

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY STUDIES

**Introduction
to
Hospitality**



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PASSPORT

Manual on Module II

Introduction to Hospitality

By

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TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY STUDIES

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Introduction

A set of curriculum support package of tourism and hospitality learning and teaching materials is being developed by the Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section of Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau for the implementation of the senior secondary Tourism and Hospitality Studies curriculum in schools. The curriculum support package is comprised of eight manuals, and they are developed to broaden students' knowledge of the eight different units of the Tourism and Hospitality Studies curriculum.

The content of this manual – Introduction to Hospitality, should enhance students' understanding of the dynamic nature of the tourism and hospitality industry. In addition, the manual includes activities to deepen students' understanding and help them to apply theories and concepts. Furthermore, students should be able to develop enquiry, problem-solving and decision-making skills through these activities.

All comments and suggestions related to this curriculum support package may be sent to:

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1 Hospitality Industry

1.1 Introduction to Hospitality Industry

1.1.1 The Nature of the Hospitality Industry

What is the meaning of HOSPITALITY? There have been different definitions of Hospitality. Broadly speaking, Hospitality is the act of kindness in welcoming and looking after the basic needs of guests or strangers, mainly in relation to food, drink and accommodation. A contemporary explanation of Hospitality refers to the relationship process between a guest and a host. When we talk about the “Hospitality Industry”, we are referring to the companies or organisations which provide food and/or drink and/or accommodation to people who are away from home. However, this definition of the “Hospitality Industry” only satisfies most situations. Can you think of any circumstances where the phrase “away from home” would not be accurate?



Resort hotel

ACTIVITY 1

In groups, consider the hospitality industry in Hong Kong. Discuss the different sectors in the hospitality industry. (Hint: A sector of hospitality industry can be profit-making or non-profit-making.) You may also give the names of some companies in the hospitality industry. One example has been given in the table below. Work on the table to see which group in your class comes up with the most appropriate examples.

Hospitality industry in Hong Kong			
Sector	Products/services provided	Example	Name of company/organisation
Food and Beverage	Food and drink	Fast food	McDonald's

ACTIVITY 2

Look at the table that your group has just completed and compare the answers with other groups. Have you been to any of the above companies or organisations? What services did you receive from them? Were you satisfied with the way you were treated by the company or its staff? Did they understand what services you wanted? Did they provide what you wanted quickly and accurately? Was the staff member friendly or rude? Based on the discussion above, suggest five qualities or traits that a successful staff member in the hospitality industry should possess. Do you or your group members possess any of these qualities or traits?

1.1.2 The Tangible and Intangible Nature of the Hospitality Industry

In Activity 1, we learned about different types of products and services provided by the hospitality industry. The physical products of hospitality, e.g. food and drink in a restaurant or the actual hotel room, are products that are sold at a price to the guests or customers (e.g. the price a guest paid for renting a hotel room, or the price a customer paid for buying a meal in a restaurant). These are often regarded as the TANGIBLE aspects of hospitality. However, our experience of the hospitality industry does not only rely on the tangibles. Think about your experience of being a customer in a restaurant or a guest in a hotel. What else, apart from the food in restaurants and the facilities in hotel rooms, do you think can make your hospitality experience more enjoyable and satisfied?

A successful hospitality business does not only count on its products and services, but also *how* they are delivered. The qualities of staff and the way they deliver the service are often more important than the tangible products in making a hospitality experience satisfactory or unsatisfactory. We call these the INTANGIBLE aspects of hospitality. Can you think of any INTANGIBLE aspects of the hospitality industry?

1.1.3 Relationship between the Hospitality Industry and Tourism

As we have seen, the hospitality industry includes hotels and restaurants, as well as many other types of organisations or institutions that offer food, drink, shelter and other related services. These products and services are offered not only to people away from home, but also to local guests. A manager in the hospitality industry, therefore, must keep in mind the following three objectives:

1. Making the guests feel welcome personally
2. Making things work for the guests
3. Making sure that the operation will continue to provide service and meet its budget

Apart from local guests, can you think of any other guests who may need services and products provided by the hospitality industry?

ACTIVITY 3

Now work in pairs and follow the instructions below:

Tourist A – You are an 18-year-old student from Beijing. You visit Hong Kong for the first time with your cousin who is also from Beijing this summer. As you are a student, you travel on a budget and are planning to come to Hong Kong round trip by train. You plan to stay in Hong Kong for 5 days/4 nights.

Tourist B – You are a businessman from Sweden. Your company is a car manufacturer. You come to Hong Kong for an international automobile exhibition. You will fly to Hong Kong and stay for two nights before you fly to Singapore for another business meeting. You will stay in Singapore for two nights before going home.

In two minutes, write down as many as possible of the products and services you would require from the different sectors of the tourism industry for your trip. Compare your answers with those of your partner. Do you have different or similar answers? How many of the points you jotted down are similar to those of your partner?

Fill in the following table:

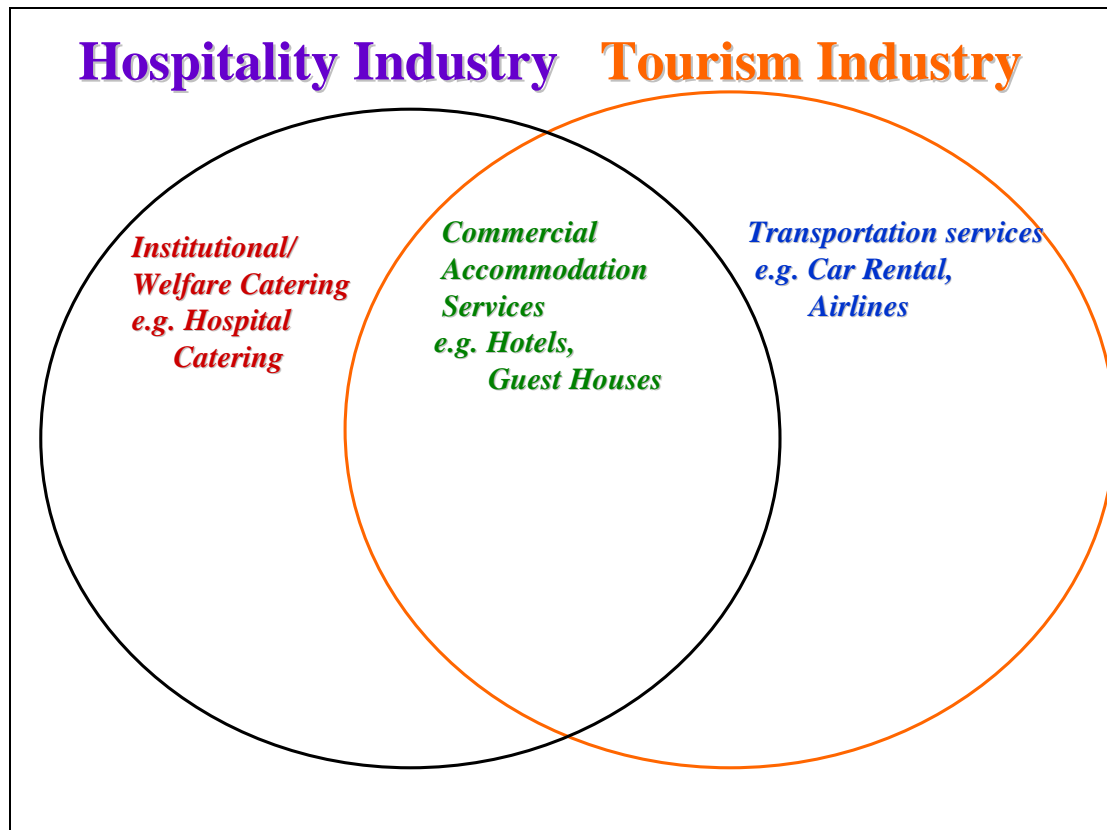
A young student (Tourist A)	A business traveller (Tourist B)

In Activity 3 we learned there are different kinds of tourists. Regardless of what type of tourist they are, they all need shelter and food and drink – the basic hospitality services – at ALL points of the tourism cycle, not just at the destination. This is why hospitality can be referred to as one of the principal dimensions in tourism, along with transportation, specialist shops and leisure activities.

Unlike tourism, hospitality, however, serves both tourist and non-tourist needs. To enhance your understanding of the relationship between the hospitality and tourism industry, complete Activity 4.

ACTIVITY 4

The following diagram shows the relationship between the hospitality and tourism industry. Can you think of more services with examples to add to the diagram?



In Activity 4 we learned the hospitality industry is a part of a wider group of economic activities called tourism. In addition, not all hospitality businesses are profit-making business.

In this Unit, we have learned that there are two main business sectors in the hospitality industry:

- Accommodation – To provide accommodation (and usually food and drink) to people who for whatever reason are away from home
- Food and beverage – To provide food and beverage to local, commuting, transient customers and tourists

These two sectors will be covered in more detail in Units 2 and 3 respectively.

2 Accommodation Sector

2.1 Introduction to the Accommodation Sector

2.1.1 Classification of Accommodation Establishment



Guestroom

There is no generic rule for classifying accommodation establishments globally. One method is to divide accommodation into two main groups:

- Non-commercial
- Commercial

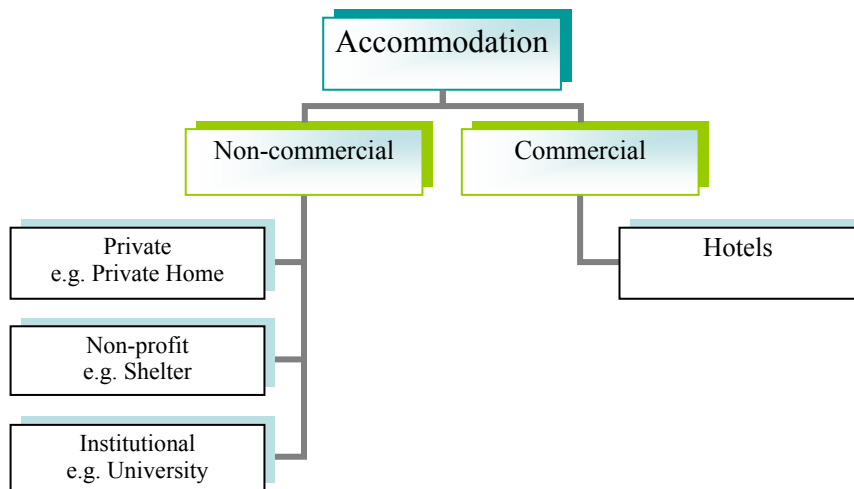


Figure 1: Accommodation structure

The Hotel Proprietors Ordinance Chapter 158 provides a clear definition of a hotel: Hotel means an establishment held out by the proprietor as offering sleeping accommodation to any person presenting himself who appears able and willing to pay a reasonable sum for the services and facilities provided and who is in a fit state to be received.

As *Hotel* is the predominant type of commercial accommodation in Hong Kong, we, therefore, will discuss in depth about how hotels can be classified.

Hotels can be classified by:

- Location:
e.g. city centre hotels, suburban hotels, airport hotels and highway hotels/motels
- Function:
e.g. commercial hotels and convention hotels
- Market segment:
e.g. resorts, health spas, timeshares/vacation ownership and casino hotels
- Distinctiveness of property:
e.g. all-suite hotels, boutique hotels, extended-stay hotels, historic conversions and bed and breakfast inns
- Price and staff/room ratio
- Size:
e.g. under 150 rooms, 151-300 rooms, 301-600 rooms, more than 600 rooms
- Rating (grading) :
e.g. one-star to five-star or one-diamond to five-diamond

In 2008, the Mobil Travel Guide used its own rating system to give awards to some hotels in Hong Kong, Macau and Beijing. Below is an excerpt from the following web link:

<http://stars.mobilinternationalratings.com/stars>

“Mobil Travel Guide, now in its 51st year as one of the oldest and most respected inspection and ratings system in the world, is pleased to announce its 2009 Four- and Five-Star Winners. Representing a landmark in the company's history, 2009 is the first year that international cities have been rated and received Star Awards, and the winners from Beijing, Hong Kong, and Macau are included. In November, Hong Kong and Macau were awarded with the most Mobil Five-Star rated hotels and spas for a given city in the history of the company.”

ACTIVITY 5

With the aid of the above web link, list the five-star hotels and spas in Hong Kong as awarded by the Mobil Travel Guide in November 2008.

ACTIVITY 6

The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) has developed its own hotel classification system. Look up the information from the PartnerNet website (<http://partnernet.hktb.com/pnweb/jsp/comm/index.jsp>) and answer the following questions:

- How does HKTb define the hotels in Hong Kong?
- Does HKTb make public the listing of hotels by category?

The following chart shows various types of accommodation used by travellers and their respective characteristics:

Name(s)	Characteristics
City centre hotels	These hotels are located within the heart of a city. The type may vary greatly from business, suites, residential, economy, mid-scale to luxury. Local example: _____
Suburban hotels	Suburban hotels tend to be smaller properties which usually provide full-service, and locate in suburban area. Local example: _____
Airport hotels	These hotels are designed especially to accommodate air travellers. They offer a mix of facilities and amenities. The majority offer guests transportation to and from the airport. Local example: _____
Highway hotels/Motels	They are designed for overnight stays for car travellers, often with very basic facilities. The rooms usually have direct access to an open parking lot. They are often smaller than most hotels. They are located on the outskirts of towns and cities. Local example: _____
Convention hotels	These hotels can have 2000 rooms or more. In addition to accommodation, they provide extensive meeting and function space for holding conventions. There are banquet areas within and around the hotel complex. Most of them provide an in-house laundry, a business centre, airport shuttle service, and 24-hour room service. They are often in close proximity to convention centres and other convention hotels. Local example: _____

Commercial hotels	They are located in downtown areas. They tend to be smaller than convention hotels. Meeting and function space are smaller, and there are fewer banquet areas. Local example: _____
Resort hotels	These hotels are located in picturesque, sometimes remote settings. Guests travel long distance to resorts. Usually, they tend to stay longer. Resorts typically provide a comprehensive array of recreational amenities, as well as a variety of food & beverage outlets ranging from informal to fine-dining restaurants. Local example: _____
Spa hotels	They are located in resort-type settings or as part of city spa hotels. They provide accommodations, spa treatments, programs and cuisine. Programs offered vary widely. They may include relaxation/stress management, fitness, weight management, grief/life change and pilates/yoga. Spas have professional staff that often include dietitians, therapists, masseurs, exercise physiologists, and in some cases, physicians. Local example: _____
Timeshares/ Vacation ownership	This is a type of shared ownership where a buyer purchases the right to use the property for a portion of each year. In many cases, when the timeshare is purchased, the buyer receives a deed. This indicates that the buyer can use the property each year at the time specified for the number of years based on the deed and the purchase can be handed down to the buyer's heirs. Local example: _____
Casino hotels	They have gambling operations which are the major revenue centres. They also provide live entertainment. A wide variety of luxury amenities, hotel services including fine and casual dining and shopping centres are typically available on site. Local example: _____
All-suite hotels	The guest rooms in these hotels are larger than normal hotel rooms, with separate areas for working, sleeping and relaxing. A living area or parlour is typically separated from the bedroom, and some properties offer a kitchen set-up in the rooms. The amenities and services can vary widely. They can be found in various locations such as urban, suburban, or residential. Local example: _____

Boutique hotels	<p>Boutique hotels differentiate themselves from traditional hotels and motels by providing personalized accommodation and services/facilities. They are sometimes known as "design hotels" or "lifestyle hotels". The price varies greatly. They are very different in their "look and feel" from traditional lodging properties. They are more intimate, and, perhaps, more luxurious, and stand out as an individual. The amenities vary greatly depending on what the hotel's environment and theme chosen. For example, a boutique hotel may not offer Wi-Fi Internet, air conditioning, or cable/pay TV if it is focus on comfort and solitude.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>
Extended-stay hotels/ Serviced Apartments	<p>These properties cater to guests who stay for an extended period. They usually offer full kitchen facilities, shopping services, business services and limited housekeeping services.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>
Historic conversion hotels	<p>These properties have historic significance. They have been converted into lodging establishments with retention of their historic character.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>
Bed and breakfast inns (B&Bs)	<p>They are usually family-owned. They are private homes whose owner lives on or near the premises and rents out rooms to overnight guests. The paid accommodation typically includes breakfast. A popular term is "B&Bs" (i.e. bed and breakfast provided). The host often provides guests with assistance regarding directions, and information regarding the local area including sightseeing suggestions. It is usually located in rural areas and villages.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>
Guest houses	<p>Guest houses are similar to bed and breakfast inns. They range from low-budget rooms to luxury apartments. They tend to be like small hotels in bigger cities. Though the facilities are limited, most rooms are air-conditioned with en-suite shower and toilet.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>
Hostels	<p>They are very cheap accommodation. The sleeping arrangements are usually in dormitory style and there may also be self-catering facilities on site.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>
Cabins	<p>They are bedrooms on a ship or train for passengers.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>
Villas/Chalets (usually found in skiing and beach resorts)	<p>They are self-catering accommodation in a private bungalow, usually rented to prestigious or renowned guests. In many cases, it refers to a small cottage with an overhanging roof in a seaside resort, e.g. beach houses.</p> <p>Local example: _____</p>

ACTIVITY 7

Based on the characteristics of various types of accommodation listed above, browse the website and fill in a local example.

In Activity 7 we learned that a hotel may fall under more than one classification. For example, The Landmark Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong is a luxury city centre and spa hotel. In addition, different types of hotel will offer different kinds of products and services for their guests and will be run differently to meet their guests' needs. A luxury hotel may provide more personalised services and facilities that may not appear in a limited-service hotel. Examples include high-speed broadband Internet access, LCD televisions, DVD/CD home entertainment sound systems, 24-hour butler service and in-room dining, and 24-hour concierge and business services.

2.2 Introduction to the Hotel Operations



Hotel swimming pool



Hotel fitness centre

2.2.1 Hotel Ownership

Another way to classify hotels is by their ownership, which can be:

- **Private**
An independent hotel owned by a person/partnership/private company
e.g. Shamrock Hotel
- **Local group**
Several hotels owned by a local company
e.g. Harbour Grand Hong Kong, The Kowloon Hotel, Harbour Plaza Hong Kong, Harbour Plaza Metropolis, Harbour Plaza North Point and Harbour Plaza Resort City are all owned by Harbour Plaza Hotels & Resorts
- **International group**
A hotel which is part of an international chain of hotels
e.g. JW Marriott Hotel Hong Kong is part of the Marriott International, Inc.

Hotel management

Hotels can be operated in one of the following ways:

- **Independently owned and operated**

These can be independent hotels, with no affiliation, that are being managed by the owners of the properties.

- **Management contract**

Management contracts are hotel management companies which operate properties owned by other entities. In some cases, the hotel owners may arrange to run their properties through a management contract with a company that specialises in managing hotels. The reason for this is that the owner may not:

- Have the necessary expertise
- Desire to become involved in the operation of the hotel

Benefits for the hotel management company:

- Little or no up-front financing or equity involved
- Manage the property for the contract period such as five, ten or twenty years
- Receive a management fee during the contract period

- **Franchising**

Some investors prefer to use the franchising concept in running the hotel. Franchising in the hospitality industry is a concept that:

- Allows interested investors to use a company's (the franchisor) name and business format
- Is made up of properties where the franchisees agree to run the hotel in accordance with the strict guidelines set by the franchisor
- Allows a company to expand more rapidly by using others' capital

Benefits for the franchisee:

- Obtain from the franchisor the expertise in doing business such as site selection, planning, pre-opening training, operations manuals, information management, central reservation system, field support, quality control, purchasing, advertising, marketing, new products and concepts
- The franchisee has complete control and responsibility over the daily operation of the property

In return, the franchisor receives a joining fee and an ongoing fee from the franchisee.

- **Referrals**

Referral associations, e.g. Leading Hotels of the World (LHW), offer to hotels similar benefits as franchising, but at a lower cost. Some hotels choose to become a referral property. This means that the property is being operated as an independent hotel in association with a certain chain. These hotels refer guests to one another's properties and share a centralised reservation system, a common logo, image, or advertising slogan. Hotels pay an initial fee to join a referral association and further fees are based on services required. As the property has already been physically developed, the owner may want assistance only with marketing, advertising, management, or reservation referral. In addition, guests may find more variation among the referral properties as size and appearance standards are less stringent than those in a franchise agreement. However, every hotel is assessed and checked regularly to ensure that it maintains the highest standards.

ACTIVITY 8

State two drawbacks for a franchisee joining a franchise company.

ACTIVITY 9

Browse the website and find out two international hotel chains that provide management contract and franchising services to the hotel owners.

2.2.2 The Functions and Departments of a Hotel

The day-to-day operations of a hotel are the key factors determining the success or failure of its service. It is necessary to understand the structure of hotels in order to get an overview of how the organisation fits together.

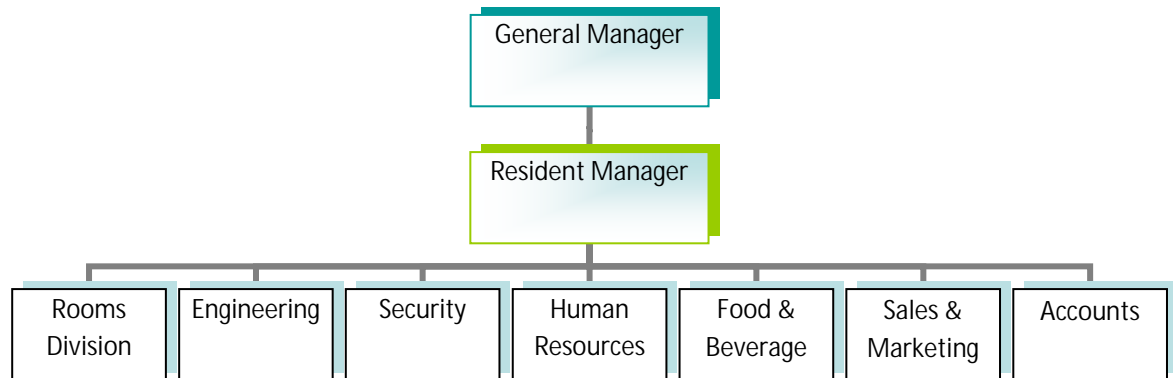


Figure 2: Major departments of a five-star hotel

Regardless of the size of a hotel, the organisational structure will be basically the same. It is usually divided into several distinct departments, each responsible for a particular area of work. The larger the hotel is and the more facilities it offered, the more specialised the departments become. For example, the front office and housekeeping department are under the control of the director of rooms.

The duties of key executives

1. General Manager

The main responsibilities of the general manager (GM) include:

- Providing leadership to the management team
- Coordinating the work of all departments
- Participating in the formulation of hotel policies and strategies
- Leading the hotel staff in meeting the financial, environmental and community responsibilities
- Assuming full responsibilities for the overall performance of the hotel

2. Resident Manager

The main responsibilities of the resident manager include:

- Holding a major responsibility in developing and executing plans developed by the owner(s), the general manager and other members of the management team
- Checking on operations, providing feedback and offering assistance when needed
- Completing, reviewing and summarizing statistical reports and sharing them with the general manager
- Assuming responsibilities for the daily operations and management of the hotel

Functions of major hotel departments

1. Engineering

The engineering department is responsible for maintaining the physical plant of the hotel such as electricity, plumbing, air conditioning, heating and elevator systems; and for overseeing all mechanical and technical conditions of the hotel.

