



Food Safety at Barbecues & Picnics

► **Store and marinate meats carefully.** Store meats in a fridge kept at 35-38°F. If you'll not be using the meats right away, then freeze them. Ground meat and poultry should be frozen within 1 or 2 days and other meats should be frozen within 4 to 5 days. Thaw meats in the refrigerator or thaw sealed packages in cold water. Do not leave these items out to thaw at room temperature. Marinate meats in the fridge. If you are going to use some marinade as a sauce on cooked foods, then reserve a portion of the marinade *before* placing raw meat in it. Meats can be transported to a cookout location in an insulated cooler kept at 40°F or below.

► **Cook meats thoroughly.** Cook meats to safe internal temperatures. Never assume meats are done because of how long they have been cooking or because of how they look. Use a food thermometer to verify that the items have reached safe minimum internal temperatures.

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| Steak/roast | 145°F |
| Fish | 145°F |
| Pork | 145°F |
| Ground beef | 160°F |
| Chicken breasts | 165°F |
| Whole poultry | 165°F |
| Ground turkey or chicken | 165°F |
| Hot dogs | 165°F |
| Shrimp, lobsters, & crabs | Cook until pearly & opaque |
| Clams, oysters, & mussels | Cook until the shells are open |

► **Keep hot foods hot.** Meats and other warm foods should be kept hot (140°F or warmer) until they are served. These foods can be kept warm by setting them to the side of a grill rack (not directly over the coals) or by placing them on a warming tray or in a chafing dish or slow cooker. Do not allow these foods to sit out for more than 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F).

► **Keep cold foods cold.** Transport cold foods in insulated coolers with enough ice or ice packs to keep the foods at 40°F or below. Keep coolers out of direct sunlight and open the lids as infrequently as possible. Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable foods in another, as the beverage cooler will be opened frequently. If possible, keep cold foods on ice while they are out on a serving table. Do not allow these foods to sit out for more than 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F).

► **Keep clean.** Wash surfaces and hands before preparing and setting out foods. If running water is not available at a cookout site, then bring a water jug, soap, and paper towels or moist towelettes to complete these tasks. Have plenty of clean utensils and platters on hand so you can use different utensils and platters for raw and cooked meats.

SOURCES: **USDA** (http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/barbecue-and-food-safety/CT_Index) and **FDA** (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm109899.htm>).