

# Grilling Safety Tips

Cooperative Extension • Delaware State University

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## More on cooking temperatures:

- Checking the color of the meat is not enough
- Hamburgers should be cooked to 160°F
- Poultry to 165°F
- Pork to 145 °F
- Beef (large cuts) to 145 °F for medium rare, 160°F for medium
- Insert a food thermometer horizontally into the center of the burger, steak or poultry for 10-15 seconds to register the internal temperature

## Keep Food Safe

- Wash hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food.
- Keep food and drinks in separate coolers.
- Never leave perishable food out of the refrigerator for more than two hours. When the air temperature is above 90°, do not leave food out for more than one hour.
- Use clean utensils and dishes to serve food. Each dish should have its own serving utensils to avoid cross-contamination.
- Preheat cooking grills for 20-30 minutes before using.
- Allow meat to completely thaw in a refrigerator before placing on a grill.
- Marinate meat in a tightly sealed plastic container or sealable plastic bag, and keep refrigerated until ready to use. Do not reuse marinade.
- You can partially cook meat or poultry ahead of time and finish it up on the grill ONLY if the meat goes immediately from the microwave or range to the grill.
- Use a meat thermometer to ensure meats have reached a safe, internal temperature: hamburger-160°; chicken-165°; pork-150°; steak-145°; hot dogs-140°.
- Serve grilled foods on a clean dish, not a dish used for raw meat.
- Leftovers should be refrigerated or placed in a cooler within one hour after use.



### Grilling Safety tips

- NEVER use a grill indoors (home, tent, vehicle, etc.). The toxic gases produced by charcoal or gas grilling are extremely dangerous and can kill without warning.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Perform an annual safety inspection prior to the first seasonal use of a grill.
- Never allow children to use the grill without supervision. Create a safety zone of at least 3 feet around the grill and place the grill a safe distance from play areas.
- Place the grill at least 10 feet from combustible materials such as siding, decks, tree branches, etc.
- Avoid Burns: Use proper utensils with long handles that allow the chef plenty of clearance from the heat and flames.
- Do not wear loose clothing while cooking.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Periodically remove grease buildup from the grill surfaces and the trays below the grill so the grease is not ignited by the hot grill.
- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby and accessible.

### Specific Charcoal Grilling tips

- Charcoal produces carbon monoxide (CO) when burned. CO is a colorless, odorless gas that can accumulate to toxic levels in closed environments.
- Never use a grill indoors!
- Make sure charcoal has been completely extinguished before disposing of the ashes and storing the grill – ashes may reignite 48 to 72 hours after use.
- If using a fluid to start the charcoal grill, use only starter fluid intended for this purpose. It is extremely dangerous to use any other combustible liquid to start the coals.
- Never apply charcoal lighter (starter) fluid after the charcoal has been lit.
- Store starter fluid away from heat sources and out of reach from children.



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