2. Security

Security is an important concern in every hotel. The security department is responsible for implementing procedures which aim at protecting the safety and security of hotel guests, visitors, hotel employees and the hotel itself. Examples include monitoring surveillance equipments, patrolling the hotel premises and maintaining security alarm systems.

3. Human Resources

The human resources (personnel and training) department is responsible for hiring, orientation, training, wages and benefit administration, labour relations, employee relations, and staff development.

4. Food and Beverage

The food and beverage (F&B) department provides food and beverage services to the hotel guests and visitors through a variety of outlets and facilities/services. Examples include lounge, bar, coffee shop, restaurants, banquet service, room service (also called in-room dining) and cake shop.

5. Sales and Marketing

The main functions of the sales and marketing department involve generating new businesses for the hotel, coordinating advertising, as well as sales promotions and public relations activities aiming at enhancing the hotel's image.

6. Accounts

The accounts department is headed by the financial controller who, as a key member of the management team, can guide the hotel to an increasing profitability through better control and asset management. In addition, this department is responsible for monitoring all of the financial activities of a hotel. Examples include overseeing accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, and cost control systems of the hotel; keeping records of assets, liabilities and financial transaction of the hotel; preparing the monthly profit-and-loss statement, coordinating with purchasing department and information technology department, and handling guests' inquiries about billing.

The functions of **Rooms Division** will be covered in detail in Unit 2.2.3.

ACTIVITY 10

Browse the website and find a five-star hotel in Hong Kong/Macau that has a video in English and Chinese promoting its services and facilities to the guests.

2.2.3 Introduction to the Rooms Division

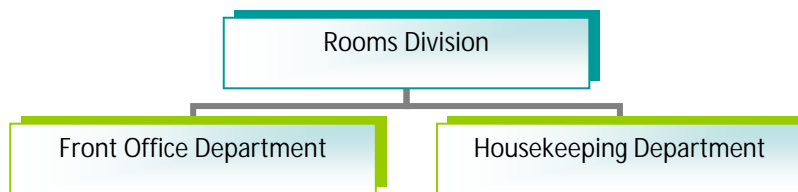


Figure 3: Organisation of the rooms division

The main source of income for most hotels comes from the rooms division and the food and beverage department. In general, the rooms division comprises two major departments, the front office and housekeeping, which are involved in the sales or services of rooms to guests.

The director of rooms is responsible to the general manager for the effective leadership and smooth operation of all departments that make up the rooms division.



Front desk counter

2.2.4 Front Office Operations

The front office is the nerve centre or hub of a hotel. It is the department that makes the first and last impression on the guests, and the place that guests approach for information and service throughout their stays.



Front desk clerk

The three main functions of the front office are as follows:

1. Selling rooms
2. Maintaining balanced guest accounts
3. Providing services and information to guests

2.2.4.1 Guest Cycle

The operation of the front office department is mainly determined by the type and number of guest transactions which take place during the four different phases of the guest cycle as shown in Figure 4 and listed below:

- Pre-arrival
The stage where the guest makes room reservation.
- Arrival
The point when the guest arrives at the hotel.
- Occupancy
The period during which the guest stays in the hotel.
- Departure
The point when the guest checks out and leaves the hotel.

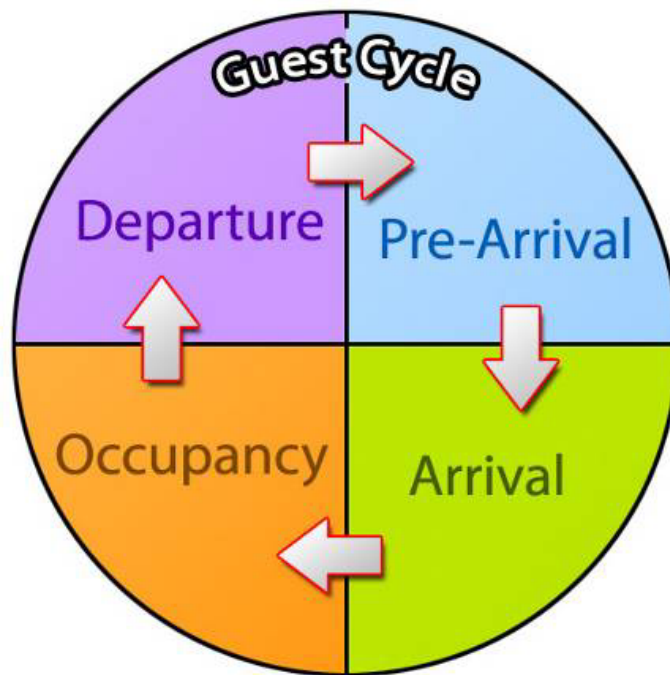


Figure 4: The guest cycle

Complete Activity 11 to enhance your understanding of the various types of transactions and services which may occur between the guest and the hotel during different phases of the guest cycle.

ACTIVITY 11

Determine at which stage(s) of the guest cycle the following guest transaction or service could occur.

- a) Fill in the **Answer** column below with the correct alphabet (**A-D**) which denotes the four different stages of the guest cycle.

A – Pre-arrival

B – Arrival

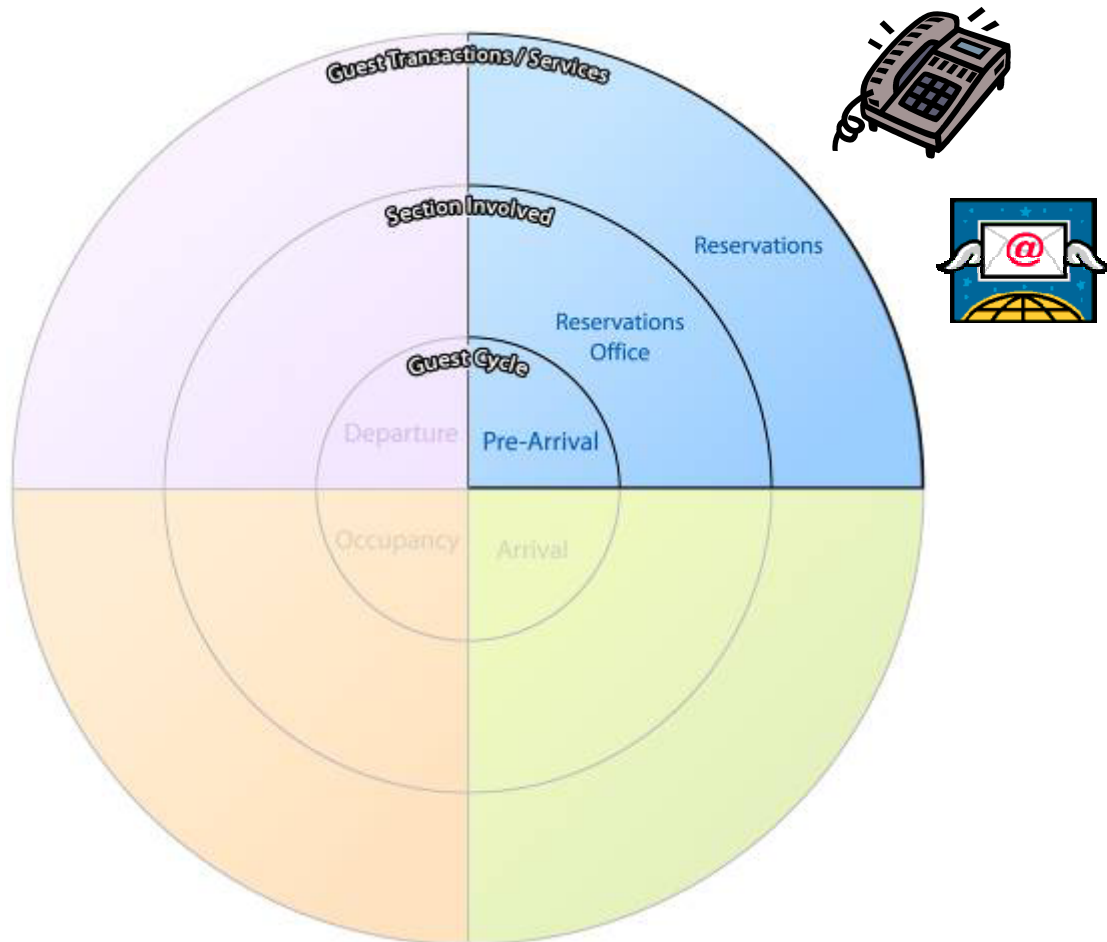
C – Occupancy

D – Departure

The first one has been done as an example for you.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Guest Transaction or Service</i>	<i>Answer(s)</i>
1.	<i>Reservation</i>	A
2.	<i>Mail and information</i>	
3.	<i>Transportation</i>	
4.	<i>Telephone call and message</i>	
5.	<i>Check-in and registration</i>	
6.	<i>Flight confirmation</i>	
7.	<i>Room assignment</i>	
8.	<i>Safe deposit</i>	
9.	<i>Issuing of key</i>	
10.	<i>Baggage handling</i>	
11.	<i>Maintaining guest account</i>	
12.	<i>Bill settlement</i>	
13.	<i>Issuing of breakfast coupon</i>	
14.	<i>Currency exchange</i>	
15.	<i>Wake-up call</i>	
16.	<i>Check-out</i>	
17.	<i>Booking of theatre ticket</i>	

- b) When you complete studying this section - 2.2.4 Front Office Operations, try this activity again by filling in your answers using the guest cycle provided below.



In Activity 11, we have learned that different types of guest transactions and services could occur in the four different phases of the guest cycle which are being handled mainly by the front office department. The following will explain how different sections of the front office department are being organised to handle these guest transactions.

2.2.4.2 Front Office Department

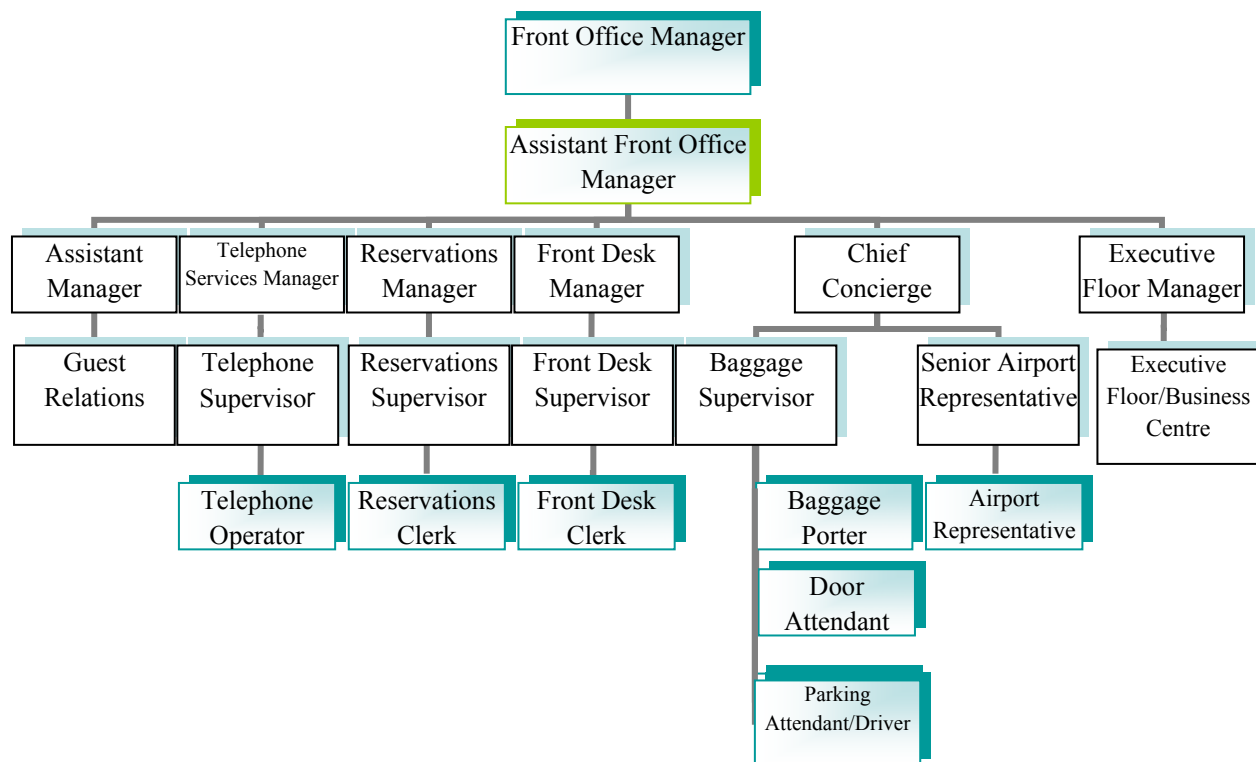


Figure 5 Front office organisation chart of a large hotel

Figure 5 shows an organizational chart for a front office. This illustrates the structure and lines of communication which operate within the front office.

The front office department is headed by the front office manager (FOM) whose main duty is to enhance guest services by constantly developing services to meet guests' needs.

The FOM performs the following duties:

- Monitoring reservation status
- Looking over market mix and preparing occupancy forecasts
- Determining rate structures and supervising implementation of rate policies
- Reviewing previous night's occupancy and average room rate
- Reviewing arrivals and departures for the day and the next day
- Making staffing adjustments needed for arrivals and departures
- Reviewing the VIP list, checking VIP rooms, meeting VIPs and entertaining them

(1) Telephone

The telephone department is headed by the telephone services manager. The telephone supervisor and telephone operator process all incoming and outgoing calls through the hotel switchboard. Staff in this department generally possesses good language and communication skills. The members need to:

- Provide general information regarding the hotel or local attractions to guests over the telephone
- Place international calls, morning calls and wake-up calls as required by guests
- Administer the paging system of the hotel, which provides a communication service between certain hotel staff and management staff who are not always in their offices
- Administer the in-room movie system of the hotel
- Stay familiar with the names of Very Important Persons (VIPs) in the hotel
- Protect guest privacy by not disclosing room number, guest information and reporting suspicious person
- Communicate weather emergency to management, engineering, security and guests
- Perform the role of communications centre in the event of emergency

In order to provide better service, some hotels have introduced the “one-stop service” with all guest requests being carried out through the telephone department. For example, if a guest called in and wanted to place a booking with the coffee shop, the line would be transferred by the telephone operator to the coffee shop in the past. With the “one stop service”, the telephone operator will take the booking for the guest. This can speed up the booking process and leave the guest a better impression.

(2) Reservations

The reservations manager takes charge of this section and makes decisions on whether room reservations/bookings should be accepted when the hotel is fully booked. That is, to stop taking room reservations or to allow overbooking of rooms.

The reservations supervisor will monitor closely all the room reservations taken and report to the reservations manager when abnormal situations happen. For example, there is a larger number of room cancellations than usual.

The reservations clerk will:

- Handle reservation request and prepare reservation confirmation slips
- Request guests to confirm or guarantee their room reservations
- Keep records of the details of each reservation and the number of room reservation taken for each night
- Provide the front desk with details of room reservation due to arrive the next day
- Prepare VIP lists
- Update guest history records

Reservations may originate from different sources:

- Direct reservation via telephone, fax, letter, e-mail or Internet
- Reservation network systems such as Leading Hotels of the World (LHW)
- Travel agents
- Tour operators
- Meeting planners
- Walk-in

When a reservation request is accepted, the details of the room reservation such as guest name(s), staying period, room type and rate, method of payment, guest contact information and special requests will be recorded on a reservation form, as shown in figure 6, and in the computer.

It is common practice for hotels to overbook during peak season in order to ensure full occupancy as some guests are likely not to show up. Overbooking refers to a situation when the hotel takes more reservations than the number of its rooms to accommodate. Therefore, reservations clerk will request guests to guarantee their booking during peak season.

For guaranteed reservation, hotel will hold the room for the guest overnight or during the guaranteed period as the guest has prepaid for the room and no refund will be given if the guest does not show up.

By contrast, a non-guaranteed reservation means that the hotel will hold the room until a stated cancellation time, normally up to 6 p.m. on the arrival date and then release the room for sale if the guest does not arrive.

RESERVATION FORM				
Title	Surname	First Name	Second Name	
Arrival Date:		Departure Date:		
Flight/Time:		Flight/Time:		
No. of Persons:		No. of Rooms/Room Type:		
Room Rate: _____				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate Discount	Travel Agent Discount	Airline Discount	Courtesy Discount	Package
Transportation Required:				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Airport to Hotel Hotel to Airport Round Trip				
Billing Instruction:				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Guest A/C	Room on Company	All Expenses on Company		Other: _____
Guaranteed By:				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Company letter/fax/e-mail	Fax	Deposit		
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card No.: _____ Expiry Date: _____				
Company Name:				
Telephone/Fax no.:		Reserved by:		
E-mail Address:				
Confirmation: Yes/No				
Remarks:				
Approved by:		Taken by:		
		Date:		

Figure 6: Reservation form

(3) Concierge

The concierge comprises of a large group of uniformed staff, including:

- Chief Concierge
- Airport Representative
- Driver
- Parking Attendant
- Door Attendant
- Baggage Porter
- Baggage Supervisor

The **chief concierge** is the overall in charge of this section. He/she normally works at a desk in the main foyer. The following guest services are provided by the concierge:

- Providing information/advice on hotel products/services, entertainment, attractions, sightseeing tours and local restaurants
- Confirming airline passages and purchasing airline tickets
- Reserving tables at restaurants and tickets to shows
- Arranging the hire of hotel limousine and other transportation service such as a private jet
- Handling guest requests and inquiries, e.g. shopping request and an inquiry concerning the direction to a local bank

Airport Representative

Duties include:

- Greeting hotel guests at the airport
- Arranging hotel transportation for guests from the airport to the hotel
- Answering inquiries from guests about the different means of transportation available from the airport to the hotel such as airport express train, airport shuttle and bus
- Taking hotel room bookings
- Assisting departing guests at the airport
- Liaising with airlines for special arrangements such as wheelchair for guests and the handling of guest baggage lost by the airlines

Driver

Duties include:

- Taking guests to and from the airport
- Acting as personal driver for guest upon request such as taking guest to his office or for sightseeing tour

Parking Attendant

Duties include:

- Parking cars for guests patronising the hotel
- Assisting the door attendant in ensuring that traffic at the main entrance is smooth

Door Attendant

Duties include:

- Greeting all new arrivals
- Providing door service to guests
- Summoning baggage porter to assist arriving guests
- Calling taxis and providing the hotel address card for guests
- Paying taxi fare on behalf of the hotel guests who do not have local currencies
- Directing traffic and parking of vehicles at the main entrance

In general, the door attendant works outside the hotel's entrance.



Hotel entrance

Baggage Porter (Bell Attendant)

Duties include:

- Handling guest baggage in and out of the hotel
- Escorting check-in guests from the front desk to their rooms and introducing facilities in the room
- Running errands for the executive office and hotel guests such as going to the post office buying stamps/sending parcels, doing grocery shopping and obtaining visa to China for guests
- Delivering to guest room newspapers, mail, fax, message and parcel, etc
- Handling storage of guest baggage/belongings for late check-out, next arrival or outsiders to pick up

Baggage Supervisor (Bell Captain)

Duties include:

- Answering telephone calls from guests regarding luggage pick up from room
- Assigning baggage porter to handle the guest baggage
- Receiving guest article, such as a tailor-made shirt from outsider, and assigning a baggage porter to deliver it to the guest room
- Handling guest requests for postal services such as collecting the postage fee of sending a parcel from the guest

(4) Front Desk (Reception)

The front desk is headed by the **front desk manager** whose main duty is to ensure that the hotel achieves the highest possible level of room occupancy and the maximum revenue.

Front Desk Supervisor (Reception Supervisor)

Duties include:

- Overseeing the smooth running of the front desk
- Compiling duty roster
- Greeting important guests (VIPs)
- Assigning rooms to guests
- Dealing with group arrivals
- Handling guest requests such as room change and complaints not being able to be handled by subordinates

Front Desk Clerk (Receptionist)

Duties include:

- Greeting the guest
- Providing information and promoting hotel facilities and services to guests
- Checking in the guest
- Maintaining guest account
- Checking out the guest
- Administering the safe deposit system of the hotel
- Providing foreign currency exchange service to guest

Registration (Check-in)

The purposes of registration include the following:

- Recording the arrival of guest
- Confirming the personal details of guest
- Satisfying legal requirements

Stages of registration

- Preparing for guest arrival such as check for arrivals with special requests
- Greeting the guest
- Determining the room rate and assigning room
- Assisting guest to complete the registration form
- Checking guest's method of payment
- Handing over mail, message, article received before guest arrival and breakfast coupon (if applicable) to guest
- Issuing room key to guest
- Escorting guest to the room and introducing room facilities *as required by individual hotel*

Figure 7 shows the sample of a completed registration form. During the process of registration, the front desk clerk will request to see the guest's identity card or passport to check if the guest is an alien, for verification purpose. When all formalities are completed, the front desk clerk will issue the room key to the guest. The baggage porter will then take the guest's baggage and escort the guest to the guest room.

Guests who arrive at the hotel without having made a reservation are known as walk-ins. It is common practice for hotel staff to obtain from the guest a substantial deposit or credit card imprint before checking the guest into the hotel.

ACTIVITY 12

Mr Christie, a walk-in guest, will stay in your hotel for one night only and will be fully responsible for all charges incurred. As a front desk clerk, how would you explain to the guest that you have to collect one night room rate (HK\$2,000.00) + 10% service charge + prevailing government room tax (e.g. 3%) + an extra HK\$ 1,000.00 for hotel signing privileges from him as the deposit for check-in?

Registration Form**Welcome to Parkside Hotel**

Guest Name:	Mr. Brent David Ritchie	Room Number :	1718
Address:	8200 River Road Richmond BC Canada V6X 3P8	Date of Birth:	11 Oct 77
		Nationality:	Canadian
Tel/Fax No.:		Passport No.:	JP089556
E-mail Address:	britchie201@yahoo.com	Next Destination:	Canada
Occupation:	Engineer	Arrival Date:	12 Sep 07
		Flight/Time:	CX839/20:55
Company Name:		Departure Date:	14 Sep 07
		Flight/Time:	CX838/16:35
Room Type:	Deluxe Suite	No. of Nights:	2
Room Rate:	\$2300 (HKD) Room rate is subject to 10% Service Charge & 3% Government Tax	No. of Guests: (Adult/Child)	1/0
Payment Method:	<input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MASTER <input type="checkbox"/> AMEX <input type="checkbox"/> JCB <input type="checkbox"/> DINERS <input type="checkbox"/> CUP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CASH <input type="checkbox"/> OTHERS: _____		
Guest Signature: <u>Brent D. Ritchie</u> I understand that the guest signature on the registration form is authorized for use of the credit card on the file for payment of my account for this and future stays. I agree that my liability for this bill is not waived, and agree to be held personally liable in the event that the indicated person, company, or other third party billed fails to pay part or all of these charges.			
Express Check Out Service:		I hereby authorize Parkside Hotel to charge my credit card for all expenses pertaining to my stay.	
Signature of Credit Card Holder: _____		*Express check out is available for credit card paying guest.	
I understand that Parkside Hotel is not responsible for money, jewels or other valuables that have been misplaced, stolen or left in the guest rooms, meeting rooms, public areas, and family and/or hotel vehicles. Safe deposit boxes are available at the Front Desk.			

