

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Food Preparation and Assembly Guidelines

Objective: Ensure safe, consistent, and high-quality food production while maintaining compliance with health regulations and enhancing customer satisfaction.

1. Hygiene Practices

- Wash hands with soap and warm water before and after food handling, after using the restroom, and after touching raw foods.
- Wear clean uniforms, gloves, and hair restraints (caps/nets) at all times.
- Keep fingernails trimmed and avoid wearing jewelry.
- Sanitize all food contact surfaces before and after food preparation.

2. Ingredient Handling

- Check and record the temperature of all perishable deliveries immediately upon receipt.
- Store dry, refrigerated, and frozen goods at appropriate temperatures as per guidelines:

Type	Storage Temperature
Dry goods	Cool, dry place (10°–21°C / 50°–70°F)
Refrigerated items	≤ 5°C / 41°F
Frozen items	≤ -18°C / 0°F

- Label and date all ingredients upon storage (FIFO: First In, First Out).

3. Cross-Contamination Prevention

- Use color-coded cutting boards and utensils for raw meats, cooked foods, vegetables, and allergens.
- Clean and sanitize equipment between tasks and after handling allergens.
- Store raw foods below cooked/ready-to-eat foods in refrigerators.
- Avoid using the same gloves or utensils for different food categories without cleaning.

4. Cooking and Cooling Procedures

- Adhere to specified cooking temperatures. For example:
 - Poultry: 74°C / 165°F
 - Ground meats: 71°C / 160°F
 - Seafood: 63°C / 145°F
- Use calibrated food thermometers to verify internal food temperatures.
- Cool cooked foods from 60°C (140°F) to 21°C (70°F) within 2 hours, and then to 5°C (41°F) within the next 4 hours.
- Store cooled foods in shallow containers for efficient cooling.

5. Portion Control

- Use portion scales, ladles, or scoops to ensure consistent serving sizes.
- Follow standard recipes to maintain product consistency and reduce waste.
- Double-check weights and measures during assembly.

6. Presentation Standards

- Arrange each dish neatly according to reference photos or plating guides.
- Check for cleanliness of plate edges and serving ware before service.
- Garnish dishes appropriately and as detailed in the standardized recipe.
- Ensure food is served at proper temperature and promptly after assembly.

7. Documentation and Compliance

- Complete food safety checklists daily.
- Record corrective actions when deviations occur.
- Report any incidents of contamination or unsafe practices immediately to supervisors.
- Participate in regular food safety trainings and reviews.

Adherence to this SOP ensures the highest standards in food preparation and customer satisfaction. Regular updates may apply according to new health regulations or internal process improvements.