

Cleaning Schedules

Why is cleaning important?

Listed below are some of the main reasons why effective cleaning is so vital when running a food business:

1. The most basic requirement of food safety law is that food business premises and equipment are kept clean. Failure to do so may result in legal action being taken against the proprietor of the business.
2. Cleaning removes matter on which bacteria capable of causing food poisoning will grow.
3. It removes materials that may provide a food source or harbourage for pests such as insects and rodents.
4. Cleaning will reduce the risk of foreign matter contaminating food and therefore reduce the likelihood of customer complaints.
5. Dirt may cause damage to equipment or mean that it operates less efficiently resulting in increased running and maintenance costs.
6. The **Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995** require proprietors of food businesses to identify potential food hazards, decide which of these hazards need to be controlled to ensure food safety and then put into place effective control and monitoring procedures to prevent the hazards causing harm to consumers. Effective cleaning is an extremely important measure in preventing contamination of food by bacteria, foreign objects and chemicals. This will reduce the risk of causing food poisoning.

So why have a written cleaning schedule?

1. It is an offence to sell food which is unfit, substandard or which may cause harm to the person consuming it. The principal defence available to a person accused of selling such food is one of **due diligence**. This requires them to prove they "**took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to avoid committing the offence**". Whilst there is no legal requirement for a documented cleaning schedule, written records would be considered extremely important when trying to establish a defence in cases where, for example, dirt or foreign objects had found their way into a food product.
2. It clearly demonstrates that measures are in place to control food safety hazards as described in 6 above (these are different from health and safety chemical hazards controlled by separate regulations - COSHH), even though written records are not necessarily a legal requirement.
3. Having identified all the areas and equipment that require cleaning it provides a checklist to help ensure things are not missed.
4. It makes it clear to staff what their cleaning duties are and what cleaning materials are safe/appropriate.

IMPORTANT: It is very important that once the schedule has been set up it is monitored to ensure areas or equipment have not been missed off and that cleaning staff are following it correctly. Therefore in addition to a cleaning schedule template we have also included a Cleaning Monitoring Checklist in this printout.

Which cleaning materials should I use?

Selection of the correct cleaning materials often requires expert technical advice. Mistakes either in the choice of chemical or its use, for example using the wrong strength, temperature or contact time may have serious consequences. It may lead to tainting or chemical contamination of food or premature corrosion of equipment.

Listed below are some common terms used to describe types of cleaning materials:

Detergent - a chemical used to remove grease, dirt and other soiling such as food particles. Detergents may remove large numbers of micro-organisms but will not kill them.

Disinfectant - something which will reduce micro-organism numbers to a level which is safe and will not cause premature spoilage of food. Disinfection may be brought about by "disinfectant chemicals" or simply by applying heat e.g. using very hot water.

Sterilizer - a chemical designed to kill all micro-organisms.

Sanitizer - a chemical which combines the properties of detergents and disinfectants. It will therefore clean and disinfect surfaces.

Scourer - cleaning powders combining abrasive properties often with minute amounts of bleach. Can cause serious damage to enamel or stainless steel surfaces.

How to set up a cleaning schedule

Please follow the easy to use step by step guide below.

Step 1

At the top of the schedule write down the room to which the sheet refers.
(You may need more than 1 sheet per room)



Step 2

In the "**Item**" column list all the items which require cleaning in the room. (We have started you off with walls, doors and paintwork).
Where there are several items which share identical cleaning requirements (such as in this example) place them all in one box. A list of items you may wish to include in this column has been included (see over).



Step 3

For each area or item of equipment identified as needing cleaning write down:

- the person responsible for carrying out that cleaning;
- the method of cleaning you want that person to use;
(Always refer to the product packaging for guidance on it's safe & effective use. Include details such as contact time and solution strength, along with instructions for dismantling equipment etc.)
- the name of cleaning products to be used;
- how frequently you want the item to be cleaned.



Step 4

Repeat the process for every room.



Step 5

Make sure all staff know their cleaning responsibilities and that they are properly trained in the use of the various chemicals and procedures.



Step 6

Fix the schedule in a prominent place where it can easily be referred to. (A plastic wallet will help to protect it.)

Step 7

At regular intervals, for example once a month, complete the Cleaning Monitoring Checklist.



Step 8

Record the date you inspect the cleaning in each room you check.



Step 9

Record details of anything you find wrong and what you do to put it right.



Step 10

Don't just record things that are wrong. If you find everything is satisfactory in the room or premises this should also be recorded.



Step 11

When something does require action wait until you are satisfied that all the faults have been remedied before completing the **Action completed** box and initialling the final column.

Items which you may wish to include in your Cleaning Schedule
(and suggested cleaning frequencies)*

Ovens & grills	(as necessary)
Boilers & steamers	(weekly)
Canopies	(weekly)
Deep fat fryers	(weekly)
Chopping boards & preparation surfaces ...	(after use)
Slicers, mincers, peelers, mixers	(after use)
Bain maries & hot cupboards	(daily)
Drains & gullies	(weekly)
Refrigerators, freezers, cold stores/rooms ...	(weekly)
Tea & coffee urns	(weekly)
Waste bins & lids	(after emptying)
Cutlery, crockery, pots & pans	(daily)
Dishcloths, drying cloths	(daily)

* Note the frequencies shown are just for guidance. It is the responsibility of the food business proprietor to determine the level of cleaning required.

Room:	Main Kitchen
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Item	Person responsible	Product	Method	Frequency
Walls, doors, woodwork	Cleaner	Easy Degreaser	Solution strength: 2 cups per bucket of hot water Contact time: 5 minutes Apply with: Clean cloth or mop Rinse with: Clean Water Dry: Air	Daily
Chopping boards & food prep surfaces	Chef	Easy Sanitiser	1. Remove food debris 2. Wipe surface with clean damp cloth 3. Sprinkle on sanitiser and wipe 4. Rinse cloth and wipe over surface 5. Allow to air dry	After use
Fridges	2nd Chef	Easy Sanitiser	1. Make up sanitiser solution (2 scoops / bucket) 2. Wipe all surfaces with solution 3. Rinse thoroughly with clean water 4. Allow to air dry	Weekly

Cleaning Monitoring Checklist

Date	Room	Action required/taken	Action completed (date)	Supervisor (initials)
5/1/01	Main kitchen	Fridge seal dirty Greasy under cooker Extractor hood filter - greasy Cleaner told 5/1/96 Areas checked 6/1/96 - all o.k.	6/1/01	MP
	Storeroom	Satisfactory	5/1/01	MP
	Preparation room	Meat slicer - handle dirty Tiles behind wash basin dirty	5/1/01	MP