Figure 7 A completed registration form

ACTIVITY 13**Role play**

In groups of 2, one student will act as a front desk clerk helping a guest, i.e. another student, to check-in. Answer the following questions asked by the check-in guest:

Question 1: Is it possible for me to check-out two hours later than the hotel's standard check-out time with no additional charge?

Question 2: Is there any show or concert that you could recommend to me?

Question 3: Where could I find foreign currency exchange service?

Question 4: Where would you recommend me to go for delicious Chinese cuisine?

During the guest's stay, all transactions will be posted to the guest's account/folio/bill. When checking out a departing guest, the front desk clerk should follow the following procedures:

1. Check the name of guest and the room number against the guest's account.
2. Check the departure date. If the guest leaves earlier than expected, other departments will need to be informed.
3. Check whether late check-out charges should be applied. This would occur if a non-frequent guest leaves after the hotel's stated check-out time such as 12 noon; the relevant late check-out charge will have to be added to the guest account. In general, hotels will charge guests an extra 50% of the standard room rate if the guest leaves before 6p.m. and an extra 100% of the standard room rate if the guest leaves after 6p.m.
4. Check for late charges such as mini-bar or laundry charges.
5. Produce guest folio(s) for guest inspection and master folio(s) for tour escort's inspection. Master account/ folio/ bill is the main account on which all charges to a company or travel agent have been recorded. For example, the master folio shows that the company or travel agent is only responsible for the room and breakfast charges. All other incidental charges are the guest's own responsibility which could be found in the incidental account.
6. Check the guest's method of payment and help the guest to settle the account.
7. Provide front office services such as handing over to guests any last minute message, fax, mail or parcel, helping guest to empty the safe deposit box opened at the front desk during their stays and offering the assistance of the baggage porter to collect the baggage.
8. Check if the guest would like to make a future room reservation or an onward reservation in another hotel within the chain.
9. Update the front office record to ensure that other departments can accurately know the guest and room status.

ACTIVITY 14

As a front desk clerk, you have been informed by Mr Schneider, a regular guest on own account, who receives daily newspaper and fruit basket that he has decided to leave now; one day earlier than expected. Fill in the reason(s) column below showing why the following departments need to be informed. The last one has been done for you as an example.

Department(s)	Reason(s)
Housekeeping	
Concierge	
Room Service (In-room Dining)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop delivering fruit basket the next day

- (5) The Assistant Manager and the Guest Relations Officer also serve the guests from a separate desk located in the lobby of the hotel.

Assistant Manager

The Assistant Manager represents the management in handling the daily operations of the hotel and could directly report to the General Manager in some hotels. Duties include:

- Welcoming VIPs upon check-in
- Conducting guest relations role
- Handling efficiently all inquiries and complaints of guests
- Ensuring the smooth functioning of all departments in the hotel

Guest Relations Officer

The Guest Relations Officer reports to the Assistant Manager. Duties include:

- Greeting all arriving individual guests, especially those under commercial accounts
- Providing local information for guests
- Promoting in-house functions, facilities and services
- Assisting front desk staff when they are busy and assisting guest to check out

- (6) The executive floor manager oversees the smooth operation of the executive floors and business centre.

The Executive Floor

Business travellers who require an environment conducive to business and privacy will choose to experience enhanced services in the executive floor for an additional fee. The executive floor(s) is usually the top floor(s) of a hotel. Guests of the executive floor will enjoy a range of complimentary exclusive privileges and benefits which vary from one hotel to another. Examples are as follows:

- Express check-in and check-out services on the executive floor
- Complimentary breakfast buffet, afternoon tea, cocktails, evening hors d'oeuvres and all-day refreshments in the executive floor's lounge
- Complimentary in-room local calls and high-speed Internet access
- Garment ironing service
- Complimentary use of the hotel's fitness centre, swimming pool and private use of the boardroom for one-hour per stay
- Personalised business and concierge services such as flight confirmation and hotel limousine arrangement

Business Centre

Many hotels provide a business centre to both their business and leisure guests. The range of services and facilities provided may include business equipments, presentation supplies, computers, meeting and function space with wired or wireless Internet access, secretarial and translation services. Economy properties typically offer limited business services with self-serve options.

Relationship between front office department and other departments in a hotel

The front office is the centre of guest transactions in a hotel and so often acts as the centre for collection and distribution of guest information. Such information may help other departments providing the best service to guests throughout the different stages of the guest cycle.

Housekeeping Department

The housekeeping department requires the following information from the front desk:

- Check-in, occupied and check-out rooms in order to organise room cleaning
- Special requests from guests, such as baby cot or extra blanket, etc., so that extra amenities and services can be provided to guests

In return, the housekeeping department will provide the actual room status to the front desk for comparison with the computer record which ensures that the front desk has the correct room status. Any discrepancy found will be double checked by the Assistant Manager.

Engineering

The engineering department is responsible for maintaining properly the hotel facilities under the care of the front office department such as the proper of functioning of the guest lift.

Security

The front office needs to provide guest information to the security department in the event of emergency; such as fire alarm, power failure and so on. When guest reports loss of property to the front office, security department will be informed to handle the case together with front office's assistant manager.

Human Resources

The human resources department provides staff training and recruitment service to the front office. It also sets up the staff grooming and discipline standard for staff to follow.

Food and Beverage Department

The front desk will provide the food and beverage department with a guestroom special amenities request form. The food & beverage department then arranges for item such as welcome fruit basket with fruits, chocolates and wine to be put in the guestroom. For groups, the food & beverage department will need the front desk to provide information on meal arrangements so as to reserve seats in the outlets or conference rooms for guests' meals.

Sales and Marketing Department

The sales and marketing department needs to work closely with the front desk and reservations department for reservations of groups, tours and corporate bookings. The front desk will provide to the sales and marketing department an updated rooming list, see example on page 35, with guest room number upon the arrival of tours or groups.

Accounts Department

Information concerning advance deposits received by the reservations department and payments received by the front desk must be recorded and passed to the accounts department which is responsible for monitoring guest accounts, checking credit limits and seeking settlements of guest accounts. Accounts department is responsible for compiling a list of credit-approved companies, which is needed by reservations and front desk when receiving bookings.

Rooming List of Samson Trading Company Ltd. (May 1-12, 2009)

Guest Name	Title	Nationality	Passport No.	Period of Stay	Preference	Room Type	Room No.
Ms Wong Mei Bo	Liaison Officer	Chinese	G45889246	May 1 - May 12	Non-Smoking Room	Standard Room	804
Mr Chen Wei Kit	Vice President	Chinese	G27205533	May 1 - May 10	Smoking Room	Harbour Suite	1811
Mr Peter Gibbs	Financial Controller	Australian	E2007201	May 1 - May 5	Non-Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1501
Ms Patricia Sand	Trading Manager	Australian	E6572458	May 4 - May 12	Non-Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1503
Mr Bill Lewis	Project Manager	American	107225422	May 4 - May 12	Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1410
Ms Devon Morton	Marketing Manager	Australian	E4470237	May 5 - May 10	Non-Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1504
Mr Dan Morris	Marketing Manager	Australian	E4589632	May 5 - May 10	Non-Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1505
Mr Anthony Beer	Treasury Manager	American	197520409	May 5 - May 9	Non-Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1506
Mr Tey Wing Fatt	Sales Manager	Singaporean	S7127001H	May 5 - May 8	Non-Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1507
Ms Yetty Thomson	Sales Manager	Australian	E2477082	May 5 - May 8	Non-Smoking Room	Deluxe Room	1508
Mr Jason Herrick	Technical Support Manager	Australian	E7142355	May 5 - May 8	Non-Smoking Room	Superior Room	1112
Ms Jill Steward	Technical Support Manager	Australian	E7568933	May 5 - May 8	Non-Smoking Room	Superior Room	1113

Figure 8: Rooming list

2.2.4.3 Types of Hotel Guest

Hotel guests can be classified according to their:

- Trip purpose – pleasure or business travellers
- Numbers – independent or group travellers
- Origin – local or overseas travellers

Pleasure travellers

They are individuals who travel to engage in leisure activities, outdoor recreation, relaxation, visiting friends and relatives or attending sports or cultural events.

Corporate business travellers

They are individuals whose frequent bookings are usually made by companies with reduced room rates. Business travellers travel to conduct business, attend business meetings or workshops, and engage in selling or purchasing products.

Free independent travellers (FITs)

They are sometimes referred to as "foreign independent travellers". FITs are international tourists who purchase their own accommodation and make their own travel arrangements.

Group inclusive tours (GITs)

Tourists who travel together on package tours with accommodation and sometimes meals which are booked through travel agencies. Group tourists tend to spend less and budget their spending allowance.

Domestic tourists

They are local residents who stay at a hotel for special occasions and functions.

Conference participants

Individuals who travel to attend conference and whose accommodation is usually reserved by himself/herself, his/her company or a conference organiser before their arrival.

Very important persons (VIPs)

Very important persons may include celebrities, frequent-stay guests, guests in expensive rooms, guests with security risks and top executives from companies.

Incognito

They are guests who stay in a hotel with concealing identities so as to avoid notice and formal attention.

2.2.4.4 The Accommodation Product

Accommodation is one of the largest sources of revenue for the operation of a hotel. It is the main product provided by a hotel.

A guest who books accommodation receives more than just a room with a bed. It includes the facilities and services provided by the hotel staff. Since guests in general cannot examine the hotel product before purchase, front office staff must have a clear understanding of the accommodation product and describe it accurately and clearly to the guest. Examples include:

- Room rates
- Size of beds
- Frequent-guest programme
- Other services provided to the guest

Room rates

Front desk personnel need to know how the room rates are derived. The following criteria will influence the room rate charged to the guests:

- Type, size, décor and location of room
- Meal plan
- Season and seasonal events
- Kind of guest
- Length of stay and day of the week

The room rate categories have variations in all hotels. Many hotels offer a number of different room rates to attract different guests who will provide repeat business and help ensure full occupancy. Examples of different room rates are as follows:

Rack rate

The standard rate charged for the room only.

Corporate rate

Room rate offered to executive personnel who are regular guests or employees of a corporation that has a contract rate with the hotel which reflects all businesses from that corporation.

Commercial rate

Room rate offered to executive personnel of a company who have infrequent visit.

Airline rate

The rate agreed between an individual airline and the hotel as determined by the volume of business the hotel obtains from the airline.

Group rate

Room rate given to bookings for a large group of people made through a travel agency or professional organisation.

Children's rate

Each hotel has a specific age limit for the child to stay with their parents in the same room free of charge or at a nominal rate.

Package rate

Room rate, which includes goods and services and the rental of a room, is developed by the hotel to attract guests in during low sales periods.

American Plan (AP)

Room rate that includes room and three meals.

Modified American Plan (MAP)

Room rate that includes room and two meals; usually breakfast and dinner.

European Plan (EP)

Room rate that includes room only.

Complimentary rate (Comp)

Guest is assessed no charge for staying in a hotel. The management of the hotel may grant comp rooms for guests who are tour directors, local dignitaries, executives from the hotel's head office and so on.

Hotel brochures and tariffs

Hotel brochures and tariffs are sales and marketing tools used by the hotel to provide information on the room rate (rack rate) charged and the facilities and services provided to the guests. In general, the brochures contain pictures of guestrooms, restaurant outlets and other facilities. Tariffs are usually printed separately as an insert, as the price may change every season or year.

Types of room and bed

A hotel has different types of guestroom and bed for the guests to choose from. Hotel staff should explain these clearly to customers, as they may not be familiar with the hotel terminology.

Types of bed	Sizes, e.g.
Twin	39" x 75"
Double	54" x 75"
Queen	60" x 80"
King	78" x 80"

Figure 9: Types and sizes of bed

Types of room	Explanations
Single	A room that sleeps only one person and has been fitted with a single, double or queen-size bed.
Twin	A room that can accommodate two persons with two twin beds.
Double	A room that can accommodate two persons with a double or queen-size bed.
Twin double (also double-double or queen double)	A room that can accommodate two to four persons with two twin, double or queen-size beds.
Triple	A room that can accommodate three persons and has been fitted with three twin beds, one double bed and one twin bed or two double beds.
Hollywood twin	A room that can accommodate two persons with two twin beds joined together by a common headboard.
Murphy	A room that is fitted with a murphy bed, i.e. a bed that folds out of a wall or closet.
Suite	Room with one or more bedrooms and a living space. The bedrooms might be singles, doubles or twin doubles.
Adjacent	Rooms close by or across the corridor, but are not side by side.
Adjoining	Rooms that are side by side, but do not have a connecting door between them.
Connecting	Two rooms that are side by side and have a connecting door between them.

Figure 10: Types of room



Twin bedroom



Double bedroom

Frequent-guest program

Hotels build guest profiles, often called the guest history, that keep track of preferences of guests and enable the hotels to provide customized guest services. Loyalty programs let the most valuable guests be recognized on-property and have been at the core of how chain hotel brands attract and retain their best customers. The loyalty program is a strong factor in persuading hotel owners to become franchisees or give a particular hotel brand the management contract to run their property. Some studies found that members wanted a streamlined reward redemption process, and points that did not expire. The most important features of a hotel program were room upgrades and airline miles, followed by free hotel stays, and a variety of on-property benefits and services. However, no amount of miles or points is ever going to replace a warm welcome and being recognized by the hotel as a loyal customer.

ACTIVITY 15

Give an example of how a chain hotel could customize a frequent guest's hotel experience using the frequent-guest program.

2.2.5 Housekeeping Operations

2.2.5.1 Housekeeping Department

The housekeeping department is responsible for cleaning and maintaining the guestrooms, public areas, office spaces and back of the house areas in the hotel so that the property is as fresh and attractive as its first day of business. Although the roles that housekeeping performs vary from one hotel to another, the tasks performed by the housekeeping department are critical to the smooth daily operations of any hotel.

ACTIVITY 16

Brainstorming – Using the information you learned in the previous sections, imagine yourself as a tourist or business traveller, what kind of a hotel would you like to stay in? In three minutes, brainstorm with your partner a list of the qualities of an ideal hotel. Use as many adjectives or phrases as possible to describe your ideal hotel. Here are examples of statements to use to start the brainstorming process:

An ideal hotel should be ...
An ideal hotel should have ...

For both business and leisure travellers staying in a hotel, an essential requirement is that the guest room be clean. Surveys conducted by the hotel industry constantly indicate that cleanliness is a prime factor in a guest's selection of a hotel. It is clear that without clean rooms to rent, a hotel would have to close. The housekeeping department and its staff play a role that is critical to the profit and success of the hotel. In general, it maintains the cleanliness of guestrooms and public areas in such a way that reflects the hotel's commitment to standards of excellence. In many hotels, the housekeeping department is the largest department in the hotel.

ACTIVITY 17

Imagine yourself as the secretary to the Managing Director of ABC Company in Australia. Your boss needs to travel to Hong Kong and asks you to book a hotel having rooms with all the amenities required for a comfortable stay, but within a budget of around HK\$2,000.00 per night. You have to compare the room features of different types of hotels by browsing through various hotel websites, and recommend to the Managing Director on the choice of hotel within the assigned budget.

Organisation of the Housekeeping Department

The organisation of the housekeeping department will vary from one hotel to another depending on the number of rooms and the hotel management. This department is usually headed by an executive housekeeper, who is often assisted by an assistant and several supervisors. In the case of a small hotel, an executive housekeeper might have no assistant and is assisted by smaller number of supervisors. Increasingly hotel management are streamlining their organisational structures and employing casual employees. As a result many hotels have substantially reduced the number and role of housekeeping staff. This helps reduced the bottom line. However, set standards may be scarified and staff must assume a larger responsibility.

The housekeeping department of a large-sized hotel, see figure 11, comprises of the following sections:

- Laundry department
- Uniform and linen room
- Housekeeping office
- Guest floors
- Public areas
- Health club
- Floral and plant arrangement

The laundry department provides laundry, dry cleaning and pressing services to guests. Some hotels maintain their own laundry, while others rely on commercial operators. In either case, close teamwork is necessary to assure a steady flow of linen back and forth for restaurants, banquet areas, floor pantry and recreational areas. Examples of linen follow:

- Towels
- Blankets
- Sheets
- Pillowcases
- Mattress protector
- Tablecloths
- Napkins
- Cleaning cloths

ACTIVITY 18

Imagine yourself as the executive housekeeper of a large-sized hotel. Due to the recent financial tsunami, your hotel decided to cut cost by streamlining the organisation structure. As the Executive Housekeeper, how would you redesign the organisational chart of your department, see figure 11 below, to suit the need of your hotel?

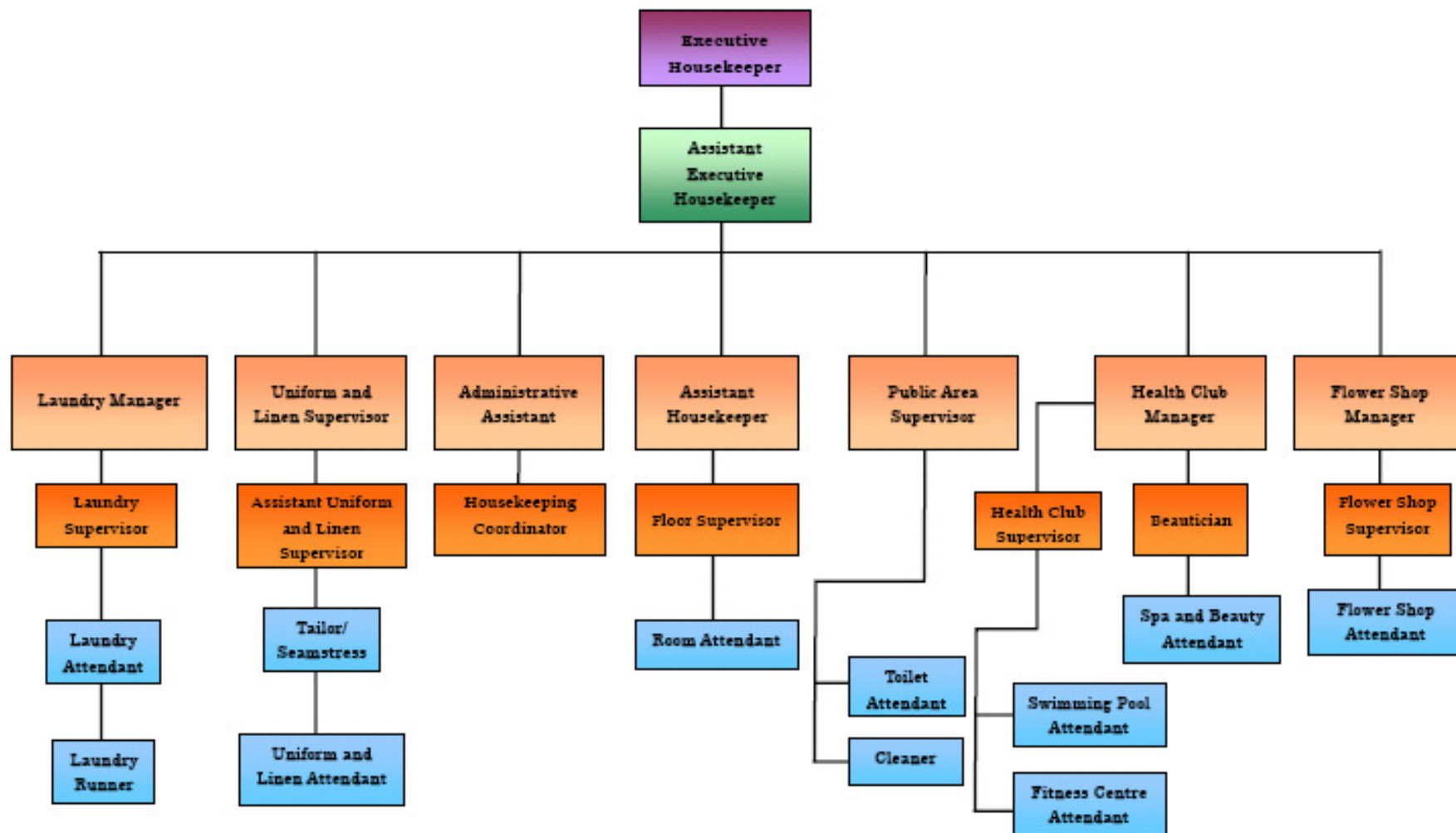


Figure 11 Housekeeping Organisation Chart of a large-sized hotel

Duties of Housekeeping Staff

As mentioned, the housekeeping department is generally the largest department in hotel operations. A sizeable hotel in Hong Kong would typically employ more than 100 staff. Owing to its sometimes complex organisational structure, it is important for every housekeeping staff to clearly understand his own responsibilities in order to provide the most efficient service to guests.

Study the following list of job descriptions for housekeeping staff. Do you think some of the responsibilities of one post can be taken up by another post in the housekeeping department? Why or why not?

Executive Housekeeper

- interviews, selects and engages staff in conjunction with human resources manager
- training
- deployment
- prepares work schedules, work procedures and job descriptions
- compiles duty rotas, holiday lists, etc.
- personnel records
- arranges supervision
- staff welfare
- orders and controls equipment, materials and linen
- handles complaints
- key control

Assistant Executive Housekeeper

- assists executive housekeeper in day-to-day operation
- assumes responsibilities of executive housekeeper in his/her absence
- revises daily work schedule depending on the occupancy
- prepares master list for carpet spotting, curtains, etc.
- inspects work to ensure prescribed standard of cleanliness
- inspects rooms, lobbies and restaurants for cleanliness and also determines need for renovations and makes recommendations
- coordinates with the front office
- screens applicants, trains new employees and recommends disciplinary actions or dismissals

Assistant Housekeeper

- assists executive housekeeper in day-to-day operation
- dispatches room attendants and floor supervisors to assigned floor
- checks equipment and recommends new purchases
- inspects guest rooms, lobbies and back stairs
- keeps records of extra work performed by housekeeping department
- takes inventory
- prepares attendance records

Floor supervisor

- checks staff on duty
- redeployment
- supervision of staff

- checks section/floor of rooms by filling in the room inspection list
- conducts induction and general training
- orders and issues cleaning materials
- linen checks
- maintenance checks
- liaises with reception on guest arrivals and departures

Room attendant

- cleans rooms, bathrooms and suites
- handle dirty and clean linen
- provide turn-down service
- reports faults, maintenance and peculiarities

Public area supervisor

- inspects public areas cleaned to see whether cleaning is adequate, supplies in public areas meet the standard and needs for immediate repair is reported
- makes maintenance report for restaurant or item in need of repair and follows up to make sure work is completed satisfactorily
- supervises cleaning of public areas, corridors and offices
- trains cleaners, advises executive housekeeper if performance is not satisfactory
- liaises with other departments such as food and beverage department regarding the cleaning schedule

Cleaner

- maintains the cleanliness and order of the hotel premises
- spots rugs, carpets, upholstered furniture using vacuum cleaner, broom and shampooing machine
- keeps corridors dust free
- moves and arranges furniture
- carries out special work assigned by the public area supervisor

Tailor and seamstress

- alters and repairs linens, uniforms, curtains and drapes
- distributes and measures uniforms for new employees and keeps record
- discards uniforms, room and table linen
- keeps records of all discarded items
- prepares inventory
- repairs guest clothing

Uniform and linen room attendant

- sorts and counts dirty linen and uniform
- checks and counts clean linen and uniform
- issues and receives linen and uniform
- assists in inventory taking of all linen/uniform

The relationship between housekeeping department and other departments

No matter what the type of hotel or the category of traveller, hotels are in the service industry and their goal is to meet the guest expectations. To help achieving this goal, all hotel staff must work as a team to provide consistently high quality service that promotes customer loyalty. An example would be when the housekeeping and front office departments work closely as a team to ensure that the guestrooms are cleaned and made ready for arriving guests. If housekeeping cannot provide cleaned rooms quickly enough to front office for sale, especially in peak season, the result is a loss of sales and customers.

