

Cleaning effectively in your business

Guidance on how to clean equipment and surfaces to prevent harmful bacteria from spreading onto food.

Steps for cleaning effectively

You should do the following things:

- Clean and disinfect food areas and equipment between different tasks, especially after handling raw food.
- Clean as you go. If you spill some food, clear it up straight away and clean the surface thoroughly.
- Use cleaning and disinfection products that are suitable for the job and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Disinfection products should meet the BS EN standards. Check product labels for either of these codes: BS EN 1276 or BS EN 13697.
- Do not let food waste build up. Dispose of food waste suitably.
- Use a cleaning schedule to make sure that surfaces and equipment are cleaned when they need to be. It can also help to stop cleaning products being wasted or used incorrectly

Not cleaning thoroughly is one of the most common reasons why food businesses are prosecuted.

Cleaning schedule

Work out what needs cleaning or disinfecting every day, or more than once a day, and what needs cleaning less frequently. Your schedule should show:

- what needs to be cleaned
- what needs to be disinfected
- how often it needs to be done
- how the cleaning/disinfecting should be done

It is a good idea to include cleaning instructions showing:

- cleaning procedures
- what cleaning products should be used
- how the products should be used, including how much they should be diluted and how long they should be left in contact with the surface, following the manufacturer's instructions
- how the products should be stored - in a special place, not in food areas

You can find more information on [cleaning](#) in our Safer food, better business for caterers pack.

Disinfection

If you are using a chemical disinfectant or sanitiser, these must meet officially recognised standards and should be used as instructed by the manufacturer.

Detergents

Detergents clean the surface and remove grease, but they do not kill bacteria.

Disinfectants

Disinfectants kill bacteria and should be used on a visibly clean surface. They do not work effectively if the surface is covered in grease or visible dirt. It is also important that you leave the product on the surface for the time specified in the instructions.

Sanitisers

Sanitisers can be used to both clean and disinfect as part of a two-stage approach. First use the sanitiser to clean the surface, removing any:

- dirt
- food
- grease

Re-apply to the visibly clean surface and leave for the required time to disinfect the surface.

Food safety coaching video – Cleaning effectively

How to clean work surfaces using a two-stage process.

Remember: When you start a new food business or take over an existing business, you must [register with your local authority](#).