

# CLEANING AND SANITISING IN FOOD BUSINESSES

Cleaning and sanitising help prevent the growth and spread of organisms that cause foodborne illness, and help reduce the activity of pests in a food premises.

All food businesses are required to comply with Standard 3.2.2, Clause 19, of the Food Standards Code, which states that a food premises, including the fixtures, fittings and equipment, is to be maintained to a standard of **cleanliness** where there is no accumulation of:

- garbage and recycled matter
- food waste
- dirt
- grease
- other visible matter.

*Note: 'Cleanliness' means that surfaces are clean to touch and free of visible matter, and without a bad odour.*

## Cleaning and sanitising of special equipment

In the food industry, cleaning and sanitising are two separate and important issues.

Under Standard 3.2.2, Clause 20, of the Food Standards Code, a food business must ensure that all **eating and drinking utensils and food contact surfaces of equipment** are both clean and sanitised.

## What is cleaning?

Cleaning generally involves the following steps:

1. Scraping, wiping or sweeping away food scraps and rinsing with water
2. Washing using hot water and detergent to remove grease and dirt (protective gloves may be required)
3. Rinsing off any loose dirt or detergent residue.

## What is sanitising?

Sanitising is the process of applying heat and/or chemicals (or other approved processes) to a clean surface to reduce the number of bacteria and other organisms to a safe level. Sanitising can be performed using a dishwasher or chemicals.

## How to sanitise effectively

Make sure the item to be sanitised is clean. Sanitising is not effective on unclean surfaces.

### Dishwasher

To sanitise with a dishwasher:

1. Use the correct type of detergent or sanitiser

2. Use the hottest rinse cycle available (economy cycle on a domestic dishwasher is not adequate)
3. Look over equipment and utensils when removing them from the dishwasher to check they are clean
4. Clean the dishwasher so there is no build-up of food residues
5. Regularly maintain and service the dishwasher according to the manufacturer's instructions.

## Chemicals

Chemical sanitisers are generally chlorine-based or ammonium-based compounds. Only use chemical sanitisers that are designed for using in food premises.

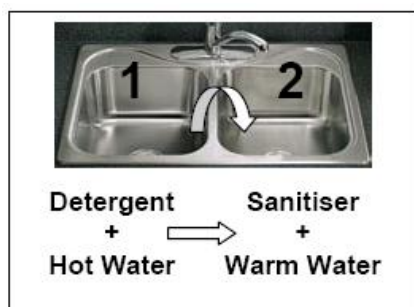
Products suitable for using in food businesses are available from commercial chemical suppliers and retailers. It is recommended that you seek advice from a reputable supplier.

Dilution rates, contact times and safety instructions vary from product to product. When using and storing chemicals (including bleach), always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Items that can fit in the sink can be washed and cleaned in the left-hand bowl and then immersed in a chemical sanitiser solution in the right-hand bowl.



If an item has been cleaned and is too large to be immersed in the right-hand bowl for sanitisation, the sanitiser solution can be applied using a spray bottle.



How a double bowl sink can be used to clean and sanitise eating and drinking utensils and food contact surfaces of equipment.

### Using vinegar and methylated spirits as sanitisers

Vinegar and methylated spirits should not be used as sanitisers. Vinegar is a weak acid and not effective and methylated spirits can leave chemical residue on surfaces.

### Using bleach as a sanitiser

Unscented bleach is a chlorine-based chemical that can be used to sanitise food contact surfaces when diluted correctly. A bleach concentration of 50 ppm is only effective when used warm (38°C).

Table 1 shows how to dilute bleach. Contact time with the sanitiser should be at least 7 seconds.

### More information

- Phone your local council Environmental Health Officer for information about inspection findings or compliance action. They can clarify what work needs to be done and when.
- Download the [Food Standards Code – Standard 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements](#)
- Visit the Food Authority's website at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)
- Phone the Food Authority's helpline on 1300 552 406.

Table 1: Using bleach as a sanitiser

How much water?	How much bleach?					
	Household (4% chlorine)		Strong domestic (6% chlorine)		Commercial (10% chlorine)	
Concentration required (ppm)	50 ppm	100 ppm	50 ppm	100 ppm	50 ppm	100 ppm
Water temp	Warm	Cold	Warm	Cold	Warm	Cold
1 litre	1.25 ml	2.5 ml	0.85 ml	1.7 ml	0.5 ml	1 ml
10 litres	12.5 ml	25 ml	8.5 ml	17 ml	5 ml	10 ml
50 litres	62.5 ml	125 ml	42.5 ml	85 ml	25 ml	50 ml

About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).