Apart from the front office, can you think of other departments which work closely with the housekeeping department? What is the result if communications breakdown between housekeeping and these departments? The following diagram shows the relationship between the housekeeping department and other departments:

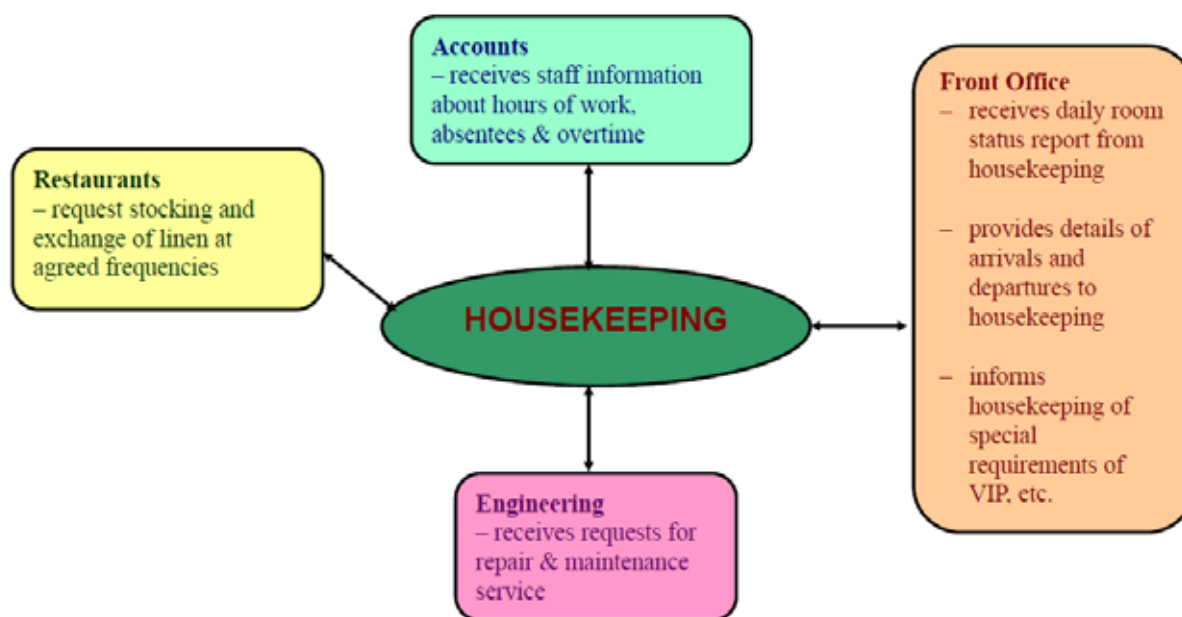


Figure 12 Relationship of Housekeeping Department with Other Departments

The following are brief descriptions of the relationship of housekeeping department with other departments:

Front Office – Rooms are the main concern of both departments. They must continually exchange information on room status so that check-out rooms can be returned as quickly as possible. In addition, renovations, repairs and maintenance can be scheduled during periods of low occupancy. The housekeeping department needs to report to the front office any unusual guest behaviours that may result in loss of revenue or bad publicity for the hotel.

Engineering – It is the housekeeping staff's responsibilities to request the engineering department for minor repairs in order to avoid a major breakdown. They must work closely as a team to do preventive maintenance and renovations with minimum disturbance to guests. The engineering department also expects housekeeping staff to contribute to the efforts of conserving heat, water and electricity.

Security – Security's responsibilities may include patrolling the property, monitoring surveillance equipment, and in general, ensuring that guests, visitors, and employees are safe and secure at the hotel. Since housekeeping personnel work in every area of the hotel, they are in a position to significantly contribute to the hotel's security efforts. For example, when cleaning guestrooms, room attendants are usually responsible for locking and securing sliding glass doors, connecting doors, and windows.

Human Resources – The relationship between human resources department and housekeeping department is similar to those mentioned earlier with the front office department.

Food and Beverage – The relationship between the housekeeping department and food and beverage department involves the supply of table linen and uniform, and the cleaning of their outlets. The banquet department, in particular, must advise housekeeping of its anticipated needs since banquet business may fluctuate considerably, thus requiring special planning to assure the required quantity of linen is available and in good condition. The food and beverage department has a responsibility to separate stained or damaged linens that requiring special treatment. A good relationship should be maintained between housekeeping and room service to ensure provision of timely housekeeping services, e.g. removal of trays and tables from the corridors to service landings, VIP set-ups etc. In some hotels, housekeeping is also responsible for minibar replenishment, although the revenue goes to food and beverage department.

Sales and Marketing – The sales and marketing department relies heavily on the housekeeping department for prompt delivery of goods/services as promised to the guests. The major problem they face together, especially in large hotels, is back-to-back conventions and groups. Front office, sales and marketing and housekeeping share the responsibility to ensure that rooms are ready and cleaned for the arriving groups of guests.

Purchasing – The Purchasing department buys all cleaning and guest supplies. Its relationship with the housekeeping department is self-evident. When it comes to deciding what brand, quality or size should be stocked - whether the item is cleaning powder or mattresses - the executive housekeeper and the purchasing agent must pool their knowledge to consider the characteristics, cost and availability of the products.

Accounts – The hotel's controller manages the accounting division which is responsible for monitoring the financial activities of the property. As the housekeeping department maintains inventories of cleaning supplies, equipment, linen, uniform, and other guest amenities, the executive housekeeper must often work closely with for example the storeroom manager, etc who reports to the hotel's controller.

ACTIVITY 19

Fill in the right column with the correct hotel department(s)/staff involved so as to meet guest needs in the following scenarios.

Scenario	Department(s)/Staff Involved
1. A guest wants to get a bouquet and some chocolate for her girlfriend's birthday.	
2. A guest calls the housekeeping department to complain that there is no hot water in the bathroom.	
3. A guest orders room service.	
4. A business traveller discovers that his personal computer left in the guestroom has been stolen.	
5. An old lady feels sick in her room.	

2.2.5.2 In-room Guest Supplies and Amenities

Hotels provide a variety of guest supplies and amenities for the guest's needs and convenience. Guest supplies refer to items the guest requires as part of the hotel stay, e.g. toilet tissues, hangers etc. Guest amenities refer to the non-essentials that enhance the guest's stay, e.g. in-room safe etc. The housekeeping department is responsible for storing, distributing, controlling and maintaining adequate inventory levels of both guest supplies and guest amenities.

ACTIVITY 20

Browse the website of Hong Kong hotels. Complete the table by filling the columns with three appropriate guest supplies and amenities. The first one has been done as an example for you.

Guest Supplies	Guest Amenities
Bath towels	Minibar
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Note that some properties provide only the basic items of guest supplies to guests, while others pamper guests with extra items like fresh fruits and flowers etc.

2.2.5.3 Room Status Codes

Special codes and terminology are used between the housekeeping and other departments (e.g. the front office) for effective communication. One typical example of how these special codes and terminology are used is that when a guest check-out from the front desk and settles his account, the front desk computer system will automatically change the room status to 'vacant dirty' or 'VD'. This permits housekeeping staff to make up the room promptly for arriving guests. As the 'vacant dirty' room is made ready for sale, housekeeping will notify the front desk through changing the room status to 'vacant clean' ('VC') or 'Inspected Clean'. A sample Housekeeping Room Status Report is given as Fig. 13.

The following is a set of commonly used Room Status Codes:

DND : Do not disturb	OC : Occupied clean
OOO : Out-of-order	OD : Occupied dirty
OOT : Out-of-town	VC : Vacant clean
NB : No baggage	VD : Vacant dirty
LB : Light baggage	ED: Expected departure
SO : Sleep out	NNS : No need service
CO : Check-out	XB : Extra bed

Other special terminologies include:

Terminology	Description
Skipper	Room is vacant and guest has left without settling the bill
Sleeper	Room is occupied by guest, but has not been checked into the computer
Complimentary	The room is occupied, but the guest is assessed no charge for its use
Stay-on	The guest will stay for the night
Late check-out	The guest is allowed to check out later than the hotel's standard check-out time
Lock-out	The room has been locked so that guest cannot re-enter until he/she is cleared by a hotel official
Check-out	The guest has settled his/her account, returned the room keys, and left the hotel

Housekeeping Room Status Report

Code :

Date _____

CO	Check-out	NB	No Baggage	OOO	Out-of-order	VD	Vacant Dirty
DND	Do Not Disturb	NNS	No Need Service	OOT	Out-of-town	XB	Extra Bed
ED	Expected Departure	OC	Occupied Clean	SO	Sleep Out		
LB	Light Baggage	OD	Occupied Dirty	VC	Vacant Clean		

Floor Room No		Floor Room No		Floor Room No		Floor Room No		Floor Room No		Floor Room No	
01		01		01		01		01		01	
02		02		02		02		02		02	
03		03		03		03		03		03	
04		04		04		04		04		04	
05		05		05		05		05		05	
06		06		06		06		06		06	
07		07		07		07		07		07	
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"		"		"		"		"		"	
18		18		18		18		18		18	

Checked By: _____

Figure 13 Housekeeping Room Status Report

2.2.5.4 Types of Guest Requests

Housekeeping staff may be called upon to provide special amenities and stock guest loan items to meet requests. These items include everyday items that the guest may have forgotten to pack or items such as irons and ironing board (if they are not routinely provided in the guest room) and personal care items. Such items also vary from hotel to hotel, depending on the market segment the hotel attempts to reach and satisfy. Some examples of such items are:

Adapter	Fan
Additional furniture, e.g. table, chair	Heater
Air-purifier	Humidifier
Bed board	Iron and ironing board
Crib/Baby cot	Morning set (tooth brush & paste...)
Dehumidifier	Rollaway bed*
Extension cord	Transformer
Extra bedding supplies, e.g. pillow, blanket	Vase
	Tapes

*Stands for chargeable item



Stationery & Service Directory



Iron & ironing Board

Most items mentioned above are free of charge upon request. However, some hotels may charge the guest if they request to add a rollaway bed in the guestroom. Apart from these items, guests may also request other services from the housekeeping department. If you were a hotel guest, what other services you would require or expect the hotel to provide to you?

Guests with special needs

- Wheelchair
- Facilities for the disabled

Business travellers

- Broadband Internet service
- International direct dialing (IDD) service
- Local & international newspapers
- Laundry/valet service
- Shoes polishing service
- Other business facilities, e.g. business centre, executive floor, fax machine, laptop computer, conference and meeting facilities

Leisure travellers and holiday makers

- Rollaway bed/ baby cot
- Connecting rooms
- In-room movies
- Sports facilities, e.g. gymnasium, swimming pool
- Spa facilities for beauty and health treatments, e.g. massage, hydrotherapy, facials and intensive foot and hand therapies
- Baby sitting service

Other requests

- In-room dining (Room service)
- Doctor service
- Smoke-free guestroom
- Room make-up service
- Alteration & mending service
- Repair and maintenance service
- Food & beverage enquiries, e.g. hours and location of meals

2.2.5.5 Security Procedures

In a hotel of any size, security is a major concern. The security division is responsible for maintaining systems and implementing procedures which protect the personal property of guests and employees and the hotel itself. Every hotel has its own procedures and guidelines for staff on how to handle guests' valuables, keys and telephone calls. Any unauthorized disclosure of guest information to anyone by hotel staff will be regarded as misconduct. Hotel staff should never disclose guest's information such as guest name and room number to anyone calling in.

Handling Guests' Valuables

A room attendant must report to the housekeeping office any guests' valuables found inside the guestroom during cleaning. It is important that the room attendant stays in the room until the assistant manager, floor supervisor and the security officer arrive at the scene. The case must then be recorded very clearly in the Housekeeping Log Book with the time, room number, item(s) found, the name of finder, and the name of whom the case is reported to and handled by for future reference. The guestroom will then be double locked until the guest returns.

Key Control

The room key is an important instrument that housekeeping staff use to access the guestroom and carry out their duties. All keys must be kept securely and distributed properly. Every room attendant is responsible for taking care of the keys under their charge and not allowing anyone else access to their keys. All keys are kept in the housekeeping office in a locked cabinet and are properly coded. The housekeeping co-ordinator is responsible for the distribution and control of keys. All keys issued must be properly signed for and cancelled after return. The room attendant must complete or sign "The sign in and out" log book listing the number of keys issued.

The housekeeping co-ordinator takes inventory of the keys at the beginning of each shift and prior to the handover of keys to the subsequent shift in charge. The key cabinet must remain locked at all times. Keys issued to the employees must be kept under their own custody and never be left hanging on the trolley or in the door lock. All keys must always be returned to the housekeeping office.

Keys must never be taken out of the hotel premises. The misplacing or loss of key is a very serious matter and should be reported to the executive housekeeper or assistant manager and security officer immediately. An immediate search must be made until the key can be located.

Every member of staff in the housekeeping department is trained to handle the different keys and use the correct procedures when someone asks to open a guestroom.

Suspicious Person

The housekeeping staff must report any suspicious person loitering on guest floors and public areas to the housekeeping office. The housekeeping coordinator will in turn inform the floor supervisor/assistant housekeeper, the assistant manager and the security officer.

Lost and Found

'Lost and Found' refers to:

- a place or an office that keeps any items found inside the hotel; or
- a place or an office where reports of missing items, reported by either guests or staff, are kept and followed up.

All staff should hand in items found inside the hotel premises, regardless of their value. Most hotels assign this duty to the housekeeping department, or the Security department. All information is recorded in the Lost and Found Logbook for prompt and easy reference in case of a guest enquires about a lost item. All items found by the guests and staff should be stored in a ventilated room and kept for three months before being releasing to the finder. Some items, such as perishable food or drink, may be kept for a shorter period. The storage area must be secure.

ACTIVITY 21

Discuss the following scenario: A guest enquires about a missing item in his room, but the Lost and Found Log book has no record of it. How would you handle this situation if you were the assistant executive housekeeper?

3 Food and Beverage Sector

3.1 Introduction to the Food and Beverage Sector

3.1.1 Food and Beverage Operations (Hotel)

Functions of the food and beverage department within a hotel

FOOD & BEVERAGE is a term the hospitality industry uses to refer to all food and beverage needs for an event, dining experience or general catering. The food and beverage department within a hotel consists of many areas and personnel that cater to internal or external guests.

Divisions

Kitchens
 Restaurants
 Catering, internal and external
 Banqueting, internal and external
 Room service (In-room dining)
 Minibars
 Lounge bars
 Stewarding



Food and beverage operation

Kitchens

A kitchen is a place for the storage and preparation of food for consumption. In some hotels, there may be a variety of kitchens catering to different needs from breakfast, luncheon and dinner to events such as gala dinners and conferences. The number of guests being catered for varies depending on the size of the dining facilities and kitchen, the number of staff employed and the equipment being used.

The purpose of a kitchen is to produce the right quality of food of the highest standard for the required number of people, on time, by the most effective use of staff, equipment and materials.

A kitchen can be divided into separate areas:

- Production kitchen
- Banqueting kitchen
- À la carte kitchen
- Grill room
- Pastry kitchen
- Food preparation area



Production kitchen

Production kitchen

The correct design and layout of food preparation and production areas can make a major contribution to good food hygiene. Staff respond better under good working conditions by taking more pride in their work, themselves and their environment. Adequate working space must be provided for each process in the kitchen and the separation of raw and cooked, clean and dirty must be followed to reduce the risks of food contamination.



Production kitchen



Production kitchen

Production kitchens produce foods for separate service areas in the hotel. The amount of food produced can be as large as in the production for airlines or functions centre dealing with several hundred people, or as in the food production for a counter area where smaller numbers of customers are catered for.

Features of a good production kitchen:

- *Designed* so that it can be easily managed.
- *Management* must have easy access to the areas under their control and have good visibility in the areas which have to be supervised.
- *Products* – raw materials to finished product must have an easy flow
- *Personnel* – how people work and move in the kitchen must have a good work flow, therefore good time management.
- *Containers/Equipment/Utensils* – equipment should, where possible, be separated into specific process areas to increase efficiency, hygiene and work flow.
- *Storage areas* should be kept clean and tidy, with temperatures monitored where necessary, and be close to the production areas for improved time management.

Factors that influence the design of a kitchen

Kitchens are designed for easier management. The market that the business is catering for and the style of food operation, which includes the menu structure, are all needed to be considered. Other important factors include:

- Properly planned layouts, with adequate equipments, tools, materials and work space, are essential if practical work is to be carried out efficiently.
- The movement, storage and handling of foods.
- Working methods of staff employed.
- Size of dining area if applicable.
- Number of staff employed and their skill levels.
- Type of operation, e.g. breakfast, luncheon and dinner.
- Storage areas for chemicals and equipments, perishable and non-perishable foods.



Kitchen design

Kitchen design



Chinese kitchen



Western kitchen

ACTIVITY 22

There are many factors that can influence the design of a kitchen. Take your kitchen at home as an example. Can you think of some factors that have influenced its design? Look at its size and shape. How have these two things had an effect on your kitchen?

ACTIVITY 23

List four factors that you think could influence the design of a newly-built hotel's kitchen in Central, Hong Kong. The main kitchen will be located four floors above ground level. Think of the hotel's location and possible problems that they may have.

Restaurants

A restaurant is a retail establishment that serves prepared food to customers. Food is generally for eating on the premises, although 'restaurant' can also describe take-out establishments and food delivery services. The term covers many types of venue and a diversity of styles of cuisine and service. Restaurants can range from modest lunching or dining places catering to people working nearby, with simple food served in simple settings at low prices, to expensive establishments serving refined food and wines in a formal setting.



Hong Kong restaurant



Ritz-Carlton, Tokyo



Dining room, Ritz-Carlton, Tokyo

ACTIVITY 24

There are many different restaurants offering an array of foods and cultures in Hong Kong. Some specialise in foods from different countries. From the web sites eatdrinkhongkong.com and www.vibesasia.com/restaurants/search.htm, see how many different types of foods from different countries are offered in Hong Kong.

Typically, customers sit at tables and their orders are taken by food service personnel who bring the food to them when it is ready. Then, the customers pay the bill before leaving. Restaurants often specialise in certain types of food or sometimes present a certain theme. For example, there are seafood restaurants, vegetarian restaurants or ethnic restaurants. Generally speaking, restaurants selling "local" food are simply called restaurants, while restaurants selling food of foreign origins are called accordingly, for example a *Thai restaurant* or a *French restaurant*.

Hotels may have different restaurants to cater for different events and times of the day. For example, breakfast and luncheon may be served in the same restaurant whereas dinner may be in a more formal setting.

Banqueting and catering (internal and external)

A banquet, event or function can be described as the service of food and drink at a specific time and place, to a given number of guests at a known price. Banquet is a term used to describe a large formal occasion, e.g. Chinese wedding. Some examples of hospitality functions include:

Business functions: Conferences, working breakfasts, luncheons and dinners, meetings

Social functions: Gala dinners, anniversaries, weddings

Some hotels can cater for functions/banquets outside their establishment. The use of refrigerated vans and trucks is necessary for the transportation of food items.



Conference in a hotel



Special function at a Hong Kong hotel

Stewarding Department

The correct cleaning, drying and storage of all equipment used in the preparation and cooking of food is critical to prevent the spread of bacteria and cross-contamination.

Responsibilities of the Chief Steward are:

- Cleanliness of back-of-house
- Washing of pots and pans and other kitchen equipments
- Cleanliness of glassware, china and cutlery
- Inventory of chemical stock
- Maintenance of dishwashing machines
- Pest control, where necessary

ACTIVITY 25

From the list below, which can be described as a function, banquet or event?

Service style	Function	Banquet	Event
Chinese wedding			
Hong Kong Hotels Association Gala Ball			
Premiere of a new film starring Tony Leung Chui Wai			
The launch of a new car for the Hong Kong market			
Conference dinner for the management of Hong Kong Tourism Board			

ACTIVITY 26

Can you think of any outside catering opportunities here in Hong Kong, for example a hospitality tent or booth at the Annual Dragon Boat Racing at Stanley? Give three other opportunities that you consider would be profitable in Hong Kong. Browse through the following website: www.discoverhongkong.com for more examples.



Outside catering



Outside catering



Outside catering

Room service

This is the service provided in a hotel that allows guests to order food and drink to be delivered to their rooms. This service will depend upon several factors:

- Typically found in larger city hotels, especially airport hotels
- Level of service and menu vary
- Challenges
 - Delivery of orders on time
 - Making it a profitable department within food and beverage
 - Avoiding complaints, e.g. food being cold or delivered late
 - Forecasting when the busy times will be during a day or week



Room service

Bar management

Bar management involves the functions of planning, organising, staffing, leading and controlling. Besides, a bar manager's responsibilities often include coordinating, training and evaluating the staff. Bars are run by managers that have a sound knowledge in the making, brewing and distillation of wines, beers and spirits, and also the ability to make alcoholic and non-alcoholic cocktails. Other duties may include:

- Supervising the ordering and storage of wines
- Preparation of wine list
- Overseeing staff, rotas and training
- Scheduling of staff
- Maintaining cost control
- Assisting in wine selection by guests
- Correctly serving wine
- Knowledge of other beverages



Hotel bar



Restaurant bar in Hong Kong



Lobby bar in a Hong Kong hotel

Staff Duties

Food and Beverage Manager

The responsibilities of a Food and Beverage Manager will typically cover a number of areas. They will have the sole responsibility for the day-to-day running of the F&B department and ensuring budgetary controls while overseeing pricing and purchasing in all food and beverage areas. They will also be involved in the recruitment and supervision of a highly skilled F&B team and be responsible for the creation and implementation of seasonal F&B marketing strategies including input into menu planning. Their responsibilities can also include:

- Dealing with all matters concerning spirits, wines and beers.
- Ensuring that the profit margins are achieved for each food and beverage outlet.
- Purchasing, receiving, storing and issuing liquor as well as controlling the overall inventory.
- Interviewing and selecting staff.
- Training of staff for supervisory level.
- Promotion of the beverage department and marketing.
- Co-ordinating requests from other departments within the hotel.
- Complying with health and safety regulations.
- Holding regular meetings with section heads to ensure that all departments are working efficiently.



