

KITCHEN POLICIES & OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard Operating Procedures for the Major Departments - the Kitchen and the Dining Room - are written statements specifying exactly HOW you will provide consistently good food and service for your guests... at a profit. The content of these "SOP" statements is determined by your menu, facility, layout, equipment and your style of service.

Yes, deciding "what is so" about the detailed aspects of your operation and then clearly writing it all down is an enormous effort requiring expert knowledge, concentration and perseverance. The payoff shows up in more well-controlled operating costs, improved efficiency, better safety and sanitation and, most importantly, more consistent customer service and food quality.

Kitchen Policies & Procedures

Opening the Kitchen

Access: Designate who is issued keys and alarm codes

Entrance: (Specify which is to be used.)

Alarms: Follow shut-off procedure

(Have phone number(s) of Alarm Company posted)

Clock in or fill in a time card.

Basic Utilities: Turn On

Lights

Air system

Equipment requiring time to pre-heat:

Proofers

Griddles

Ovens

Ranges

Grills

Broilers

Fryers

Steamers

Kettles

Steam Tables (Bain Marie)

Hot Food Display Appliances

Unlock Refrigerators and Freezers.

Check Temperatures of units.

Put Keys in proper storage area.

Line and distribute trash bins.

Layout floormats.

Dish & Pot Washing Equipment: Inspect, assemble, add chemicals, turn on.

Check Hot Appliances for temperatures, odd noises, leaks.

Inspect the whole kitchen area for:

Neatness & cleanliness

Equipment malfunctions

Orderliness

Proper storage practices: food, supplies, tools.

Check phone messages.
Inspect Food Storage Areas for:
 Presence and condition of foods
 Proper storage practices: labels, dates, wrapping, location.
Distribute towels and other issued items to stations.

Production Pre-Prep

Check the reservations for special events/parties.
Count current inventories of prepped menu items left from previous shift.
Based on leftovers and/or a Daily Specials Plan, decide on any "Specials".
Refer to sales forecast for determining production requirements.
 Often a "sales forecast" is just knowing your daily sales pattern and factoring in very unusual weather or special events in your area that may increase or decrease traffic that day. Experience plays a large role.
Write a **Prep List**: Items, amounts and sequence.
 (Each cook should write their own prep list - guided by the chef)

Preparation Procedures

Use established Par Stock Levels of Basic Menu Items and Foundations.
 (Often varies by the day of the week and shift.)
"Pull" the items needed to begin cooking... based on the prep lists.
Pull items for the next shift or day, according to expected needs.
Use **written** recipes for each Menu Item.
 Recipes should specify measurements, techniques, holding instructions portion sizes and plating instructions. (Photographs of plated foods are recommended.)

"Firing" Orders:

Treat the servers with courtesy and respect.
Know and Follow the written recipe procedures for cooking and plating.
Follow **one** procedure for controlling the written orders: "dupes" or print-outs.
 Systems vary for holding orders: Wheels, snap-lines, check slides.
Designate one person to manage the order-tickets and verbally firing orders.
After the food is up, keep the tickets - do not discard. Turn in at end of service.
Notify the service staff of imminent "run-outs".
 (Use a "chalkboard" system.)

Ordering and Receiving

Use Lists of Par (Raw Material) Stock Levels by category:

- Produce
- Dairy
- Meats, Poultry, Seafood
- Pastas, Rices, Grains
- Dry Goods, Condiments, Oils, Vinegars
- Kitchen Alcohols - Liqueurs, Wines, etc.
- Herbs, Spices
- Bakery/Pastry items
- Beverages for Service
- Chemicals and Cleaning supplies
- Paper Goods
- Kitchen Office supplies

Refer to the Vendors List for Ordering:

This list will quickly be unnecessary for experienced personnel because they will know which food is ordered from which vendor and when orders are made. It is very helpful for new staff members.

(The Vendor List should contain:

- Vendor Name
- Contact Persons (Sales rep and delivery person)
- Phone, Fax, email numbers of the sales rep
- General Item Categories supplied
- Day of week to order
- Day and approximate time of delivery.)

