# Cooking Safety

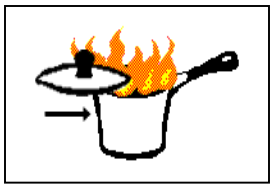
1. **ALWAYS WASH YOUR HAND BEFORE AND AFTER HANDLING FOOD.** When preparing food, keep surfaces and utensils clean. Use one cutting board for raw meats, another for fruits and vegetables that won't be cooked. *WASH YOUR HANDS BETWEEN EACH TASK!* A simple trick to fill your kitchen sink with hot, sudsy water. This serves two purposes:

   (a) When preparing food, toss the dirty dishes into the hot water as you cook. This makes for easier cleanup.

   (b) As you cook, stick your hands in the water to clean them.

2. **ALWAYS SERVE FOOD ON CLEAN PLATTERS.** Now, you are probably thinking - "I know that!" But think? Have you every taken raw meat to the barbecue on a plate and then put the cooked meat back on the same plate to serve? Don't do this unless you have washed the dish in between. Raw meat has bacteria that will spread to the cooked meat.

3. **DON'T LEAVE COOKING UNATTENDED.** The first step to safe cooking is to stay in the kitchen whenever something is cooking -- unattended cooking is the #1 cause of cooking fires. Also, turn off appliances promptly when you finish using them. Coffee pots, toaster ovens, and other appliances can overheat if you leave them on, causing a fire. Always, unplug electrical appliances when they are not in use (*several years ago, a coffee brewer was recalled because the switch when in the "off" position would short to the "on" position and then cause a fire*).



4. **SMOTHER A GREASE FIRE.** *Never* put water on a cooking fire – it will splatter violently! If a pan containing food catches fire, slide a lid over the pan, then turn the burner off.

5. **EXTINGUISH OTHER FOOD FIRES WITH BAKING SODA.** *Never* use water or flour on cooking fires (*this must be important, we said it twice*).

6. **DON'T TRY TO CARRY A PAN THAT'S ON FIRE OUTSIDE OR TO THE SINK.** This is extremely dangerous because it can easily ignite your clothing or other combustibles you may pass with the pan.

7. **OVEN FIRES.** If a fire starts in the oven close the oven door and turn off the heat. If the flames do not go out immediately, call the fire department.

8. **KEEP APPLIANCES CLEAN.** Built-up grease catches fire easily. Clean ovens, stoves, and other appliances regularly.

9. **WEAR CLOSE-FITTING SLEEVES WHEN COOKING.** Loose sleeves can catch fire when they dangle near hot burners. Protect yourself by wearing sleeves that fit snugly. For added safety, don't store things over the stove where you must reach over hot burners to get them.

10. **KEEP FLAMMABLE OBJECTS CLEAR OF THE STOVE.** Pot holders, dish towels, blowing curtains ... if any of these come too close to a burner, a fire can start. Keep them all a safe distance from your stove.

11. **IF YOUR CLOTHING CATCHES FIRE**, do not run; stop, drop to the ground, and roll over and over (Stop – Drop – Roll) until the flames are smothered.

12. **COOL A BURN.** If you experience a burn while cooking that does not break the skin, run cool water over the skin for 10 - 15 minutes. Do **not** place butter or other ointment on the burn as this keeps the heat in and could further damage the skin. Severe burns, including burns that break the skin, should be treated by a physician.

13. **HEAT OIL SLOWLY.** Keep careful watch while you heat cooking oil. A fire can easily start if you set the burner too "high" and then leave the pan of oil unattended.

14. **PREVENT BURNS BY TURNING POT HANDLES INWARD.** A pot handle over the edge of your stove can be bumped in passing, or grabbed by a child, causing serious burns. Turn pot handles inward for safety.

15. **WATCH OUT FOR MICROWAVE BURNS.** Microwave ovens stay cool, but what's in them can be very hot. Use a pot holder when removing food from a microwave! Remove lids with caution to prevent steam burns, and test the temperature of food before eating it.

16. **CLOSE THE DOOR ON MICROWAVE FIRES.** If anything catches fire in your microwave, opening the door will provide oxygen to the fire. Leave the door shut and turn the microwave off.

17. **MICROWAVES TEND TO HEAT UNEVENLY.** Never put foil or other metals in a microwave.

18. **FOOD POISONING, SPOILAGE, AND TEMPERATURE CONTROL.**

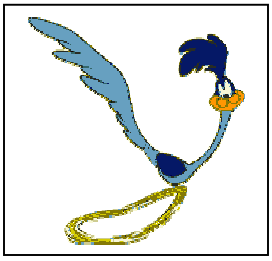
(a) Keep foods either hot or cold. The bacteria that cause spoilage and food poisoning grow best when food is between 40 °F & 140 °F. Be especially careful with raw poultry; seafood; foods with a base of eggs, such as mayonnaise or egg salad; and bread, like stuffings or puddings.

(b) Make sure the temperature in your refrigerator is 40 °F or under. Get a good thermometer for the fridge, keep it in there where you can see it, and check it often.

(c) Keep shrimp, lobster, oysters and such in the refrigerator on ice. Ideally, put the seafood on top of the ice, and the ice in a colander or other bowl with holes in it so that when the ice melts it can drain into another container.

(d) When you want to refrigerate a hot dish, first leave it for a bit in a cool spot with the lid ajar so that it can cool down before you put it in the refrigerator. If you put a hot dish in before it cools, it will warm up the refrigerator, endangering everything else in there.

(e) A soon as you have served a stuffed bird, such as a turkey, remove the stuffing that is left in the bird so that it can cool down faster.



# Be Safe

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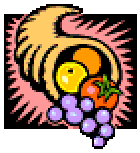
# Enjoy your Holidays!