Hotel lobby and Front Desk

ACTIVITY 27

You are employed as a Food and Beverage Manager with a major hotel in Hong Kong. Make a list of the duties that you think you would be responsible for during the course of one week's work.

ACTIVITY 28

You are employed as a Bar Manager in a major hotel in Hong Kong. Make a list of the duties that you think you would be responsible for during the course of one week's work.

Restaurant Manager

A Restaurant Manager can also be referred to as the *maitre d'* (short for *maitre d'hotel* which literally means "master of the hall"). In a suitably staffed restaurant or hotel this person is in charge of assigning customers to tables in the establishment, and dividing the dining area into areas of responsibility for the various waiting staff on duty. He or she may also be the person who receives and records advance reservations for dining, as well as dealing with any customer complaint and making sure all servers are completing their tasks in an efficient manner. In some localities or traditions, particularly small organisations like a single restaurant, the post is also known as the headwaiter, host or restaurant manager. Their duties include daily operations, staffing and human resources, legal aspects of the business, accounting, finance, marketing, advertising and public relations. Their duties also extend to the followings:

- Responsibilities to the guests
- Responsibilities to the employer
- Responsibilities for health and safety
- Responsibilities for staff training
- Interviewing and selecting new staff

Assistant Restaurant Manager

An Assistant Restaurant Manager will assist the Restaurant Manager in the organisation and running of the restaurant. They will assume full responsibility when the Restaurant Manager is unavailable, on leave or absent. Their duties will include daily operations and staffing and will also extend to:

- Responsibilities to the guests
- Responsibilities to the employer
- Responsibilities for health and safety
- Responsibilities for staff training
- Helping and assisting the Restaurant Manager with interviewing and selecting new staff

Station Head Waiter/Section Supervisor

This person is responsible for a team of staff serving a set number of tables in the restaurant or function; this is known as a *station*.

Station Waiter

In larger hotels this position is sometimes called a *chef de rang*. This employee will work under the direction of the Station Head Waiter and serve guests.

Waiter/Waitress

This employee will work under the direction of the Station Waiter and is usually an apprentice or a person who is just beginning to learn the skills of serving guests.

ACTIVITY 29

Describe the roles of the staff positions listed below:

Position	Responsible to:
Restaurant Manager	
Assistant Manager	
Section Supervisor/ Captain	
Station Waiter	
Waiter/Server	

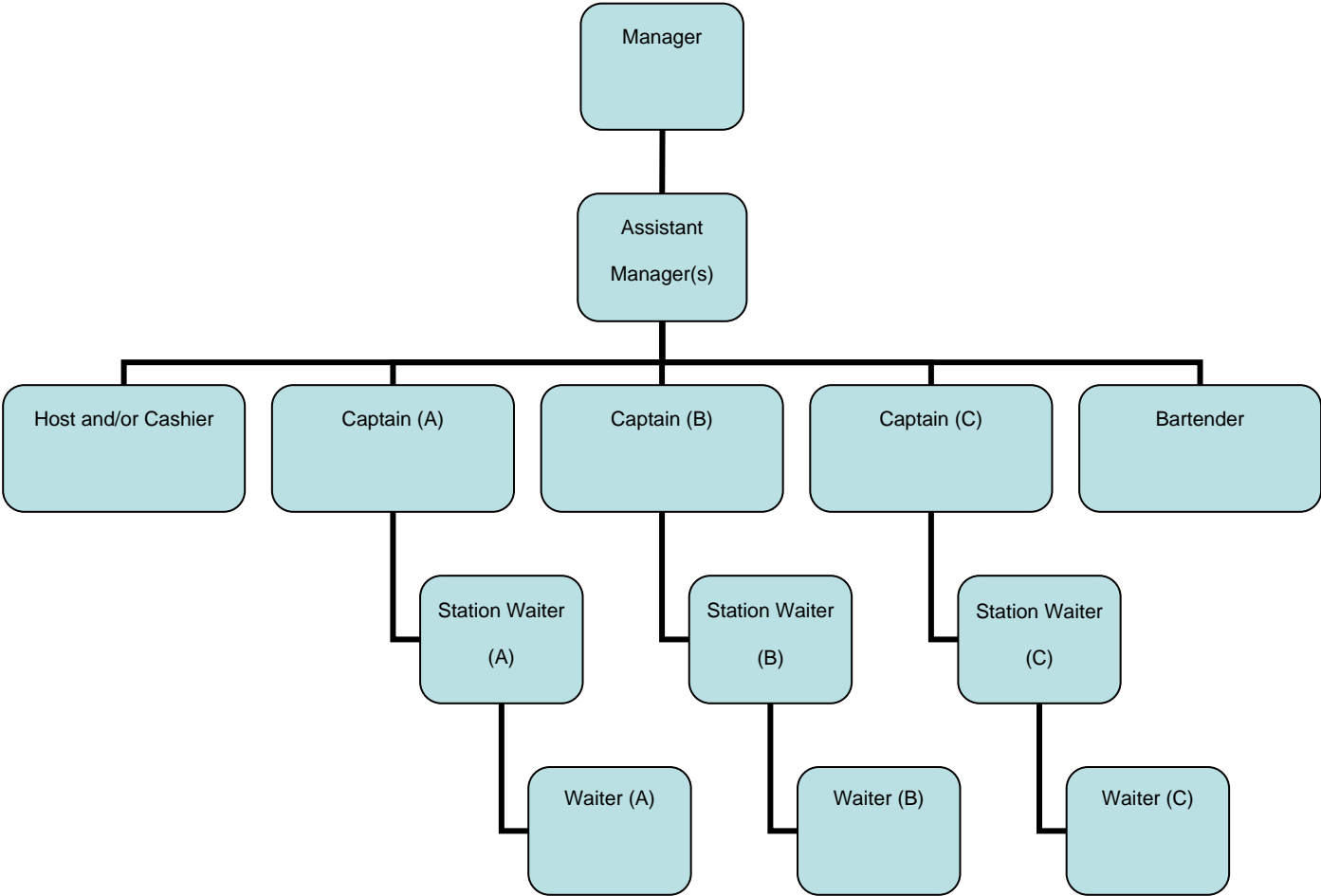


Figure 14 Restaurant Structure



Waiting staff at work



Helping a guest

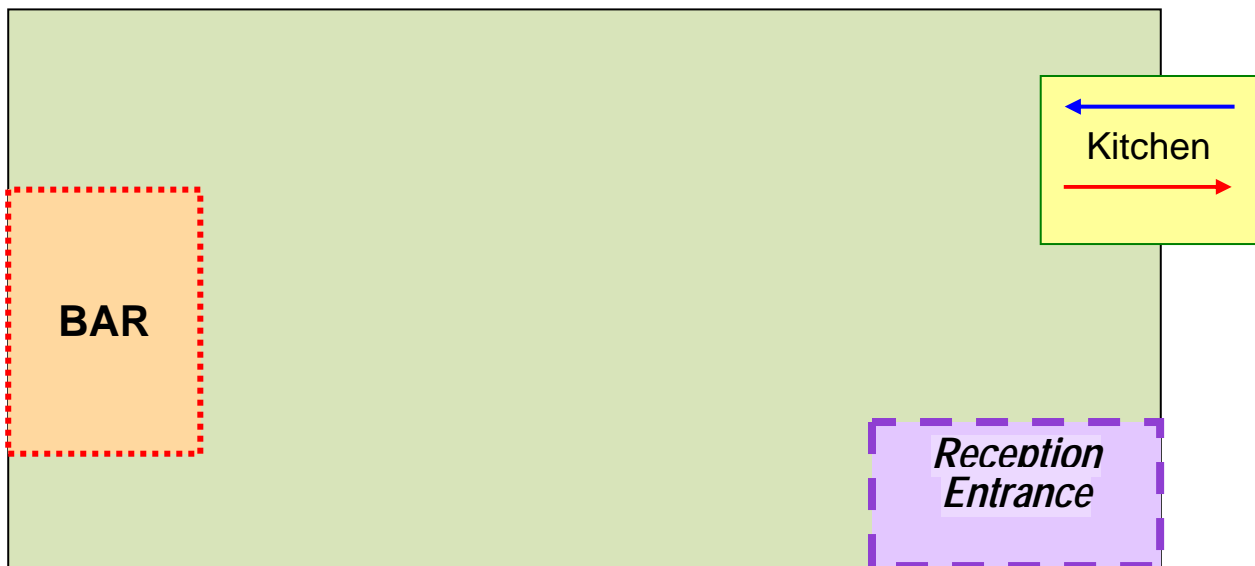
ACTIVITY 30

You are employed as a *maitre d'* in a restaurant that can seat 56 customers. Your task is to draw a restaurant plan for the seating for the night. There are:

- 4 tables for two customers
- 3 tables for four customers
- 3 round tables for six customers
- 3 oblong tables for six customers

Divide the restaurant into three sections with a Station Supervisor for each.

- 3 Station Waiters in each section
- 2 Waiters/Waitresses in each section



Kitchen organisation

Executive Chef

To become a Head Chef or an Executive Chef takes many years of hard work with long hours standing on your feet, working unsociable hours at any time of the day or night. It takes years to learn the skills and knowledge necessary to become proficient in different cooking methods and styles.



Instructing kitchen staff



Chef at work

Head Chef (*le chef de cuisine*)

In large establishments the duties of the Executive Chef, Head Chef or person in charge are mainly administrative; only in small establishments would it be necessary for the Head Chef to be engaged in handling the food. The functions of the Head Chef are to:

- Organise the kitchen
- Compile the menus
- Order the food
- Show the required profit
- Engage the staff
- Supervise the kitchen (particularly during service hours)
- Advise on purchases of equipment
- Be responsible, in many cases, either wholly or partially, for the stores, still room and the washing up of silver crockery etc.
- Be responsible for guest satisfaction
- Ensure food quality and consistency



Head Chef giving instructions to staff

An Executive/Head Chef also has to work in conjunction with:

- Other chefs and cooks
- Food and beverage staff
- Function staff
- Kitchen stewards

In the late nineteenth Century, when labour in Europe was relatively cheap, skilled and plentiful, the public demand was for elaborate and extensive menus. In response to this, Auguste Escoffier, one of the most respected chefs of the era, devised what is known as the *partie* system. The number of parties required and the number of staff in each will depend on the size of the establishment. This system is still used to some extent in today's large hotel kitchens such as The Peninsula and The Marco Polo Hotels.

Second Chef (*le sous-chef*)

The Second Chef/sous chef relieves the Head Chef when they are off duty and is the Chef's 'right hand'. Their main function is to supervise the work in the kitchen so that it runs smoothly and according to the Chef's wishes. In large kitchens there may be several sous-chefs with specific responsibility for separate services such as banquets and grill room.

Chef de Partie

The Chefs de Partie are each in charge of a section of the work in the kitchen, such as sauces and soups, fish, vegetables, larder or meat. This is the job of the specialist. The Chefs de Partie organise their own sections, delegate the work to assistants and are in fact the 'backbone' of the kitchen.



Kitchen staff at work

Pastry Chef (*le patissier*)

All the sweets and pastries are made by the Pastry Chefs, as well as items required by other parties, such as vol-au-vents, bouchees, noodles etc., and also the coverings for meat and poultry dishes when pastry is required. Ice cream and petits fours are also made here. Formerly, a *glacier* was employed to make all the ice creams, but now most of them are produced in factories. The bakery goods, such as croissants, brioche, breads etc. may be made by the Pastry Chef when there is no separate bakery.

Assistant Cooks (*les commis chefs*)

The Chefs de Partie are assisted by *commis* or assistants, the number varying with the amount of work done by the partie, e.g. the vegetable partie is larger than the fish partie due to the quantity of work to be prepared, so there are more assistants in that partie. The Assistant Cook is usually capable of taking over a great deal of responsibility, and in some cases will take charge of the partie when the Chef is off duty.

Apprentice (*l'apprenti*)

The apprentice is learning the trade and rotates among the parties to gain knowledge of all the sections in the kitchen.

For those of you who still desire to become a Chef, the main element that is required is hands-on experience. This experience coupled with an education in the culinary arts has the potential to give you an opening in the culinary world. You should gain this experience as early as possible, perhaps by working in a restaurant while you are in high school.

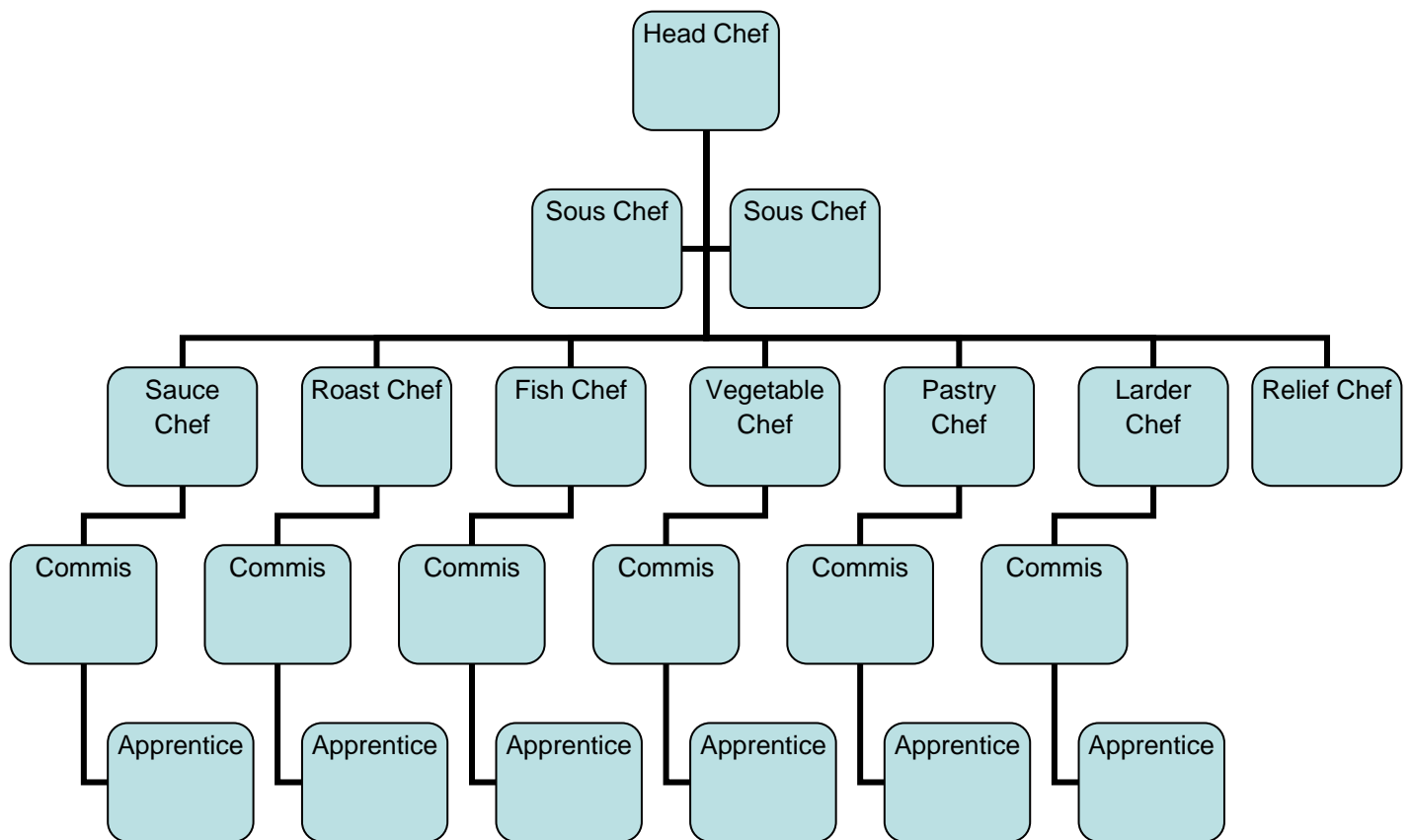
Even if you are not cooking food, you will still have the chance to observe and understand what is needed for the preparation of meals for a large number of people. From this starting point you can decide whether you want to become a chef.

As an educational backdrop you should see if there are any first-class culinary schools that you can enrol in, e.g. Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Here you will be taught the fundamentals of cuisine and hotel management.



Staff training in a Hong Kong kitchen

Figure 15 Example of a traditional kitchen brigade in a large hotel



ACTIVITY 31

Explain the differences between a Sous Chef and a Chef de Partie. What are their roles within a kitchen?

ACTIVITY 32

Describe the role that an Executive Chef would have in a large hotel in Hong Kong today. Use the criteria listed above and give six important functions that you think would be necessary for this position.

3.1.2 Classification of Food Service Establishments



Guestroom

A hotel is classified as a commercial establishment providing lodging, meals and other guest services. Originally guests had two choices:

- Luxury hotels
- Budget hotels

In some countries, hotels were built to serve middle-class families and, when the economy in general boomed and room supply increased; hoteliers then focused on setting themselves apart by offering specialised accommodation for:

- Conventioneers
- Business groups
- Special weekend events and families

As diversity flourished so did competition and brand loyalty. Anyone who can pay (within reason) can rent a room for a night in a hotel. Hotels vary greatly in style and services, from luxury, business, resort, townhouse to boutique and budget. A standard room will have a bed, bathroom facilities, shower, telephone, TV, lounge area and minibar. Housekeeping services available include laundry and dry-cleaning. Nowadays guests would usually have access to a wireless computer network and also to a business centre. Most major hotels will have restaurants and bars available for guests and if they are situated in a large city they are usually located near the business districts, tourist destinations and/or airports.

Independent ownership

Usually refers to small family-run restaurants where the owners have complete control. This was the only existing option before the emergence of chain restaurants. These restaurants do however have the highest failure rate. You often find that groups are made up of independently-run restaurants. Depending on the location of the restaurant the clientele may vary accordingly, however, business usually relies on local customers or its neighbourhood. Examples of independent ownership of food service establishments in Hong Kong would be family-owned and operated restaurants.

Chain ownership

There are many chain establishments in Hong Kong, mainland China, Asia and other parts of the world. Chain establishments can be grouped into single-concept chains and multiple-concept chains. The general public usually has no idea multiple-concept foodservices chains are owned by the same company. Single-concept chains include McDonald's, MOSS Burgers, Subway, Burger King and KFC. Multiple-concept chains include Maxim's Catering Limited, Lan Kwai Fong, King Parrott Group and Igor's. Usually they have a centralised reservation system and some chains offer franchise opportunities.

The opportunities for promotion are considerable as they usually have a strong local and international brand identity. Normally, a percentage of sales is automatically taken for advertising. Again, depending on the location of restaurants the clientele may vary accordingly. Many non-adventurous tourists prefer these international foodservices chains given their consistency in quality and service. Examples are:

International foodservices chain – McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, Moss Burgers, Pizza Hut, Subway, Tanyoto Hotpot, COVA, Haagen-Dazs and Outback Steakhouse, Starbucks Coffee, TGI Friday's.

Local foodservices chain – Maxim's Catering Limited, Lan Kwai Fong, Igor's, Caffè Habitu, King Parrott Group, Café de Coral.

In-hotel restaurants

Most hotels have at least one dining room that can be used for breakfast, luncheon and dinner meals. There are some hotels that do not have a restaurant; in this case guests will have their meals at a local establishment. Some larger and higher-grade hotels may have several restaurants and dining areas, with the number and type depending on the type and service of the hotel, e.g. breakfast and coffee shop restaurant, formal dining room, banqueting facilities. Typically these food and beverage areas are run by a *Restaurant Manager*.

- A major chain hotel generally has at least two restaurants: a signature or upscale formal restaurant and a casual coffee-shop restaurant.
- The restaurants cater for both the hotel guests and the general public. Hotels will promote their restaurants to hotel guests, or in some cases a hotel will allow a brand name restaurant to operate within their hotel as this helps to reduce the hotel's food and beverage costs.

Specialty

Hospitals, Universities, Colleges, Prisons and the Military are all food service establishments whose focus is on minimising costs by optimising efficiency and in some cases they are non-profit-making. The other types of specialty food service establishments are those whose focus is on maximizing the uniqueness of food and beverage concepts. The concepts range from quick services to fine dining with an emphasis on unique features such as health-conscious market – salad bar, Non Genetic Modified (organic) food and beverage, and niche market – specialty coffee shops, pastry shops, ice cream bars.

ACTIVITY 33

- Explain the differences between an Independent and Chain Ownership Restaurant e.g. Café De Coral with an example.

ACTIVITY 34

- Can you give three examples where a major restaurant brand name is operating inside a hotel in Hong Kong?

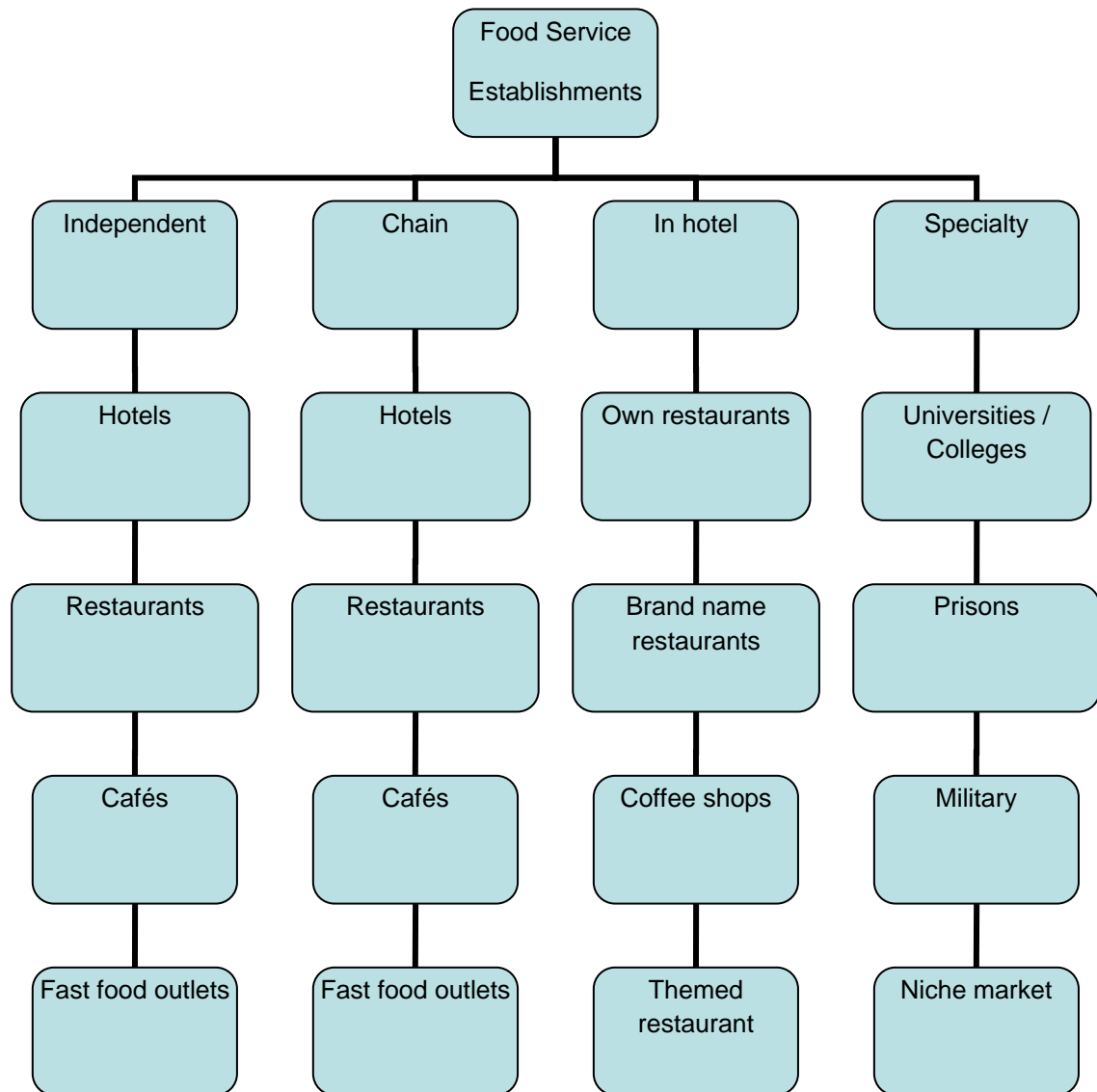


Figure 16 Chart of typical food service establishment

3.1.3 Types of Food and Beverage Services

The different types of food and beverage services are the result of the formulation of restaurant concept. Concept is formulated to attract a certain group or groups of people, and it is integrated with atmosphere, menu, location, marketing, image, and ambience.