Ordering Procedure

Ordering & Receiving Form (Often the same piece of paper)

This should show:

- Date item is put on list
- Item being Ordered (Be specific)
- Vendor to Order From
- Person Ordering
- Date Actually Ordered
- Check-box of receipt (upon Delivery)
- Person Receiving
- Special Comments
(Ordered from other vendor, substitute item delivered, out of stock, etc.)

Receiving Procedure

Use the Order Form to verify that items ordered came in

Use Specified Rotation Rules

(Typically FIFO : First In - First Out)

Policy should state exactly where new items are to be stored on shelves in relation to identical items already on hand. (New items go to the left and/or in the back of and/or under old items, for instance.)

Date dry goods (Indelible marker on item, usually)

Requisition or Usage Procedures

The size and complexity of the kitchen determine how formal this procedure may be. Formal systems use a requisition form filled out by production personnel, reviewed by a chef, given to a special person (steward) who issues the items, records the event, adjust the inventory level and may order more goods.

Most kitchens just have the cooks go get their items themselves and do nothing more. Others allow the cooks to get their own foods but require a notation on a form listing what was taken, when and by whom.

At the very least, when a minimum par level is reached, cooks should requisition (order) replacements to avoid run-outs.

The chef should be constantly monitoring inventory levels, comparing stocks on hand to projected needs. (Because of special events, par levels are not always adequate for assuring that enough food will be on hand.)

Kitchen Orderliness

Storage Locations: DICTATE WHERE EVERYTHING GOES! (Be firm on this.)

Specify where all food types are stored.

(Using a label maker that prints adhesive, smooth, washable labels is recommended for marking shelves, cabinets and refrigerators/freezers.)

In addition, specify the location of:

- Pots, Pans, Trays
- Appliances & Appliance Accessories

Utensils, Small Wares
China, Flatware, Glasses
Bus Tubs
... and specify that all of the above are to be stored DRY!
Chemicals
Cleaning Supplies
Linen - Clean and Soiled
Paper goods

SAFETY & SANITATION:

The following information presents key points that should be included in your policies and procedures. It is emphatically recommended that all of your key personnel take the “SERVE-SAFE” course sponsored by the National Restaurant Association. This course is a comprehensive training in preventing Food-Borne Illness and Accidental Injury.

Ware-washing:

The persons washing up are as important as any other key employee.
These people keep your operation running. They not only clean, **they organize!**
They are responsible for putting EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE.
Their performance, above all others, prevents food poisoning and creates order.

The “dishwasher” may also do basic food prep and help receive and put away deliveries. They often know as much or more about how to take apart and reassemble equipment plus what to do to keep things running properly. Take the time to hire and train these people well.

Setting up the Washing Area:

Inspect the dishwasher for cleanliness. Clean if necessary.
Check the chemical levels. Fill as required.
Assemble the machine, if left dis-assembled.
Fill and run a few cycles to assure proper chemical levels, if necessary.
Straighten out racks and shelves of pots, pans, trays, bowls, boards. Nest if dry.
Set up the pot-washing sinks: Wash - Rinse - Sanitize. Clear drain board.
Assemble tools: scrapers, squeegees.
Check and refill hand-washing station stocks: bacteriostatic soap, paper towels.
Line and distribute trash receptacles.

Running the station:

Check the sanitizer strength (often chlorine) with test strips every 2 hours.
Empty, clean and refill the machine as needed or at least every other hour.
Keep the floor dry near the dish area.
Let all items air dry before putting away.
Avoid excessive dumping of fibrous foods into the disposal.
Avoid putting large amounts of starchy foods into the drains: rice, cereals.
(They swell in your pipes and clog them.)
Avoid putting fats into the drains: shortenings, icings, oils, butters.
(They congeal in your pipes and clog them.)
Keep paper out of the disposal.
Fold down partially full trash can liners and stack new ones on top.
(This keeps the bags light enough to lift out without splitting.)
Notify the chef if the station is caught up and other duties can be assigned.

