

# MEAT AND POULTRY SAFETY CHECKLIST



Meat and poultry, especially ground beef, pork and poultry, are highly perishable. Proper handling and storage measures not only help ensure the safety of meat and poultry, but also help maintain wholesomeness and quality. Consistently following these simple safety measures will help protect you and your family from foodborne illness. *Check the box next to each safety step you follow.*

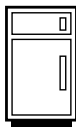
## Safe Shopping

- Meat is selected last and bagged separately in plastic bags.
- The “sell by” date has not expired on fresh, raw meats.
- Meat packages selected are cold to the touch and tightly wrapped. Frozen products are frozen solid.
- Raw ground beef is bright red in color. Packaging is intact and does not show signs of leakage.



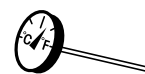
## Safe Transportation and Storage

- Meats and other perishable items are placed in an insulated cooler for the trip home (if the ride is more than one hour or if the temperature is above 80°F and the ride is more than 30 minutes).
- Meats are placed in the refrigerator (on the lowest shelf) or freezer immediately upon returning home from the grocery store. Packages are spaced so that air can circulate freely around them.
- Thawed meat is never refrozen.



## Safe Preparation and Service

- Hands are washed thoroughly, immediately before and after handling raw meats.
- Separate cutting boards, platters and utensils are used for cooked and uncooked meat.
- Work surfaces and utensils are washed with hot, soapy water after handling raw meat or poultry.
- Frozen meats are thawed at refrigerator temperatures in a plastic bag or on a dish, or in the microwave, and never on the counter.
- Meats are marinated in the refrigerator. If used as a sauce, marinade is then boiled for at least one minute before serving.
- Ground beef is cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F, until the center is no longer pink. Ground poultry is cooked to at least 165°F.
- Cooked foods containing ground meats are kept hot at 140°F or higher while serving and are refrigerated as quickly as possible after serving.



*If you checked every box, congratulations—you’re food safety savvy! If not, make it your goal to follow each of these safety measures to reduce your risk of foodborne illness.*

## Storing Ground Beef

*Time and Temperature Guidelines*

Type of Product	Storage Temperature	Storage Times
Fresh ground beef	Below 40°F and as close to 28°F as possible	1 to 3 days
Frozen ground beef	0°F or below	Up to 90 days
Refrigerated cooked ground beef	Below 40°F	2 to 3 days
Frozen cooked ground beef	0°F or below	Up to 90 days