Fast food outlets

Customer demand has resulted in a rapid growth in fast food outlets here in Hong Kong. There are a variety of establishments offering a limited to very comprehensive choice of popular foods at reasonable prices. Some establishments may be small and suited to the local area offering local delicacies, whereas others may be part of a national or international chain employing a particular theme, e.g. the type of food and range of items available depends on the type and location of the establishment.

- There is little or no waiting time
- Food can be consumed either on the premises or taken away



Hong Kong fast food



Hong Kong fast food

Traditional restaurants

Food and restaurants are an important part of life in Hong Kong because of the type of society and culture here. We patronise restaurants several times a week to socialise, on family and celebratory occasions such as birthdays and Lunar New Year celebrations, and also to eat and drink for breakfast, luncheon or dinner. They offer a place to relax and enjoy the company of family, friends, school colleagues and associates. As a society we are spending an increasing amount of our money on food items away from home.

Traditional restaurants:

- Use local ingredients
- Cook and serve a variety of traditional foods and beverages
 - Cater to dietary requirements
 - Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages are available
- Cater to a local clientele as well as international visitors



Formal dining

Cafeteria

A cafeteria is a type of food service establishment in which there is little or no table service. It is either a restaurant or within an institution such as a large office building or school. A school dining location is also often referred to as a canteen or dining hall.

A cafeteria can also be a restaurant in which customers select their food at a counter and carry it on a tray to a table available after making payment, if necessary.

It is also a dining area in an institution where customers may select meals at a counter which are then purchased. Alternatively meals may be brought in from elsewhere and consumed on the premises.

Different methods of self-service for customers

- Counter: Customers line up in a queue at a service counter and then choose their menu items. The chosen items are then placed on a tray and taken to the payment point.
- Free flow: The selection is counter service. Customers move at will to random service points exiting via a payment point.
- Supermarket: Island service points within a free flow area. The menu items available at cafeterias usually cover a variety of tastes, e.g. rice or noodles with a choice of vegetable, meat or fish. Soups, sweets and beverages are also available.

Café

A small social gathering place (shop) which sells food and drink. Customers order their food from a counter and serve themselves before paying. Cafés are also:

- Somewhere you can go for afternoon/morning tea, light lunch or coffee.
- Because of their popularity they are now often developed into more of a restaurant with a full range of food and beverage services.
- There is a more casual atmosphere.
- Hong Kong is gradually developing a "Café Culture". In Europe, the Americas and Australasia, cafés have developed widely over the last few years.



Café in Hong Kong

Activity 35

Explain the differences between a Cafeteria and a Café.
Which would you prefer and why?
What type of service style is used in each?

Bars

A bar can be part of a larger operation, like a restaurant, or it can be an individual business. The physical set-up of bars is critical to set the ambience and the theme of the establishment. A bar also allows guests to meet and socialise for both business and pleasure. There are many bars in Hong Kong, mostly in tourist areas and scenic locations, eg Lan Kwai Fong, SoHo, Tsim Sha Tsui, Wan Chai, along the harbour front and The Peak. Most bars will have a quick snack menu available for the guests to choose from. The profit percentage from beverages is higher than that from food and, unlike food, beverages can be held over if not sold. Themes of bars vary according to their location, eg Mexican cantina, African bar, British pub.



Lan Kwai Fong



Bar in a Hong Kong restaurant

ACTIVITY 36

There are many theme bars in Hong Kong. Search the following areas and list four different theme bars that you can find?

Lan Kwai Fong

SoHo

Tsim Sha Tsui

Wan Chai

3.2 Food and Beverage Service Principles

3.2.1 Basic Knowledge of Menus, Food and Beverage Services and Kitchen Operations

Menus were once used as a list of foods in a random order that the patron would choose from, including raw, prepared and cooked items. Not until the 19th Century did menus become more individual with different courses defined. With the formulation of menus, other things began to influence their structure such as the artistry and flair of different cookery methods and the creation of different styles or dishes named after famous people, e.g. Peach Melba, named after Dame Nellie Melba, a famous opera singer of her day.

As more people moved and settled from country to country they brought with them different styles of food and service resulting in a broad variety of restaurants offering an assortment of ethnic dishes. There are many types of food, service styles and menus on offer in Hong Kong that satisfy different budgets and tastes.

Establishing a menu format is helpful in ensuring that each of the five food groups is represented. This will make certain that healthy balanced items are available from the menu. There must be at least one food item from each category on the menu:

1. *Starchy foods*: Potatoes, pasta, rice, noodles
2. *Fruit and Vegetables*: Mango, melon, broccoli
3. *Meat, fish and other non-dairy sources of protein*: Meat e.g. pork, beef, chicken; fish e.g. grouper, sea bream; non-dairy e.g. tofu, red beans, soya products
4. *Milk, eggs and dairy foods*: Cream, cheese, yogurt, sour cream
5. *Fat-containing Foods and sugar-containing foods*: Cheese, bacon, eggs, fatty cuts of meat. Dried fruits, canned fruits, sauces and soups, sugar-containing ice cream

The Five Main Food Groups

There are many ways in which a person can stay healthy throughout their lifetime. One way to stay healthy is to eat a balanced diet. The food pyramid shows the five main food groups, and how much of each of them a person should eat to maintain a balanced diet. The five main food groups are listed below, with information of each provided.

What is a Serving?

An individual quantity of food or drink taken as part of a meal.

An individual portion or helping of food or drink.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta</u></p> <p>To maintain a balanced diet, a person should eat about 6-11 servings a day from this group. The food from this group gives your body energy.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Milk, Yogurt and Cheese</u></p> <p>To maintain a balanced diet, a person should eat about 2-3 servings a day from this group. The food from this group provides you with calcium, which makes your bones and teeth hard.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Fruit</u></p> <p>To maintain a balanced diet, a person should eat about 2-4 servings a day from this group. The food from this group helps keep your body healthy as fruit contains many vitamins.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Meat, Poultry and Fish</u></p> <p>To maintain a balanced diet, a person should eat about 2-3 servings a day from this group. The food from this group provides your body with protein, which helps your body grow strong. Nuts and beans are also in this category as they also provide protein.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Vegetables</u></p> <p>To maintain a balanced diet, a person should eat about 3-5 servings a day from this group. The food from this group provides your body with vitamins, just like the fruit group.</p>

Figure 17 The Five Main Food Groups

For more information on the food pyramid and health, visit:

<http://www.drpboddy.com/nutrition.html>

ACTIVITY 37

Name two **menu items** for each of the five food groups listed above that would be suitable when designing a well-balanced menu:

Starchy foods

Fruit

Vegetables

Meat

Fish

Non-dairy protein

Milk

Dairy foods

Foods containing less fat

Foods containing less sugar

ACTIVITY 38

You have several friends coming to your house for a dinner this weekend. From the items that you have listed in activity 37, assemble a well-balanced menu for the evening, including one non-alcoholic cocktail.

Types of menu



A table d'hote menu (non-selective menu)



A non-selective menu

A *table d'hote* menu may only offer one food item from each category of the menu format and therefore offers little choice. Or it can be a menu at a set price, offering two or three courses with no choice. For example: Soup, main course and dessert.

Table d'hôte menus are a good example of a non-selective menu. The menu is at a fixed price with set items. It can also be a cyclical menu, e.g. changing every day and rotating through the month. The guest is seated and served at a table by the waiting staff.

Banqueting menus can also be *table d'hôte menus* (set menu at a set price) when a large number of people are served at their table at the same time, course by course. Sit-down wedding banquets are a good example.

A non-selective menu would be used in establishments for the following reasons:

- Additional staff are not required in the production
- Simpler and easier to control purchasing
- Less costly due to the limited items required
- Better and easier portion control

ACTIVITY 39

Give three good reasons why a restaurant in Hong Kong would choose to serve a *table d'hôte* menu to its customers during the Lunar New Year.

ACTIVITY 40

Among the restaurants that you know or have been to recently, which of them offer a *table d'hôte* menu? Make a list and see how many you can name.



Selective menu



A table d'hôte menu (non-selective menu)

A selective menu offers at least two choices from each of the food groups in each category.

A good example of a selective menu would be:

À la carte menu

This is a menu with all the dishes individually priced. Items on the menu are prepared and cooked to order. All items on the menu are listed at a separate price and the guest is served at a table.

ACTIVITY 41

Give three good reasons why a restaurant in Hong Kong would choose to serve an *à la carte* menu to its customers during the Lunar New Year.

ACTIVITY 42

Among the restaurants that you know or have been to recently, which of them offer an *à la carte* menu? Make a list and see how many you can name.

Carte du jour

This menu is a list of dishes that are available from the restaurant on a particular day. Customers can choose from this list which may be given to them as a menu card, written on a blackboard or introduced verbally by the waiter/waitress.

Cocktail menu (finger food)

This menu consists of small items (no more than two bites). There is usually a selection of items – canapés, hors d’oeuvres. Service staff will circulate with a tray of items which are offered to the standing guests.

- Usually no menu card
- Dishes can be hot or cold

Visit this website to learn more about cocktail foods.

http://entertaining.about.com/od/horsdoeuvres/Hors_DOeuvres_Canapes_and_Finger_Foods.htm

Children’s menu

A children’s menu can be *à la carte* or *table d’hôte* and offered in conjunction with an adults’ menu. Puzzles and pictures are often found on the menu. The dishes can be prepared very quickly with smaller portion size and lower pricing when compared to a normal menu. This kind of menu is usually available in theme restaurants. Visit these two web sites to look at some children’s menus.

www.joetheismanns.com

<http://allears.net/menu/menus.htm>

The first decision to be made in developing a menu is to determine the frequency of change. A **fixed menu** is much simpler than a daily-change menu. Daily-change menus are required for many types of institutional food services.

- Completely fixed menu
- Fixed menu with seasonal changes
- Fixed menu with changing specials
- Complete daily changes
- Cyclical daily changes
- Daily changes with standard items

A common arrangement is to have a fixed menu for breakfast and changing menus for lunch and dinner.

Cyclical menu

A cyclical menu is compiled to cover a given length of time, e.g. one, two, three month(s), and usually consists of a number of set menus for use in the business. These menus are usually available in industrial catering establishments, cafeterias, hospitals, prisons, colleges. The length of the cycle depends on:

- Management policy
- The time of year
- Foods available
- Cost of items to prepare

ACTIVITY 43

There are several reasons why a restaurant or hotel may choose to use a *cyclical menu*. Can you give two good reasons?

ACTIVITY 44

Among the restaurants that you know or have visited recently, can you name any of them that use a *cyclical menu*?

Healthy menu

You can plan your own menu so as to enjoy delicious food easily while providing your body with important nutrients that are most needed for specific health conditions. Spark your imagination in creative ways to mix and match the recipes and the foods to create deliciously satisfying meals. Use the five main food groups to balance the menu.

A selective menu would be used in establishments for the following reasons:

- Often less expensive as the menu can be balanced with less expensive items.
- There is an increased level of food acceptance as customers can make their own choices.
- Can also encourage correct eating habits from the five food groups.
- Fewer leftovers as customers will eat what they have selected.
- A large quantity of food is not required as you have more varieties to choose from.

ACTIVITY 45

What are the differences between a selective and a non-selective menu?

ACTIVITY 46

Match the description on the left with the appropriate menu on the right.	
1. Menu items are restricted in number	a. À la carte
2. Of the day's menu	b. Table d'hôte
3. Repeats menu after a predetermined period	c. Du jour
4. Offers separate food items at separate prices	d. Limited
5. Offers several food items at a single price	e. Cyclical

Different styles of table service

There are three main table service styles: *American, French and Russian*.

American service is particularly suited to banquet service. It means all the glass and silver, plus napkin and perhaps a service plate, are on the table when guests arrive.

Plate service means waiters serve only plates, which are plated (prepared) in the kitchen. This is the style of service used in hotels and restaurants today.



À la carte setting



À la carte setting



À la carte setting

French service: All the food is presented to the guests seated at the table at the same time. In *Service à la française* ("Service in the French style"), all the food is brought out at once in an impressive display. The guests serve themselves, as often as each of them wants. When a guest places his knife and fork together on the plate it signals that he has finished his meal. The service keeps coming until guests indicate that they have finished. Essentially this service was appropriate for banquets in private homes of the aristocracy and rich. This style of service may also be called *Family service* (the main dish may be plated or silver served – see below).

Restaurants have not found this service appropriate due to money, time and staffing constraints. Because of this, *Russian service* became the norm until the 1970s when the use of large dinner plates that were elaborately prepared for presentation by the kitchen became the trend. (*American service*)



Banquet setting



Modern restaurant setting

Russian service is essentially derived from French service. *Service à la russe* ("Service in the Russian style") is a manner of dining that involves courses being brought to the table in succession.

Its main feature is the preparation of a large platter in the kitchen which is served by the waiter to the guests, using usually a fork and a spoon in the right hand while holding the platter in the left hand. This is also called Full Silver Service. The presentation of the platter to the guests is part of the visual presentation of the food. This style also helps to control food costs – an innovative idea when it first appeared.

In *Service à la française*, the dishes, at least in each course, are arranged spatially but presented to guests all at once. In *Service à la russe*, the dishes are arranged temporally, i.e. served in succession, one after another. Plus the dishes are all offered to the guests by waiters, not passed by the guests. Instead of offering each guest a different assortment of dishes, everyone is offered the same dishes throughout the meal. Also, with *Service à la russe*, roasts are carved in the kitchen or on a sideboard, making it easier for the guests to select the portion they desire.



Seating for a large booking at a Hong Kong restaurant

ACTIVITY 47

Indicate the differences between *American*, *French* and *Russian service styles*. Tick the appropriate boxes.

Service style	Waiter service	Silver service	Guests serve themselves	Plated food items served	Serving utensils used
American					
French					
Russian					

Buffet is a meal-serving system where patrons serve themselves. It is a popular method of feeding large numbers of people with minimal staff. Customers select food from a display, and it is consumed either seated at a table or standing.

There are different types of buffets. One form is to have a line of food serving sections filled with fixed portions of food; customers take whatever food items they want as they walk along and pay at the end for each dish. A good example is a cafeteria.

Well-known in Hong Kong is the **all-you-can-eat** buffet, where customers pay a fixed price and help themselves consume as much food as they wish in a single meal. This type of buffet can be either breakfast; luncheon or dinner and is found often in restaurants, especially in hotels here in Hong Kong.

As a compromise between self-service and full table service, a staffed buffet may be offered. Here diners bring their own plate along the buffet line and are given a portion from a server at each station. This method helps reduce food wastage and is becoming more common in Hong Kong.

Another style of buffet is the traditional buffet offered in Sweden, the smörgåsbord, which literally means *table of sandwiches*.



Buffet in Hong Kong



Buffet in Hong Kong



Dessert buffet in a Hong Kong restaurant

ACTIVITY 48

Write about the last experience you attended a buffet, either in Hong Kong or abroad.

How many different food items were offered?

What was the service like?

Was there sufficient food offered during the entire buffet?

Counter, Cafeteria or Self-service

Customers collect a tray or plate from the beginning of the service counter and move along selecting their meal and then pay and collect appropriate cutlery. Customers may stand or sit while dining, and may also take food away. Schools and work cafeterias are good examples.

Tray line

Queuing in a line past a service counter and choosing menu requirements.

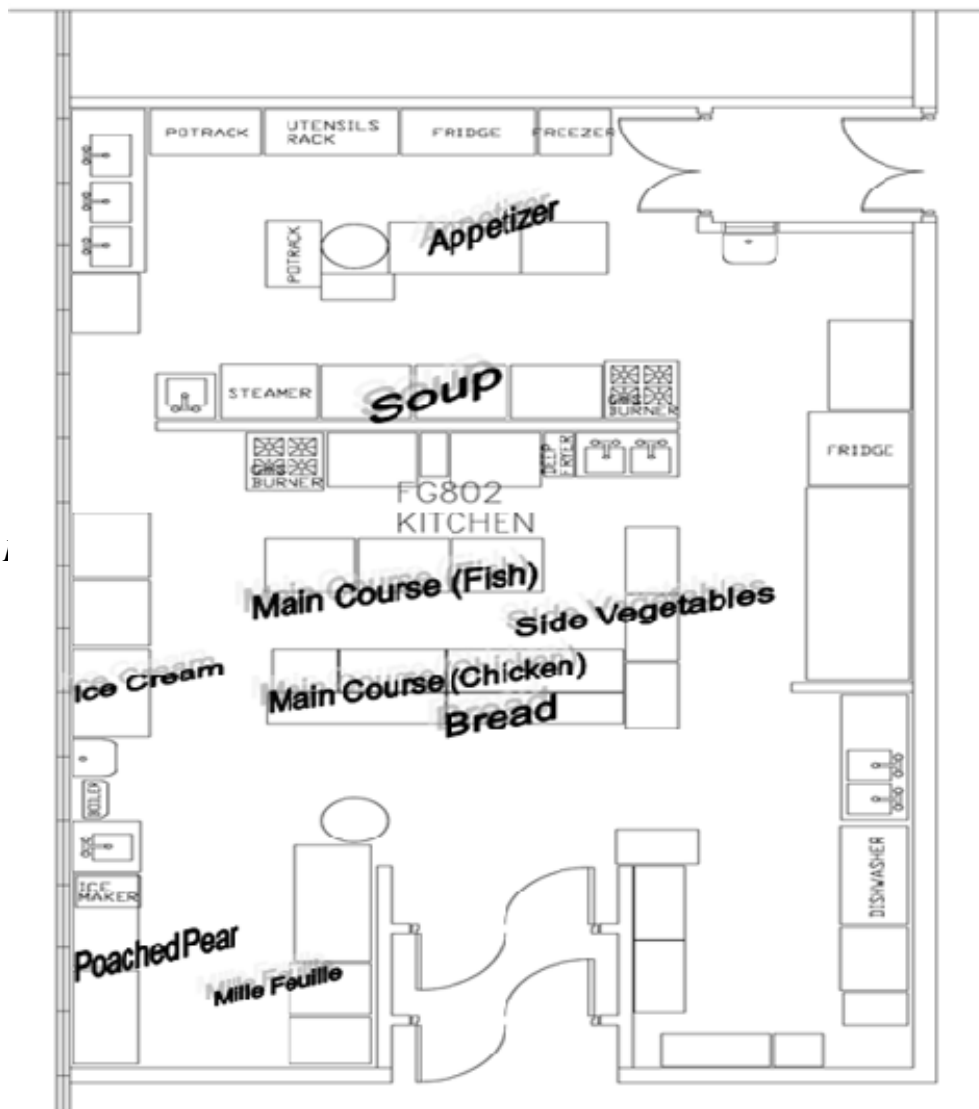
Kitchen layout for different food and beverage services

The choice of service methods and kitchen layouts will depend upon:

- The customer service specifications
 - Methods of service
 - Hours of opening – breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Capability of the staff
- Workers' safety – layout should safeguard the workers by eliminating hazards
- Movement – the layout should provide easy movement of materials and workers. Cross traffic should be minimized.
- Capacity of the operation
 - Fast food
 - Fine dining for 150 guests
 - Banqueting for 500 guests
 - Family restaurant
- Equipment available and efficient use of equipment
- Extent and size of the menu
- Methods of services – serviced or self-serviced:
 - Serviced facilities include
 - Table service
 - Counter service – Japanese sushi restaurants, salad specialty shops, ice-cream and pastry shops
 - Room service – primarily in hotels
 - Self-serviced facilities include
 - Takeaway
 - Cafeteria (used primarily in universities and hospitals)
 - Fast food
 - Vending machines (snacks and soft drinks)

Before a kitchen is planned, the management must consider their goals and an objective in relation to the establishment's marketing strategies. The menu will determine the type of equipment required, number of staff employed, positioning of the business and the type of customer.

Hotel Kitchen Floor Plan



3.2.2 Ambience of an Establishment

Atmosphere refers to the overall feel within the restaurant, and it conveys an image as related to the guests, the menus, and the types of service. The special atmosphere or mood created by a particular restaurant environment is its **ambience**. An intimate ambience can be created by low-key lighting reflecting deep shadows, creating feelings of romance, or bright lighting which could convey a cheerful ambience of joyfulness and happiness. Besides, the colour of the lighting can also affect the atmosphere and customers' feelings, so as the music being played in the restaurant which can have an emotional effect on people; sad or joyful songs, loud or soft music can set a subdued, formal or informal scene and atmosphere in a restaurant. Scent is another way to set an appealing ambience of a restaurant; freshly brewed coffee or the aroma of freshly baked bread, cakes or chocolate are always alluring to guests and in some cases conjure up happy memories from childhood.

Other factors can also affect the *ambience* of a restaurant:

Décor

The décor of a hotel or restaurant is the style of interior furnishings. For a business in hospitality to survive it needs to measure up to every detail that ensures a comfortable and pleasurable stay for the guests as well as the food and service. Along with other factors, decoration is an integral part of the hotel and restaurant business. Interiors of many hotels are in line with the particular hotel design concept, and each hotel or restaurant can be decorated individually – conventional, classical or contemporary as the case may be.



Entrance to a Hong Kong restaurant



Lounge area in a Hong Kong restaurant

Uniforms

A uniform is a set of standard clothing worn by an employee of a hospitality organisation while participating in that organisation's activities.

The use of uniforms by hospitality businesses is often an effort in branding and developing a standard image. It also has important effects on the employees required to wear the uniform. To maintain the high standard and ambience of a business, uniforms need to reflect image and brand identity through their colour, freshness and cleanliness. In some establishments a laundry department will launder the working uniforms or clothing for the employees. If this is not the case then laundering can be outsourced.

Senses

Sight – the perception of visual space depends on a combination of lighting, decoration and colour. It should provide both psychological and physical sense of freedom.

Touch – the perception of comfort while a guest is sitting in the restaurant including physical contact with table, tableware, seat and floor coverings.

