FOOD SAFETY & CULINARY HEALTH INSPECTION

SAFE MEAT INTERNAL COOKING TEMPERATURE GUIDE

USDA Food Safety Standards: Minimum Internal Temperatures, Rest Times & Pathogen Elimination

KITCHEN EDITION
Standard US Letter
Bespoke Printable

POULTRY & GROUND MEATS (CRITICAL TEMP)

MEAT CATEGORY	MIN TEMP	REST TIME	NOTES
Chicken (Breasts & Wings)	165 deg F (74C)	None req.	Probe thickest center
Chicken (Thighs & Legs)	175 deg F (79C)	None req.	Dark meat breaks down
Whole Turkey & Duck	165 deg F (74C)	15-20 mins	Probe inner thigh
Poultry Stuffing & Dressing	165 deg F (74C)	None req.	Must reach full temp
Ground Chicken & Turkey	165 deg F (74C)	None req.	Bacteria blended in
Ground Beef, Pork, Veal	160 deg F (71C)	None req.	Destroys E. coli
Ground Lamb & Game	160 deg F (71C)	None req.	Safe hamburger standard
Leftovers & Casseroles	165 deg F (74C)	None req.	Reheat to steaming
Precooked Ham (Reheat)	140 deg F (60C)	None req.	USDA certified safe
Uncooked Fresh Ham	145 deg F (63C)	3 Minutes	Raw whole pork cut

WHOLE CUTS: BEEF, PORK, VEAL & LAMB

DONENESS LEVEL	PULL TEMP	REST TIME	FINAL TEMP
Steaks: Rare (Red Center)	120 deg F	3 Minutes	125 deg F (52C)
Steaks: Med-Rare (Pink)	128 deg F	3 Minutes	135 deg F (57C)
Steaks: Medium	138 deg F	3 Minutes	145 deg F (63C) [USDA]
Steaks: Medium-Well	148 deg F	3 Minutes	155 deg F (68C)
Steaks: Well-Done	158 deg F	3 Minutes	165 deg F (74C)
Pork Chops & Tenderloin	142 deg F	3 Minutes	145 deg F (63C) [USDA]
Pork Roasts & Loins	142 deg F	5 Minutes	145 deg F (63C)
Lamb Chops & Roasts	142 deg F	3 Minutes	145 deg F (63C)
Veal Chops & Cutlets	142 deg F	3 Minutes	145 deg F (63C)
Beef Brisket / Pot Roast	195 deg F	30 Minutes	203 deg F (Gelatin)

SEAFOOD, SHELLFISH & EGG DISHES

ITEM	MIN TEMP	VISUAL SIGN	SAFETY
Fin Fish (Salmon, Cod, Halibut)	145 deg F (63C)	Flakes with fork	Opaque flesh
Shrimp & Prawns	145 deg F (63C)	Pearly & opaque	Flesh firm
Lobster & Crab	145 deg F (63C)	Shell red, opaque	Meat pearly white
Clams, Mussels, Oysters	Until open	Shells pop open	Discard unopened
Sea Scallops	145 deg F (63C)	Firm & milky opaque	Milky core gone
Egg Dishes & Casseroles	160 deg F (71C)	Set center	No runny liquid
Poached / Fried Eggs	Cook until firm	Whites & yolks firm	Salmonella safe
Commercial Eggnog / Custard	160 deg F (71C)	Coats back of spoon	Pasteurized
Wild Game (Venison)	160 deg F (71C)	3 Minutes rest	Trichinella safe
Wild Boar / Bear	165 deg F (74C)	No pink remaining	Full destruction

THE DANGER ZONE & THERMOMETER CALIBRATION

- The Temperature Danger Zone:
40 deg F to 140 deg F (4C to 60C). Bacteria double every 20 minutes!

- The 2-Hour Window Rule:
Never leave cooked or raw perishable food at room temp for >2 hours (1 hr >90F).

- Refrigerator Safe Storage:
Maintain home refrigerator at or below 40 deg F (4C) and freezer at 0 deg F (-18C).

- Thermometer Ice-Bath Test:
Fill glass with crushed ice and cold water. Probe must read 32 deg F (0 deg C).

- Boiling Water Test:
Insert probe into rolling boil at sea level; thermometer must read 212 deg F (100C).

- Proper Probe Placement:
Insert probe into thickest part of meat away from bone, gristle, and fat deposits.

EXECUTIVE CHEF & SERVSAFE FOOD PROTECTION REPERTOIRE

COLOR DOES NOT EQUAL DONE

- Smoked meats stay naturally pink
- Ground beef can brown prematurely
- Only digital thermometers verify safety

REST TIME EQUATION

- 3-min rest allows heat conduction
- Continues destroying pathogens
- Redistributes savory meat juices

PROBE HYGIENE

- Clean probe with alcohol wipe
- Wash with hot soapy water after raw
- Prevent cross-contamination