

UK food temperatures at a glance

From the cooker to the freezer - England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

70°C
for 2
minutes

Cooking

GUIDANCE

A core of 70°C for 2 minutes, or 75°C for 30 seconds. In Scotland, CookSafe says 75°C or above.

No UK law sets a cooking temperature.

OUR ADVICE

One reading at 70°C does not show 2 minutes. Hold it there, or take it to 75°C.

**Steaming
hot**
82°C in
Scotland

Reheating

LAW IN SCOTLAND

GUIDANCE ELSEWHERE

Scotland: 82°C or above, by law. If 82°C would spoil the dish, use another safe time and temperature (CookSafe gives 70°C for 2 minutes) and write down why.

England, Wales and Northern Ireland: no number in law. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through.

Reheat once only. This is guidance, not law.

63°C
or above

Hot holding

LAW IN ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Hot food kept for service or on display: 63°C or above.

Scotland: above 63°C (law, with some exemptions, and CookSafe).

**8°C to
63°C**

The danger zone

FSA GUIDANCE - NOT LAW

Bacteria may grow. Cool food through it quickly, and keep any time on display short.

8°C
or below

Chilled food

LAW IN ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Food that needs chilling, kept at 8°C or below. Scotland: the law sets no temperature; CookSafe recommends fridges at 5°C or below.

5°C
or below

Fridge setting

GUIDANCE

Set fridges at 5°C or below, for headroom under 8°C.

OUR ADVICE

The 8°C limit is for the food. If the display reads high, probe the food.

-18°C
or below

Freezer

GUIDANCE

Keep frozen food at -18°C or below.

Cold slows bacteria but does not stop all of them, and does not kill them.

8°C and 63°C are control points, not a promise that nothing grows.

Cooling: the law says as quickly as possible. It sets no time.

LAW = a legal limit in that nation. **GUIDANCE** = advice from the FSA or Food Standards Scotland, not law.

OUR ADVICE = ChefsRecords' own tip, not law and not FSA or Food Standards Scotland guidance.

Checked against legislation.gov.uk, the FSA and Food Standards Scotland on 25 October 2026. Not an FSA, Food Standards Scotland or council document. General information, not legal advice. Your own food safety plan comes first.

chefsrecords.com/guides/danger-zone-food/



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