Hearing – the perception of overall noise levels including guests' conversation, in-house music, kitchen sounds, machinery and equipment (air conditioners, coffee makers, microwave ovens), servers' conversation and outside noises (cars, shoppers, improvement works).

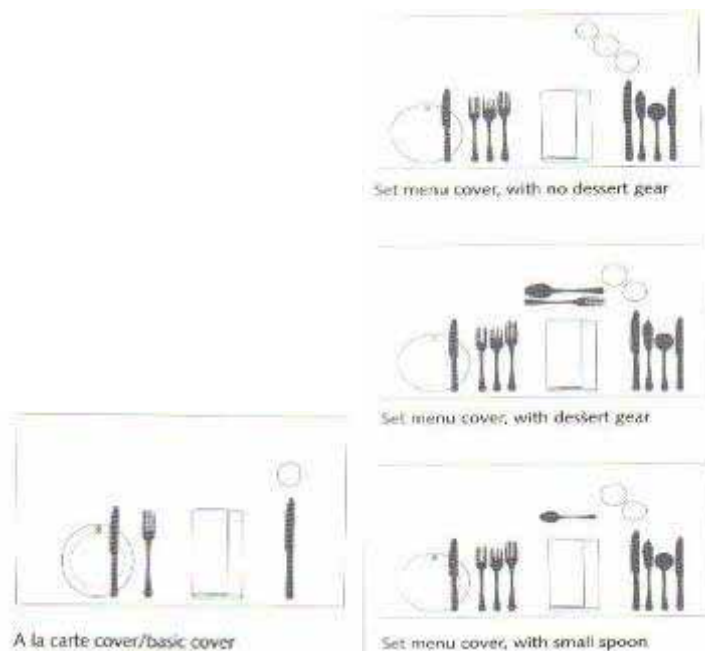
Smell – the perception of cooking aromas, effectiveness of ventilation and air pollution in the neighbourhood.

Temperature – the perception of air temperature in particular outdoor dining (poolside dining, alfresco dining), cooking heat and relative humidity.

Table settings

The table setting also portrays the image of the business and the ambience of the dining areas. The setting should have a centerpiece that performs a solely decorative function. Care should be taken not to make the centerpiece too large so that there will be sufficient room to place serving dishes.

High standard hotels and restaurants usually have white linen table cloths and napkins. Napkins can be folded into many different designs and shapes to add a decorative atmosphere to the restaurant.



À la carte setting
Figure 19

Table d'hôte setting
Figure 20

À la carte

Menu with all the dishes individually priced. Cooked to order. List of dishes.

Table setting: Large joint knife and fork

Table d'hôte

Menu is at a set price, usually with two or three courses. Fixed price.

Table setting:



Formal dinner setting



Formal dinner setting in a Hong Kong Restaurant

Depending on the type of service, utensils are placed about one inch from the edge of the table, each one lining up at the base with the one next to it. The glasses are positioned about an inch from the knives, also in the order of use: white wine, red wine, dessert wine and water tumbler. A well-laid table can add atmosphere and ambience to any restaurant.



Formal dinner setting



Lunch setting in a Hong Kong restaurant



Lunch setting

Items of silverware and glassware used in hotels and independent restaurants follow:



White wine glass, water goblet, pepper mill, salt and pepper shakers, sugar bowl, red wine glass, flower vase, toothpick holder



Table set for luncheon



Toothpick holder

Butter dish

Soup spoon

Dessert spoon

Butter knife

Fish knife

Salad/dessert knife

Dinner knife

Salt and pepper shakers, escargot tongs, service fork and spoon, escargot fork, salad/dessert fork, dinner fork



Entrée plate

Soup Bowl

Flower Vase

Soup Cup & Saucer

Bread and Butter Plate

Salad, Pasta, Dessert, Dinner



Demi-tasse cup and saucer,

Coffee cup & Saucer

Sugar bowl

Milk jug

Hot water pot, tea pot, coffee pot



Irish Coffee

- Champagne flute*
- Pilsner glass*
- Margarita glass*
- Special cocktail glass*
- Martini glass*

Glassware



- Water goblet*
- Wine glass*
- Champagne flute*
- Balloon glass*
- Liqueur glass*
- Port glass*



Wine stopper, wine pourer, wine bottle opener, zester, Hawthorne strainer, ice scoop, bar knife & spoon

Bar equipment



Wine bucket and stand

ACTIVITY 49

Describe the place setting for an *à la carte* dinner at an up-market restaurant.
Describe the place setting for a *table d'hôte* lunch at a local restaurant.

ACTIVITY 50

Describe the differences between the ambience of a restaurant and the décor.
Does each have an impact on customer expectations of service and quality?

Theme restaurants

Theme restaurants are those in which the concept of the restaurant takes priority over everything else, influencing the architecture, food, music and overall 'feel' of the restaurant. It is usually emphasizing fun and fantasy, glamorizing or romanticizing an activity such as sports, travel, an era in time or almost anything (Walker, 2005). The food usually takes a back seat to the presentation of the theme, and these restaurants attract customers solely on the basis of the theme itself. According to Martin Pegler (Pegler, 1997), theme restaurants are divided into six categories:

- Hollywood and the movies
- Sports and sporting events
- Time – the good old days
- Records, radio, and TV
- Travel – trains, planes, and steamships
- Ecology and the world around us

Popular theme restaurants in Hong Kong (excluding ethnic cuisines) include:

- Hard Rock Café – Records
- Charlie Brown's – TV / The good old days
- TGI Friday's – Theme of fun
- Jumbo and Tai Pak Floating Restaurants – Travel
- Modern Toilets – Theme of fun

Some restaurants and hotels theme their business for a particular event or occasion. Many hotels are decorated for special occasions such as festivals, Christmas, Lunar New Year or Mid-Autumn Festival, or for different promotions. Food and wine festivals organised by different F&B outlets and special events like book and product launches or corporate events and private functions are also reasons for hotels, or certain parts of it, to dress for the occasion.



Themed menu



Chinese New Year

ACTIVITY 51

How many different theme restaurants are there in Hong Kong? Type "Hong Kong Restaurants" into your search engine and locate restaurants that fall into this category.

ACTIVITY 52

Name three factors that will make a hospitality outlet into a good Theme Restaurant.

3.2.3 Menu Planning and Design

Everything starts with the menu. The menu dictates much about how your operation will be organised and managed, the extent to which it meets its goals, and even how the building itself – certainly the interior – should be designed and constructed. It is the foundation upon which the layout and other design functions are based. The menu influences every basic operating activity in a food service organization, it affects management decisions about:

- menu items which reflect a balance between profitability and popularity and are some of the most important decisions that food service managers have to make
- the usage and the space of and equipment requirements for the food service facility
- the production methods
- sources of food and staples suppliers

The menu, or bill of fare, is a/an:

- basic document in food and beverage operations
- printed document which informs patrons of the products offered
- integral part of all other functions of any food or beverage outlet

We can therefore consider the menu to have two broad uses:

- As a working document for the back of house (kitchen)
- As a published announcement to patrons out front



Book menus

Objectives of the menu

- Menu items are selected which please the customer and are either profitable (for a commercial operation) or affordable (for a non-commercial operation)
- To establish standards on which to base other activities in the operation, eg either a large five-star hotel in Hong Kong or a small restaurant in Tsim Sha Tsui or Causeway Bay
- To identify the food and drink to be offered, portions to be served, quantities and quality of food and beverage ingredients to be purchased
- The menu and service style contribute in a big way to the business's market image
- Menus are effective marketing tools if they are designed with the needs of the target markets in mind

ACTIVITY 53

Consider:

The factors which influence or constrain the choice of products to be offered on a menu, and how the resulting menu will affect other activities in a business. Imagine that you are having a dinner party with some friends. What are the factors you would take into account when deciding what to serve them for dinner?

ACTIVITY 54

List five objectives that need to be considered when planning a menu for a new restaurant in either Happy Valley or Yau Ma Tei.

Planning

The menu is the plan used to achieve the organisation's profit objectives and to satisfy customers' desires. The main objective of *Menu Planning* is for the business to make a profit while catering to its customers needs, using all available ingredients, equipment, physical surroundings and skills of its employees at a reasonable cost.

Important points to consider when planning a menu

- The type of customer to be attracted
- The cost and price of the menu, and food items
- The supplies that are needed to deliver the menu requirements
- The kitchen size and the staffing skills needed
- The type of equipment that is available in the kitchen
- The balance of the menu (light to heavy, and then back to light again)

A well-planned menu must satisfy guest expectations:

- Reflect your guests' tastes
- Reflect your guests' food preferences
- Ascertain your guests' needs

Besides, the planning of a menu must achieve its marketing objectives by taking into account the followings:

- Location of the business, e.g. near an MTR station or other public transport services, located on Nathan Road or in Central or Causeway Bay
- Times of opening and closing
- Prices that cater to the market segment are identified
- Quality of food and service, e.g. formal dining at first class hotels or restaurants
- Specific food items available to the customers at certain theme restaurants, e.g. TGI Friday's, Hard Rock Café
- Socio-cultural elements, e.g. due to the many nationalities present in Hong Kong, each needs to be considered when planning a menu

Planning a menu will also help to achieve the quality objectives of the business.

Quality standards:

- Flavour, texture, colour, shape and flair of the dishes offered
- Consistency, palatability and visual appeal
- Aromatic appeal and temperature of each item

Nutritional concerns:

A balanced diet is important in this fast-paced modern city of Hong Kong. When planning a menu, customers' preferences for low-fat, high-fibre diets and vegetarian food items also need to be considered.

ACTIVITY 55

Again, assuming you're planning a dinner party, write down a menu you feel would be suitable to serve your friends.

Now, jot down how your proposed menu would affect the followings:

- Purchasing the ingredients
- Storing the ingredients
- Production of menu items
- Serving menu items

ACTIVITY 56

Indicate which points need to be considered when planning the following menus?
Tick the appropriate boxes.

Menu Planning	Customer	Price	Items offered	Skill of staff	Equipment available
Buffet menu					
Themed menu					
A la carte menu					
Table d'hôte menu					

Design

Basic factors of menu design

First impression is always important; the entire menu should complement the operation of the business. Some menus are built around the history of the establishment or the local area, the cultural setting, cuisine or theme of the restaurant.

The menu cover should reflect the identity or the décor of the restaurant and should also pick up the theme, which is effective in creating the correct image.

The paper or card chosen needs to be of good quality, heavy, durable, stain and grease resistant.

Menu design should be unique, simple, highly recognisable, and should develop a relationship with customers. Recognisable designs and symbols can be carefully chosen to appeal to the target market identified.

The style of print should be easily read and well spaced. Customers also recognise and interpret colour differently. Colours are often identified with elegance, wealth, sophistication and other symbols, e.g. navigation lights for shipping and aircraft – red port side, green starboard side. Through the use of colour, fast food outlets design menus to attract customers quickly.



Book-folded menus

The task of the menu writer and designer is to direct the customers' attention to the menu items that the restaurant wishes to sell. A well-identified pattern of customers' eye movement can be followed: What the customer sees first after opening a window-folded menu is the centre inside panel, therefore it is important to use the centre panel to promote items you most wish to sell. With a book-folded menu the customers' eyes move from the lower right-hand panel to the upper left-hand panel.

Clip-on inserts in menus may be used to advertise daily specials and upcoming events.

Menus that contain little information and no descriptions usually fail to inspire customers. A menu should be accurate and honest in its attempt to inform and describe and, above all, reach customers' expectations.



A Window-folded menu



A window--folded menu

ACTIVITY 57

From the information you have read above, list six factors that will make your menu design unique and therefore stand out from those of competitors.

ACTIVITY 58

Again assuming you're planning a dinner party, think of a theme you like and design a menu you feel would be suitable to serve your friends involving this theme.

Take into account the following aspects of menu design:

- Book-folded or a single sheet
- Colour
- Type of card or paper used
- Language used and the font size and type
- Size of the menu
- Cover design
- Artwork used in the design

Menus as a promotional tool

A menu is anything you use to communicate with your potential customers by showing them what your restaurant has to offer. There are different types of menus including traditional hand-held menus, elaborately-printed menus, menu boards and even verbal menus. Not only does a menu play a major role in establishing market position and reaching customer expectations, it is probably the single biggest merchandising and marketing tool you have. Unfortunately many restaurateurs underestimate the role a menu plays in influencing guests' selections and miss out on major sales and profit-building opportunities.

Virtually everything that is undertaken in the restaurant and how the establishment is perceived in the identified market is linked to the food and menu. The menu in large part defines your restaurant's image and elevates or lowers your guests' expectations. Having a stained, dog-eared menu handed to you is not a great way to set the tone for a memorable dining experience. Periodic changes of menus allow restaurants to offer customers with new dining experience. Some common categories of frequency of change of menus are:

Type of menu	Features
Completely fixed menu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most fast food operations • Items in the fixed menu are added or dropped for popularity or profitability consideration
Fixed menu with seasonal changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most food operations • Changes a few times a year for seasonal food items
Fixed menu with changing specials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most food operations • Specials in the fixed menu may be changed daily
Complete daily changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most food operations open for a limited period of time during the year such as summer camps or resorts • Menu has a limited number of food items
Cyclical daily changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities, hospitals and institutions • Fixed with a number of set menus

Source: Kazarian, E. (1989). *Foodservice facilities planning (3rd ed.)*.

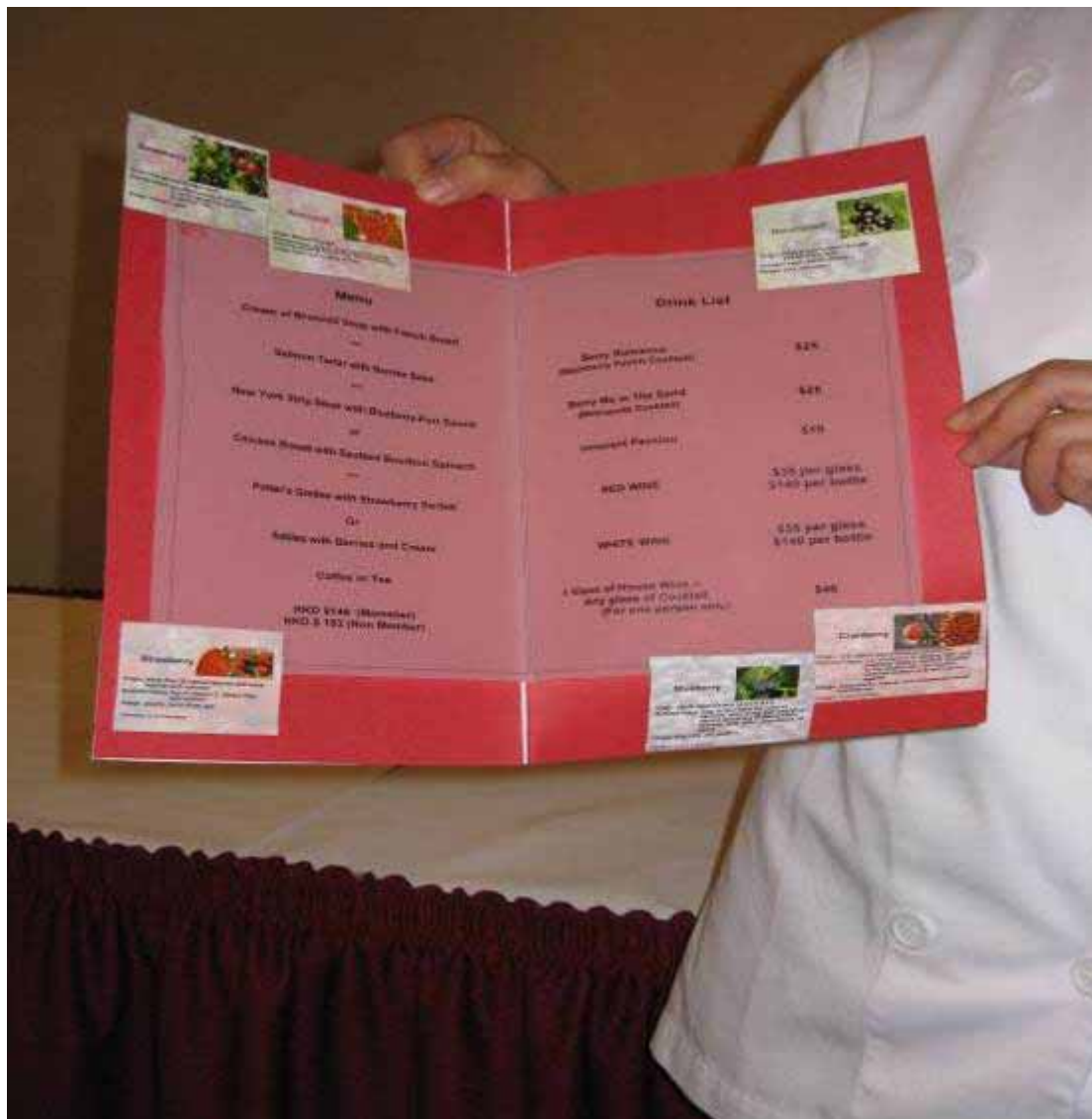


A book-folded menu

In addition to the above basic factors of menu design, the frequency of change of menus could be another marketing tool a restaurateur should consider in communicating with potential customers.

ACTIVITY 59

Can a menu be used as a marketing tool? List three changes you would like to make on the menu below to improve its marketing potential:



A book-folded menu

ACTIVITY 60

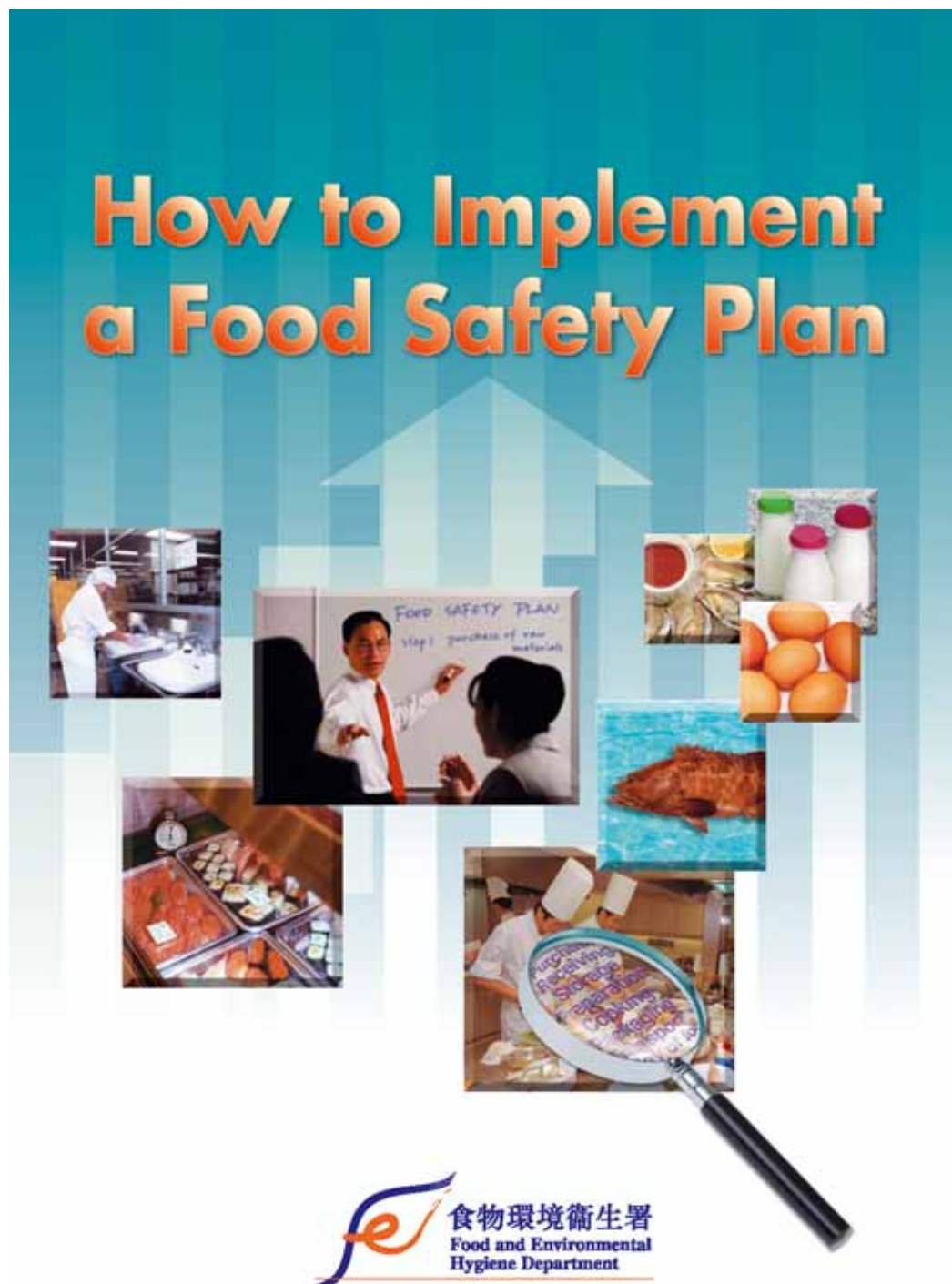
Visit several restaurants or hotels, either in person or through their web sites. Look at their menus and identify the areas that are good and not so good. What can be changed to improve its potential as a promotional tool for marketing the establishment? Comment on the followings:

- Typeface
- Page design
- Colour
- Language
- Size
- Cover
- Paper
- Shape and form
- Artwork

3.3 Food Safety and Personal Hygiene

Information from the Centre for Food Safety, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department covering key points in food safety and personal hygiene.

Acknowledgement: Reproduced with permission from Centre for Food Safety, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.



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Recently, a number of foodborne illnesses occurred worldwide have aroused the concern and anxiety of the public about food safety. Most of these foodborne illnesses are caused by mishandling or improper preparation/storage of food by food handlers (*Appendix 1*). In order to ensure food safety and prevent food poisoning, all food businesses including food service organisations should comply with the existing food regulations as well as prepare their own **Food Safety Plan (FSP)** based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system.

HACCP adopts a proactive approach to anticipate the occurrence of potential problems during the food production process and to implement measures designed to prevent the occurrence of these problems.

HACCP system has been adopted worldwide by many food manufacturing companies. However, a "classical" HACCP system is generally not considered feasible in the food service organisations due to the multiplicity of food products, lack of standardised methods, lack of systematic production planning as well as lack of expertise to develop the HACCP system. This document contains an FSP based on the principles of HACCP in order to assist managers of food service organisations to tackle the above problems and ensure food safety, including:

1. an outline of the stages involved in developing an FSP;
2. a list of potential problems that can occur during food production in catering operations; and
3. a list of control measures that can be applied generally to most catering operations and advices on when and how these control measures can be applied.

What is a Food Safety Plan?

An FSP is designed to identify and prevent possible food safety problems (hazards) in order to enhance food safety. The problems may relate to the purchase, receiving, storage, preparation, cooking, packaging, transport or display of food.

