Step by Step Preparation for a Safe and Savory Burger

1. Wash your hands. Lightly shape ground beef into four ¾-inch thick patties.
   • Make sure to thoroughly clean any surfaces or utensils that came into contact with the meat, and wash your hands after you’ve formed the patties.

2. Place patties on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill, uncovered, 13 to 15 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, covered, 13 to 14 minutes), turning occasionally, until instant-read thermometer inserted horizontally into center registers 160°F. Season with salt and pepper as desired.
   • The color of cooked meat or juices is not a reliable indicator of doneness, so use an instant-read thermometer to confirm your burgers reach an internal temperature of 160°F.
   • Grilling times can vary depending on a number of factors, including the cooking temperature of your grill and the thickness of the patty. Always confirm doneness with an instant-read thermometer.
   • Insert instant-read thermometer directly from the side into the center of the burger. Allow about 15 seconds for an instant-read thermometer to reach an accurate reading.
   • Place cooked burgers on a clean plate. Don’t place them on the same plate that held raw meat.

3. About 2 minutes before burgers are done, place buns, cut sides down, on grid. Grill until lightly toasted. Serve burgers in buns. Top as desired.

Everyone wants to make sure the meals they serve are nutritious and delicious, but it’s also necessary to think about how to safely prepare and store food. Chances are you already know some food safety basics, but it is important to brush up on that knowledge and practice proper food safety every time you’re in the kitchen.

America’s beef producers believe that producing safe food is their number one priority, but there are also steps you can take at home to contribute to food safety. This brochure contains a checklist of specific things you can do – from grocery shopping all the way to storing leftovers – to cook with confidence at home.

Safety Checklist

Shopping
- Keep your perishables out of the danger zone by making the grocery store your last stop when running errands, and the meat and dairy cases your last stop in the store.
- Be sure refrigerated products are very cold to the touch and frozen foods are still solid.
- Do not purchase dated packages if the “sell by” date has expired.

Storage
- Use a refrigerator and freezer thermometer to ensure that your refrigerator is at or below 40°F, and your freezer is at or below 0°F.
- Space items in your refrigerator and freezer so air can freely circulate.
- Use refrigerated beef steaks, roasts and deli meats within three to five days of purchase. All fresh poultry, ground meat and fish should be used within one to two days of purchase.
- Store raw meat, poultry and fish in a container or on a dish that will prevent juices from dripping onto other foods.
- Follow the “use by” information on package labels. If you cannot remember when a food item was placed in the refrigerator, throw it out.
- If fresh meat will not be used within the allowable time, ensure the meat is tightly wrapped and place it in your freezer on the bottom shelf.
- Label and date your frozen foods, and follow the “first in, first out” rule.

Preparation
- Wash your hands with hot, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before preparing food, as well as before and after handling raw meat.
- Keep raw meat, poultry and fish and their juices from coming into contact with other foods during preparation. Wash all utensils and surfaces with hot, soapy water after contact with raw meat.
- Never chop fresh vegetables or salad ingredients on a cutting board that was used for raw meat without properly cleaning it first. If possible, designate a separate cutting board for preparation of raw meat, poultry and fish.
- Thaw foods only in the refrigerator or microwave oven; never leave food out at room temperature. Foods thawed in the microwave must be cooked immediately, not refrigerated.
- Marinate in the refrigerator, not on the kitchen counter. Any leftover marinade that was in contact with the raw meat should be discarded or brought to a rolling boil for 1 minute before using on cooked meat.
- Clean produce well under cold, running water, and scrub thoroughly with a clean brush when possible.

Cooking
- Use an ovenproof or instant-read meat thermometer to prevent overcooking or undercooking.
- Insert the thermometer into the thickest portion of the meat, not touching bone, fat or the bottom of the pan.
- Avoid Cross-Contamination
- Take a moment and think about all of the surfaces, utensils, people and food that you touch when preparing a meal. Bacteria can inadvertently spread throughout your kitchen on unwashed hands, cutting boards, kitchen utensils, countertops and sponges. This is known as cross-contamination, and that’s why it’s important to thoroughly clean anything that has been in contact with raw meat, eggs or poultry with hot, soapy water.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Min. Internal Temp. (°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground meats</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole cuts (roasts and steaks, etc.)</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Pork (all cuts, including ground)</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry (chicken, turkey, duck)</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>Yolk and white are firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg dishes</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fin Fish</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shellfish</td>
<td>Until firm, opaque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leftovers, casseroles</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>