

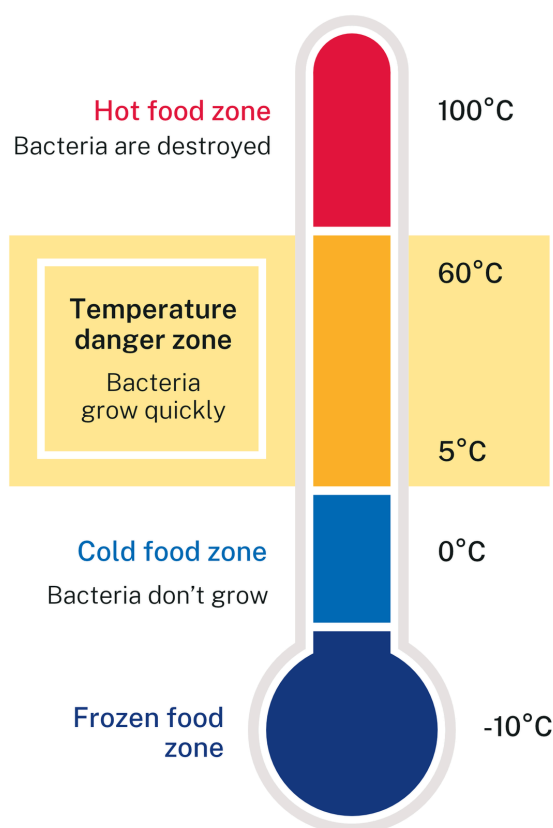
# Temperature control of food

Minimise the time potentially hazardous food spends between 5°C and 60°C – known as the ‘temperature danger zone’. Food poisoning bacteria can grow quickly in this range.

## What foods need temperature control?

Potentially hazardous foods, which include:

- meat and poultry
- cooked meat dishes
- milk, custard and dairy products
- seafood
- cut or processed vegetables and fruit
- cooked rice and pasta
- foods containing eggs
- sandwiches and rolls
- foods with beans and other protein-rich ingredients.



**Top tip:** Don't guess temperature. Use a calibrated clean and sanitised thermometer to check.

## The 2-hour / 4-hour rule

Sometimes food needs to be out of refrigeration during preparation, transport, display or service.

Businesses need to keep track of the total time food is in the temperature danger zone and use the 2-hour / 4-hour rule outlined below.



**0-2 hours** > Okay to **use or refrigerate** below 5°C for later use.



**2-4 hours** > Okay to **use** (can't be put back in the fridge).



**4+ hours** > **Do not use.** Must be thrown out.

Businesses must be able to demonstrate they are applying the rule correctly, for example by logging times or labelling food.

## Cooling and reheating cooked food

- Cooked food needs to be cooled quickly to prevent bacteria growing. Food must be cooled from 60°C to 21°C within 2 hours, then from 21°C to 5°C (or colder) within a further 4 hours.
- To hot-hold previously cooked and cooled food, reheat it quickly and keep it at 60°C or hotter. Never reheat food in hot-holding equipment, such as a bain marie or pie warmer.