Cleanliness

Personnel:

Bathe Daily. Use deodorant. Wear no cologne or after-shave.
Restrain hair: Wear a hat (or net) and tuck hair into it.

Wear a clean full uniform (jacket, long pants, apron, hat)
Name tags and scarf, if part of the uniform
Wear closed-toed, non-skid, non-absorbent shoes

Hands:

Wash hands with sanitizing cleaners for at least 20 seconds
Dry with a disposable towel.

Wash whenever finished cutting raw meats ... and after:
Going to the toilet
A break
Using the phone
and ... whenever they become soiled.

Floors:

Wipe all spills immediately and thoroughly - Do not use that towel again for prep.
Sweep floors frequently and always before and after each "rush" period.

Work / Prep Tables:

Use Cutting Boards
Sanitize any board and knives used for cutting raw meats
Keep the items on work tables organized - Do not crowd the tabletop.
Keep all knives visible: Do not cover knives with food, towels, etc.
Wipe up spills right away.
Work with CLEAN towels.

Small Appliances:

Pay close attention whenever using equipment with moving parts.
Use appliances according to their instructional manuals.
Do not overload blenders, food processors, mixers, fryers.
Do not leave mixing/chopping appliances running un-attended.
Unplug electrical appliances before cleaning, assembling or disassembling.
Wipe clean after each use.
Store attachments (lids, blades, hooks, paddles, whips, etc.) in their right place.

Drawers & Shelves:

Store knives so they are visible and will not fall or be covered - NOT in drawers.
Before opening a new food container, be sure the old one is used up - not "lost".
Avoid stacking items to the point they become unstable.

Large Heating Appliances: Ovens, ranges, broilers, etc.

Wipe up all spills immediately.
Monitor temperatures on a set schedule: once per shift. Enter readings in a log.
Follow a scheduled preventative cleaning and maintenance schedule.

Cooling Appliances:

Wipe up all spills immediately.
Keep door handles, door seals, floors and shelves clean.
Vacuum and de-grease cooling coils / fan area weekly.
Do not block air-exchange passages with food.
Monitor temperatures once each shift. Record temperatures in a log.
Wrap, label and date all items.
Store items in their designated spots.
Empty and clean refrigerators at least weekly.

Storage Guidelines:

Thaw foods in the refrigerators as much as possible.
Raw meats should be stored at the bottom of the fridges, covered.
Dairy products and raw meats should be held in their own very cold refrigerators, nearly freezing. Or keep them in the coldest (usually the bottom) part of the fridge. Fish and Poultry should be in plastic bags, covered in ice, packed in perforated pans that drip into a deeper catch-pan.
Produce should be kept cold but out of danger of freezing.
(Store ordinary onions and potatoes in a cool, dry, dark pantry.)

General Safety Rules & Procedures:

Keep food temperatures below 40 (5C) and above 140 (60C).

Understand and apply the principles of safe, sanitary food handling.

(Key personnel should take the SERVE-SAFE course!)

Do not work when you have a cold.

Keep your hands CLEAN at all times.

In emergencies, quick-thaw frozen food under cool (70°F) running water, with the food held in a vessel in the sink, not just in the sink.

NO RUNNING.

Carry knives point down at your side.

Do not point or gesture with knives.

Let falling knives fall.

Keep all knives sharp.

Never leave a knife in a sink or in a drawer.

Wipe up all spills immediately and thoroughly.

Do not store food on the floor.

Keep aisles open.

Store cleaning supplies and chemicals in a separate location - away from food.

To lift heavy items:

Squat down, bending your knees.

Grasp the item securely. Gain balance.

Lift with your legs, keeping your back as straight as possible.

Stand up straight. Look where you are going. Be sure the way is clear.

Do not block your sight when you walk with the item.

Squat again if necessary when setting the load down.

Clean pocket thermometers with alcohol swabs between uses.

