



Food Safety Project
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

SafeFood[©] Times

Special Edition

Safe Sandwich Making

Cross Out Cross Contamination

Cross contamination occurs when bacteria or viruses are transferred from one surface to another. There typically are three types of cross contamination:

1. Hand-to-food
2. Equipment-to-food
3. Food-to-food

In making sandwiches and other foods that will not be cooked, it is very important to take steps to eliminate cross contamination so that foods are kept safe to eat.

Keep Them Safe!!



Get Started

1. Wash Hands

Always begin the sandwich making process by washing your hands! Focus on:

Washing Hands Correctly

- Use soap and warm water
- Lather and rub for 10-15 seconds
- Rinse well
- Dry with a single use paper towel
- Turn off faucet with towel to prevent recontaminating hands

Washing Hands Frequently

- Before starting work
- When changing tasks
- Before putting on gloves
- After going to the restroom
- After handling surfaces such as refrigerator handles

2. Clean and Sanitize

Surfaces that should be cleaned and sanitized:

- Work surfaces/counter tops
- Cutting boards
- Knives
- Carts

Remember, cleaning and sanitizing is a 3-step process!

1. Clean with soapy water
2. Rinse with clear water
3. Sanitize

Don't forget to check the sanitizer concentration.

3. Assemble Materials

Use carts for assembling and moving food and supplies.

Check to make sure food packaging is intact.

Check the expiration dates on all meats and cheeses

Assemble all dry products first:

- Bread
- Packaging

Assemble all refrigerated ingredients:

- Meats
- Cheeses
- Vegetables
- Dressings

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Questions:

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Make Sandwiches

Got It Made!

Organize Your Work Area

There are several factors to consider when organizing your work area:

- **Efficient flow of materials.** Organize the sandwich ingredients in the order they will be used. For example, bread will be placed so it can be easily reached first, while the wrapping materials will be placed at the end.
- **Maximum utilization of space.** Place food items close together to limit reaching.
- **Flexibility and function of space.** For example, use carts to add to your work space.
- **Staffing.** Consider having more than one person assemble sandwiches to shorten the time sandwich ingredients are kept at room temperature.



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Hands should be washed after each different task. When making sandwiches, there are multiple trips to the refrigerator to retrieve ingredients and store sandwiches. Refrigerator handles are another surface that can contaminate hands!

Tips for Slicing Meat and Cheese

It is often necessary to slice meats and cheeses for making deli sandwiches. This adds one more step where cross contamination can occur. When slicing, remember to:

1. Disassemble the meat slicer and wash it thoroughly.
2. Sanitize all parts of the meat slicer that will come in contact with food.
3. Wash your hands.
4. Wear disposable gloves when handling the meat and cheese because these items will not be cooked.
5. Use batch preparation principles—remove only a small amount of meat or cheese from the refrigerator at one time. Cover, label, and return sliced product to the refrigerator as quickly as possible.

Now that you have those sandwiches made, it is important to:

- **Keep ‘em Cold!** Cold sandwiches should be kept at 41° F or lower. Minimize the time that cold sandwiches are in environments where the temperature is higher than 41° F.
- **Date and Rotate!** If there are sandwiches leftover, be sure that you can document temperature. If the cold temperature was maintained, label them with the preparation and use-by dates. Be sure to use them within the use-by period.
- **Transport Safely!** For catering or for satellite locations, if sandwiches are transported, make sure to Keep ‘em Cold! To maintain cold temperatures, transport sandwiches in:
 - A pre-chilled insulated containers
 - Refrigerated carts



Remember, always wear disposable gloves when assembling sandwiches. They are ready-to-eat items that will not be cooked!

Food Code 2005 does NOT allow any bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods. Gloves, tongs, deli tissues or other utensils are required.

For More Information

Here are some web sites where you can find more information on cross contamination.

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/fsgret.html>, Gateway to Government Food Safety Information

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Be_Smart_Keep_Foods_Apart/index.asp, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)

<http://www.fightbac.org/>, Partnership for Food Safety Education

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/HRIM/HACCP>, HACCP Information Center, Iowa State University, University Extension