings	165°F

Adapted from Safe Minimal Internal Temperature Chart, FSIS-USDA, 2012, and Home Baking Association, 2020

Taking A Correct Temperature

- **Be clean!**
Make sure the thermometer and its case remain clean.
- **Before and after each use -**
Wash, rinse, sanitize and air dry thermometers to avoid contamination.
You can sanitize with a single-use 70% isopropyl alcohol wipe or by dipping in solution of 1 teaspoon of bleach diluted in one quart of water.
- **Aim for the center!**
Take food temperatures in the center or thickest part of food, away from bone, fat or gristle.

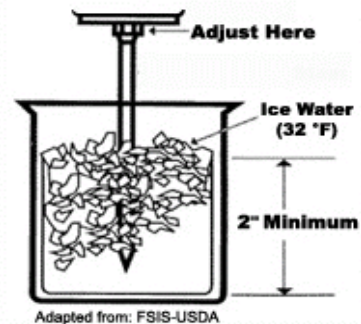


- **Place it far enough into the food.**
Put the tip of the thermometer in the food, making sure you get it in deep enough to be accurate. See what your thermometer says about how far to insert it or look for a "dimple" or "ring" on the stem. The temperature will be read at the point, but the stem must be inserted far enough for that tip to be accurate.
- **Be patient!**
Wait for the needle to stop moving or the numbers on a digital readout to stop changing.
- **Be accurate!**
Check to make sure your thermometer is accurate every now and then, and especially after a lot of use with big temperature changes (from hot food to cold food, back to hot, etc.). Always check again if it has been dropped.

See the temperature chart on the other side for minimum safe internal cooking temperatures.

Calibrate!

Be sure to check the accuracy of your thermometer before taking food temperatures



- **Make it mostly ice.**
Fill a large glass with ice and cover with water. Make it deep enough to stick the whole sensing area (tip) of the thermometer into the middle of it.
- **Cover the stem.**
Insert the thermometer at least 2 inches into the mixture. Make sure the tip does not touch the side or bottom of the glass.
- **Be patient.**
Wait until the temperature reading stops changing. Once you think it has stopped, make sure it stays the same for at least 30 seconds.
- **Be correct.**
The temperature should read 32°F.
- **Adjust if needed.**
 - If your *dial thermometer* needs correcting, turn the calibrating nut or adjusting bar under the dial or face until it does read 32. Keep the stem under ice while you do this.
 - If your *digital thermometer* needs correcting, use the buttons provided. If it cannot be adjusted, try a new battery or buy a new one.



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