Wear gloves if you have cuts on your hands.

Taste foods with utensils - no fingers or "double-dipping".

(All staff members should know basic first aid for cuts and burns.

Your First Aid Kit should be checked daily to be sure its contents are adequate.)

Key staff members should be able to recognize when a person is in shock.

All staff members should know how to dial emergency phone numbers.)

Fire Safety:

(All staff members should know:

How to use the portable fire extinguishers.

Where they are.

The limitations of the portable fire extinguishers.

The presence of the built-in fire suppression system - and what activates it.

How to safely evacuate the building.

All cooks should know:

How to put out very small flame-ups with salt or baking soda.

That water on a grease fire will just make it worse.

To NOT "clean" grills and broilers by setting the heat to MAX to burn food off.

Closing the Kitchen

Specific tasks for closing differ with each kitchen. As time permits, each station cook should begin closing their respective stations during the last hour of service. Soiled bowls, tools, boards, pans, etc. that are least likely to be needed again should be sent to the potwasher. This

reduces an overload in the washing station. As much as is practical, keep bringing dirty items to the potwasher as the breakdown and cleaning progresses rather than dumping all of the soiled cookware on the potwasher at the last minute.

As soon as the last order is sent out, all heating equipment should be shut off and wiped down when cool enough.

Food should be dealt with before general cleaning tasks commence. All food should be re-packed as necessary. Sanitation (and reducing the need for refrigerated storage space) dictate the details of this re-packing activity. Hot foods should be stored in shallow, wide containers. This speeds up the cooling process. All food should be labeled, dated and sealed. Leftovers should be dated in a way that states when they were first prepped... not just when they were last put away.

If it hasn't already happened, any foods needed for the next shift should be pulled from freezers and/or processed according to the needs of the menu for the next shift or day(s).

Other tasks commonly attended to **by cooks** in most closing procedures include:

- Wash and sanitize the hand tools: knives, special cutters
- Unplug, wash and sanitize small appliances.
- Wash and sanitize the station fixtures: tables, shelving, cabinets, heat lamps.
- Empty, wash and sanitize under-counter line refrigerators. Re-assemble.
- Lock up special tools and cooking alcohols.
- Write any notes for the next shift.
- Fill out any production reports, inventory par sheets.
- Write additional items on Ordering Sheets.
- Turn in the dining room order forms: dupes or print-outs
- Make final checks of the coolers and freezers. Write temps on log sheets.
- Lock all cabinets and coolers. Put the keys in their storage place (no pockets!).
- Re-Check that all ovens, ranges, grills, etc. are shut off.
- Put soiled towels and uniforms in the proper hampers.
- Clock out.

The **dish / pot washer (or night porter)** should:

- Complete putting away all items after washing and allowing to air-dry.
- Breakdown, clean and re-assemble dish machine. Leave open to air-dry.
- Wash down walls and shelving all around and under washing area.
- Check and refill chemicals as necessary.
- Wash and dry slides.
- Store cleaning tools: scrapers, squeegees.
- Collect all trash receptacles. Empty, wash, leave to air dry. Re-line when dry.
- Straighten chemical and cleaning supplies cabinets.
- Gather the floor mats, clean and hang to dry.
- Sweep and wash floors.
- Check laundry bins for correct contents: Sort as needed. Store in pick-up area.
 - Reline laundry hamper frames with new laundry bags.
- Clock out.

Closing Manager:

This person should make a final inspection of the kitchen.

- Double-check that no perishable foods have been left out.
- All refrigeration equipment should be checked to be sure that it is on and working and locked.
- Any cabinets that should be locked need to be re-checked and the presence of the kitchen keys needs to be verified.
- All heating equipment should be re-checked to be certain all units are off.

Monitor the general cleanliness and orderliness.
Determine that everyone else has left.
Secure the office and the sales receipts.
Shut off the fans and the lights.
Lock interior doors as needed.
Activate the alarm system.
Exit, checking that the exterior door is secure.