

Cleaning and sanitising

As a food business, cleaning and sanitising are important ways to prevent harmful microorganisms or other things contaminating food and making it unsafe to eat.



SAFE FOOD AUSTRALIA
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What are the requirements?

Under Standard 3.2.2 - Food Safety Practices and General Requirements, food businesses need to keep their premises, fixtures, fittings, equipment and food transport vehicles clean and sanitary. This means:

- things like food scraps, garbage, dirt, grease etc should not be left to accumulate
- utensils and surfaces that come in contact with food should be clean and sanitary.

Cleaning vs sanitising

Cleaning is removing general dirt, grease and food waste. Sanitising destroys microorganisms.

You need to clean items before you sanitise them.

Getting it right

Cleaning:

- ✓ pre-clean utensils by scraping or wiping food scraps off surfaces and rinse with water
- ✓ wash with hot water and detergent to remove grease and food residue (soak if needed)
- ✓ rinse off the detergent.

Sanitising:

- ✓ soak items in very hot water (77°C for 30 sec) or in diluted bleach, or
- ✓ saturate items with 70% alcohol, or
- ✓ use a commercial sanitiser and follow the manufacturer's instructions, or
- ✓ use a dishwasher that can sanitise (usually the longest hottest setting)
- ✓ air-drying is best
- ✓ where you can, remove parts like stab mixer sticks and slicer blades to sanitise.

Tips for using bleach

- use plain bleach to minimise the risk of it contaminating or tainting items
- for cold water, use 100 ppm chlorine – add 10 ml commercial bleach or 25 ml household bleach to 10L water
- for warm water, use 50 ppm chlorine – add 5 ml commercial bleach or 12.5 ml household bleach to 10L water
- contact time is usually 10–30 seconds but check the manufacturer's instructions
- throw diluted bleach away after 24 hours.

Tips for using your dishwasher

- follow the manufacturer's instructions and use the right detergent or sanitising chemical
- scrape or rinse excess food off before placing in the dishwasher
- place items in a way so that water can reach all surfaces
- use the longest, hottest cycle (or the program designed for sanitation)
- check that items are clean and dry when the cycle ends
- use clean hands to unpack the dishwasher
- clean and service the dishwasher regularly (including filters).

Need more information?

Safe Food Australia is a guide to the food safety standards in Chapter 3 of the Food Standards Code. Cleaning and sanitising are covered under Standard 3.2.2 clause 19 and 20 and in Appendix 6 and 8.

Copies of the guide, some translated fact sheets and other information is available at www.foodstandards.gov.au/safefood or by emailing information@foodstandards.gov.au.