There are six elements in an FSP:

1. List food safety problems (hazards) at each step of the food processing (e.g. purchase and receiving of food)
2. Identify preventive measures and their control limits
3. Establish monitoring procedures
4. Establish corrective actions
5. Keep records
6. Check and review

Appropriate implementation of the above elements, together with the application of some basic practices (e.g. cleaning and sanitation, personal hygiene, pest control, waste disposal and staff training), will certainly prevent food safety problems during the food production.



Stage 1 Planning

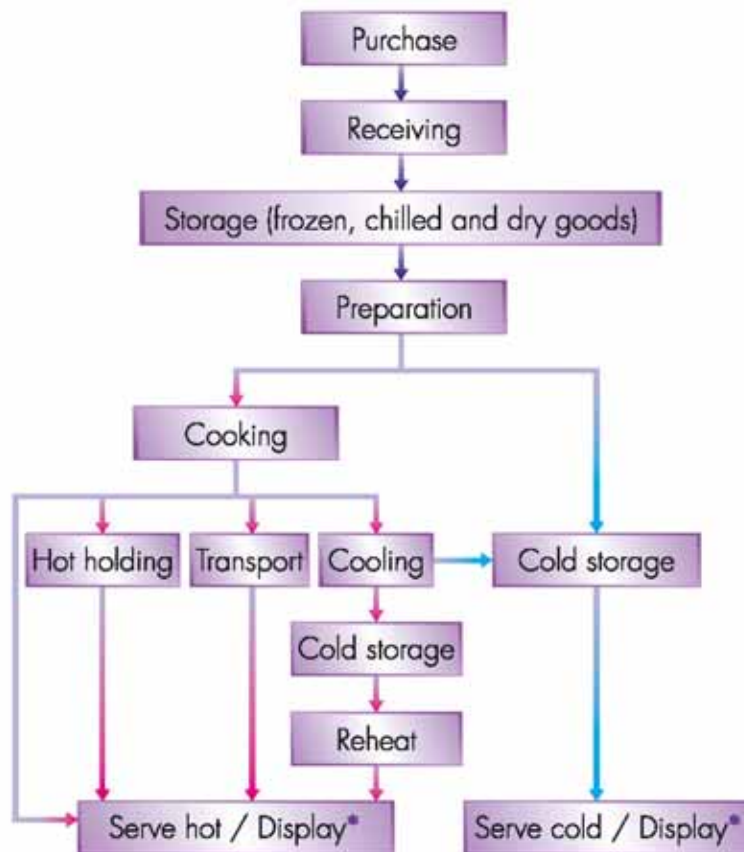
Preliminary planning and preparation will be essential before developing your FSP. A coordinator for developing an FSP should be appointed and adequate authorities and resources should also be provided. The coordinator must have basic knowledge of food safety and must be familiar with the properties of food as well as its processing procedures.

Staff should be made aware of the changes and benefits that will result from the introduction of the FSP. The FSP will only work if each staff member knows their role in the plan, and is committed to making it work. To reduce the anxiety of staff, the FSP should be introduced in phases over a period of time. For example, the FSP could be introduced initially for just the first step of the catering operation (i.e. purchase of raw materials), making sure that the first step is working properly before moving onto the next step.



Stage 2 Draw a flow diagram

A flow diagram should be drawn showing each step in the operation, from purchase of raw materials to serving food to consumers. The flow diagram shown here is a generic example for a catering operation which should be tailored to each individual operation. Each of the steps of the operation can be considered a control point to prevent food safety problems.



Stage 3 Develop a Food Safety Plan

Step 1 List hazards

A hazard is anything that may cause a food to be unsafe for human consumption (Appendix 2). Use your flow diagram to identify all the hazards (food safety problems) associated with each step.

Examples of problems:

- I. Raw materials contain harmful micro-organisms (e.g. raw oysters contaminated with Norwalk-like virus and raw eggs contaminated with *Salmonella*)
- II. Harmful micro-organisms grow and produce toxin during processing
- III. Harmful micro-organisms or toxins survive after heating
- IV. Food contains harmful chemicals (e.g. ciguatera in coral reef fish)
- V. Food contains extraneous physical objects (e.g. metal, glass fragments)



Of these, harmful micro-organisms as well as toxins produced by them are likely to be the most important problems that cause foodborne illnesses.

Step 2 Identify preventive measures and their control limits

List the measures and control limits that can be used to address the identified problems (i.e. those identified at step 1) at each step of the catering operation. A control limit is a value or measurement (such as temperature or acidity) that must be met to ensure safety of the product.

Examples of preventive measures and their control limits are:

Preventive measures	Control limits
I. Using reputable suppliers	Products bought from approved/ licensed and reputable suppliers
II. Adequate freezing or chilling	Frozen/chilled foods should be stored at $-18^{\circ}\text{C}/4^{\circ}\text{C}$ or below
III. Using proper ways to thaw frozen foods	Frozen foods should be thawed under > refrigeration at 8°C or below > cool running water in waterproof package
IV. Cooking thoroughly	During cooking the core food temperature should reach 75°C or above
V. Proper cooling	Cooked foods should be cooled from 63°C to 20°C in two hours and then to 4°C or below in the next four hours

Step 3 Establish monitoring procedures

The monitoring of control limits will ensure that any loss of control (i.e. deviation from control limits) can be identified so that corrective actions can be taken before the product becomes unsafe. The methods used should be kept as simple as possible.

Examples of monitoring procedures include:

- I. Cooking temperature and time measurements
- II. Visual observation of "use by" date and stock rotation
- III. Visual observation of cleanliness of equipment and work surface
- IV. Visual inspection of incoming food ingredients

Simple and clear work instructions for the control and monitoring procedures should be developed for staff to refer to:



- | | |
|------|--|
| I. | What is to be checked? (e.g. the cooking temperature) |
| II. | How is it checked? (e.g. use thermometer to measure temperature) |
| III. | When is it checked? (e.g. measure once every half hour) |
| IV. | Who does the check? (e.g. chef assistants) |

Step 4 Establish corrective actions

If monitoring procedures reveal loss of control, corrective actions must be taken immediately.

Examples of corrective actions:

- I. Reheat the food until its core temperature reaches the pre-determined temperature (i.e. 75°C or above) if the cooking temperature is inadequate.
- II. Adjust or repair the chiller if its temperature is higher than 4°C.
- III. Clean the equipment again if it is dirty.

Step 5 Keep records

Maintenance of monitoring records (e.g. temperature records of the freezer) helps evaluate whether preventive measures are adequate and efficient. You can make reference to the record sheets shown in *Appendices 3 to 17* and choose the ones that are suitable for you to record the monitoring results.



Step 6 Check and review

In order to ensure that your FSP works properly, you should perform a systematic check periodically (e.g. once a week). An example of an FSP checklist is provided in *Appendix 18* to assist you to develop your own inspection checklist. The checklist may help you determine areas in your operation requiring attention and improvement. In addition, you should also review your FSP at least once a year because your operation or products may change.

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Examples of application of Food Safety Plan

Following are examples of possible problems and their controls for each step in the food service operation:

Step: Purchase

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures*				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Raw materials contaminated with ➤ Food poisoning bacteria ➤ Toxins ➤ Chemicals such as pesticides ➤ Glass, metal, etc	Raw materials obtained from approved/licensed and reputable suppliers	Evidence showing that suppliers follow good manufacturing practices	Inspect suppliers' premises and check their monitoring records	Once a year and before renewing contracts with suppliers	Purchasing manager	Avoid unqualified suppliers	Record of approved and unqualified suppliers (Appendices 5 and 6)
		Suppliers' records on customer complaints	Check records	Before renewing contracts with suppliers	Purchasing manager		
	Establish products' safety and quality specifications with suppliers (including delivery temperature of perishable foods)	Requirements mentioned in product specification	Check product specification	Before purchasing	Purchasing manager	Avoid ordering substandard foods	Purchasing record form (Appendix 7) and product and product specification

* Monitoring procedures (e.g. frequency of monitoring) should be tailored made to suit your own operation.

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Receiving

Raw materials or ingredients must be checked against the specifications on deliveries. Depending upon the degree of risk they present, some food or raw ingredients will need to be checked more frequently.

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Damaged packaging and contamination with foreign matter (including food poisoning bacteria)	Packaging is intact and has no visible foreign matter	Integrity of packaging and signs of contamination	Visual checking	Receiving raw materials	Receiver	Reject raw materials and inform suppliers	Records of incoming food and supplies (Appendices 8, 9 and 10)
	Delivery vehicles are clean and hygienic and are not used for the transport of chemicals	Hygienic condition of vehicles and evidence of the vehicle being used to transport chemicals	Visual checking	Receiving raw materials	Receiver	Reject raw materials and inform suppliers	
Presence and growth of food poisoning bacteria during delivery	No sign of deterioration of raw materials (e.g. appearance and odour, etc.)	General conditions of raw materials	Check the appearance of raw materials (i.e. colour, smell, texture, etc.)	Receiving raw materials	Receiver	Reject raw materials and inform suppliers	
	Not exceeding the durability of raw materials	Durability of raw materials	Check the labels	Receiving raw materials	Receiver	Reject raw materials and inform suppliers	
	Temperature of raw materials on arrival: 4°C or below (chilled foods) / entirely frozen (frozen foods)	Temperature of raw materials	Use thermometer and check the appearance of food	Receiving raw materials	Receiver	Reject raw materials and inform suppliers	
	Store chilled / frozen foods at 4°C/-18°C or below immediately after receiving (e.g. within ten minutes)	Procedures for receiving and storing food	Visual checking	Receiving raw materials	Store keeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the procedures for receiving food to ensure that food should be stored within specified time Discard chilled/frozen foods if placed at ambient temperature for too long (e.g. chilled foods have been placed at ambient temperature for more than four hours) 	

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Dry storage

Dry storage includes the storage of some kinds of fruits and vegetables, dried foods (e.g. cereals and seasonings) and canned or bottled foods.

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Cross-contamination	Group and store food according to their properties and store food in appropriate containers	Storage conditions	Visual checking	Storing / taking food ingredients	Store keeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Store food in appropriate containers and reorganise layout to separate different food types Discard contaminated food 	
	Packaging is intact and has no visible foreign matter	General condition of food	Visual checking	Storing / taking food ingredients	Store keeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-wrap the food Discard contaminated food 	
	Keep storage area dry and clean	Hygienic condition of storage area	Visual checking	Before off-duty	Assistant manager	Clean the storage area immediately	
	Storage area is not infested with pests	Cleaning records	Check records	Before off-duty	Assistant manager	Remind staff to clean storage area according to the schedule	Cleaning records (Appendix 13)
		Signs of pests	Visual checking	Weekly	Assistant manager	Use proper methods (e.g. rodent traps) to capture and kill pests where there are signs of pests or employ a pest control company	Pest control monitoring and inspection records (Appendices 14 and 15)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria	Use first-in-first-out (FIFO) rotation (Use date codes or marks to show the time sequence of food storage)	Date codes / marks (e.g. durability / receiving date)	Check date codes / marks	Daily	Store keeper	Discard food if its durability is passed or it has no date codes / marks	Stock records

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Refrigerated storage

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Cross-contamination (e.g. cooked food contaminated by raw food)	Cover/wrap all food and store cooked and raw foods separately	Storage condition	Visual checking	Storing / taking food ingredients	Store keeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover/wrap the food Reorganise layout to separate different food types (e.g. store cooked and raw foods separately) 	
	Keep storage area clean	Hygienic condition of storage area	Visual checking	Storing / taking food ingredients	Store keeper	Clean the storage area immediately	
Growth of food poisoning bacteria and formation of toxins	Storage temperature at 4°C or below	Temperature of the chiller	Use thermometer	Three times a day (in the morning, at noon and before off-duty)	Store keeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust temperature or repair chiller where appropriate Discard affected food 	Temperature record sheet for chiller (Appendix 9)
	Storage area with good air circulation	Storage condition	Visual checking	Storing / taking food ingredients	Chef assistant	Reorganise layout	
	Use first-in-first-out (FIFO) rotation (Use date codes or marks to show the time sequence of food storage)	Date codes / marks (e.g. durability / receiving date)	Check date codes / marks	Daily	Chef assistant	Discard food if its durability is passed or it has no date codes / marks	Stock records

Step: Frozen storage

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Growth of food poisoning bacteria	Temperature of freezer at -18°C or below	Temperature of freezer	Use thermometer	Three times a day (in the morning, at noon and before off-duty)	Store keeper	Adjust temperature or repair freezer where appropriate	Temperature record sheet for freezer (Appendix 11)
	Storage area with good air circulation	Storage condition	Visual checking	Storing / taking food ingredients	Store keeper	Reorganise layout	

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Preparation

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Cross-contamination	Use appropriate methods (e.g. colour code) to distinguish the utensils and cutting boards for handling ready-to-eat foods from raw foods	Utensils and cutting boards	Visual checking	During working	Chef assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean the utensils and put them back to the appropriate location Retrain the staff 	Corrective action record sheet (if taken) (Appendix 1.2)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria and formation of toxin	Ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables are clean and hygienic	Procedures of washing fruits and vegetables	Visual checking	During working	Chef assistant	Discard contaminated ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables	
	Frozen foods to be thawed under <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ refrigeration at 8°C or below ➤ cool running water in waterproof package 	Methods of thawing (e.g. thawing temperature, food is packed in waterproof package, water is cool and running while thawing)	Visual checking	During working	Chef	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust the thawing temperature to 8°C or below Discard contaminated food Retrain the staff 	
	Frozen foods are adequately thawed (no hardening with ice) before cooking	Condition of the thawed foods	Touching and visual checking	Before cooking	Chef assistant	Throw the food under suitable condition further	
	Maximum time for holding thawed foods and cold perishable foods at above 4°C is four hours	Length of time holding perishable foods at above 4°C in food preparation area	Visual checking	During working	Chef assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control the processing procedures so as to shorten the time in which perishable food is held above 4°C Discard perishable foods that have been held above 4°C for more than four hours 	

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Cooking

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Survival of food poisoning bacteria and bacteria spores	Core food temperature reaches 75°C or above	Core food temperature	Use thermometer	Each batch	Chef	Continue cooking food to required temperature	Temperature record sheet
	➤ Minced meat is brown inside ➤ Poultry juices run clear ➤ Fish flakes with a fork	Condition of food during and after cooking	Visual checking	Each batch	Chef	Continue cooking food until thoroughly cooked	

Step: Cooling

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Cross-contamination	Food is protected from contamination during cooling	Cooling environment (whether there is any source of contamination)	Visual checking	During working	Chef assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate the possible sources of contamination Discard contaminated food 	
Growth of food poisoning bacteria and formation of toxin	Containers are clean and hygienic	Cleanliness of containers	Visual checking	Before use	Chef assistant	Clean and sanitise the containers	
	Containers less than five cm/ two inches high	Height of containers	Visual checking	Before use	Chef assistant	Use shallow containers	
	Cool to 4°C or below in six hours (Cool from 63°C to 20°C in two hours and then to 4°C or below in the next four hours)	Cooling time and temperature of foods	Use timer and thermometer	Every hour	Chef assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cool food by – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ dividing into small portions ➤ placing containers in ice water bath ➤ stirring frequently Discard product if temperature is still above 4°C after six hours of cooling 	Temperature record sheet

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Reheating

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Survival of food poisoning bacteria	Heat food to a core temperature 75°C or above as quickly as possible	Core food temperature	Use thermometer	Each batch	Chef	Continue reheating food to required temperature	Temperature record sheet

Step: Hot holding

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Cross-contamination	Cover / wrap all food	Storage condition	Visual checking	During working	Chef assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover / wrap the food Discard contaminated food 	
Growth of food poisoning bacteria and formation of toxin	Keep food at 63°C or above	Temperature of food in holding containers	Use thermometer	Every two hours	Chef assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust hot holding apparatus to keep food above 63°C Discard food if it is held below 63°C for more than two hours 	Temperature record sheet (Appendix 11)

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Display (applicable to businesses providing buffets)

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Cross-contamination	Display ready-to-eat foods* separately from non ready-to-eat foods (e.g. uncooked meat)	Condition during display	Visual checking	During display	Attendants#	Discard contaminated food and review the display layout	
	Use different sets of utensils to handle ready-to-eat foods* and non ready-to-eat foods	Utensils for handling food	Visual checking	During display	Attendants	Discard contaminated food and clean the contaminated utensils	
	Avoid topping up a displayed batch of foods with a fresh one	Handling of food	Visual checking	During buffet operation hours	Chef	Retrain the staff	
	Displayed leftovers are not kept for further use	Handling of leftovers	Visual checking	During and after display	Chef	Discard all leftovers	
Growth of food poisoning bacteria and formation of toxin	Keep food at 63°C or above	Temperature of food	Use thermometer	Every hour	Attendants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust hot holding apparatus to keep food above 63°C Discard food if it is held below 63°C for more than two hours and review display procedures 	Temperature record sheet (Appendix 11)
	Keep cold foods (e.g. raw oysters, sashimi and salad) at 4°C or below	Condition during display	Visual checking	During display	Attendants	Discard food if it is held above 4°C for more than four hours and review display procedures	Temperature record sheet for chiller (Appendix 11)
		Temperature of chillers	Use thermometer	Every two hours	Attendants	Adjust storage temperature or repair the chiller where appropriate	
	Keep displaying food in small portions	Condition during display	Visual checking	During display	Manager	Review the quantity of food for display to shorten display time and retrain the relevant staff to explain the procedures of display	

* Sashimi and raw oysters are classified as ready-to-eat foods.

Attendants should be present at buffet tables to monitor the hygienic condition of displayed food.

Chapter 3 How to implement a Food Safety Plan?

Step: Transport

Hazards	Control Limits	Monitoring Procedures				Corrective Actions	Records
		What	How	When	Who		
Cross-contamination	Delivery persons have good personal hygiene practices	Personal hygiene practices of staff	Visual checking	During delivery	Supervisor	Retrain delivery persons	
	Delivery vehicles are clean and hygienic and are not used for the transport of chemicals	Hygienic condition of vehicles and evidence of the vehicles being used to transport chemicals	Visual checking	During delivery	Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean the delivery vehicle immediately or use an appropriate vehicle Discard contaminated food where necessary 	Vehicle inspection sheet
Growth of food poisoning bacteria and formation of toxin	Keep hot foods at 63°C or above and cold foods at 4°C or below	Temperature of foods	Use thermometer	During delivery	Delivery person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust delivery system so that it can achieve acceptable temperature Discard food if hot food is kept at a temperature below 63°C for more than two hours Discard food if cold food is kept at a temperature above 4°C for more than four hours 	Temperature record sheet (Appendix 11)

An FSP should also include some basic activities (e.g. cleaning and sanitation, personal hygiene, pest control, waste disposal and staff training) so that potential problems arising from the food production process will be prevented more effectively. Listed below are the examples of these activities.

A. Cleaning and sanitation

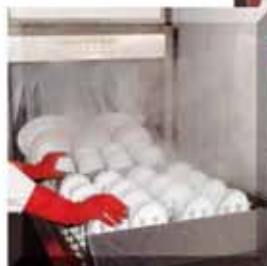
Food preparation areas, facilities, equipment and all food contact surfaces should always be kept clean because food residues and dirt may contaminate food resulting in food poisoning. A cleaning programme should therefore be developed to ensure that cleaning and sanitising be carried out in a systematic, regular and effective manner.

The steps for cleaning and sanitising of utensils are as follows:

1. Remove debris by wiping and scraping
2. Rinse with water
3. Clean with detergents
4. Rinse with water
5. Sanitise with hot water or chemical sanitisers (instructions for use and safety precautions on the labels should always be followed when using chemical sanitisers)
6. Air dry

In order to ensure that cleaning and sanitation is carried out effectively in your premises, you should develop a well-planned cleaning and sanitation programme and maintain relevant records for evaluation. A well-planned cleaning and sanitation programme should include the following elements:

- areas, utensils and equipment to be cleaned
- frequency of cleaning required for each item
- cleaning procedure specified for each item
- equipment and methods to be used
- chemicals or systems to be used
- the staff responsible for each task



An example of cleaning programme

Item	Frequency	Equipment and Chemicals	Method	Responsible Person
STRUCTURE				
Floors	End of each day or as required	Broom, damp mop, brush, detergent and sanitiser	1. Sweep the area 2. Apply detergent and mop the area 3. Use scrub for extra soil 4. Rinse thoroughly with water 5. Remove water with mop	
Walls, window and ceiling	Monthly or as required	Wiping cloths, brush and detergent	1. Remove dry soil 2. Rinse with water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Rinse with water 5. Air dry	
FOOD CONTACT SURFACES				
Work tables and sinks	After use	Wiping cloths, detergent and sanitiser	1. Remove food debris and soil 2. Rinse with water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Rinse with water 5. Apply sanitiser 6. Air dry	
EQUIPMENT				
Utensils, cutting boards, knives, and other cooking equipment	After each use	Wiping cloths, brush, detergent and sanitiser	1. Remove food debris and soil 2. Rinse with water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Rinse with water 5. Apply sanitiser 6. Air dry	
Refrigerators, freezers and storage areas	Weekly or as required	Wiping cloths, brush and detergent	1. Remove food debris and soil 2. Rinse with water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Rinse with water 5. Dry with clean cloths / Air dry	
HAND CONTACT SURFACES				
Door knobs, drawers and switches	Daily	Damp cloths and detergent	1. Remove debris 2. Apply detergent 3. Rinse with damp cloths 4. Dry with paper towel/Air dry	

B. Personal hygiene

Good personal hygiene is essential to ensure food safety. Food poisoning bacteria may be present on the skin and in the nose of healthy people. All food handlers must therefore maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness in order to avoid transferring food poisoning micro-organisms to food. The following points need to be considered by all food handlers:

Handwashing

Hands must be washed:

- Before working
- Before preparing food
- After going to toilets
- After handling raw foods
- After licking fingers, coughing, sneezing, eating, drinking or smoking
- After touching ears, nose, hair, mouth or other bare body parts
- After touching pimples or sores
- After handling waste
- After carrying out cleaning duties
- After changing soiled clothes
- After handling animals
- After any other unhygienic practices



How to wash your hands

1	2	3	4	5	6
					
Wet hands with warm running water	Apply soap	Rub hands for 20 seconds (If necessary, use a nail brush to clean nails. However, the brush must be kept clean and sanitary.)	Rinse hands thoroughly	Dry hands with a paper towel (the paper towel can then be used to turn off the tap)	Turn off the tap with the paper towel

Hand care

- Keep fingernails short and clean
- Cover all wounds or cuts on hands or arms completely with bright-coloured waterproof wound strip
- Wear disposable gloves if there is a wound on hands. Change both gloves and wound strip regularly

Clothing and appearance

- Uniforms and aprons (or clothes) should be clean at the beginning of a work shift
- Wear a hair restraint (hat or hairnet)
- Avoid wearing jewellery while handling and preparing food
- Avoid using strong perfumes/after-shaves
- Do not wear uniforms/aprons outside the food preparation area

**Personal hygiene practices while handling food**

- Avoid touching nose, mouth, hair and skin during food preparation
- Do not smoke in food premises
- Do not cough or sneeze directly onto food. Wash hands after coughing or sneezing
- Wash hands after blowing nose
- Use disposable tissues to wipe hands

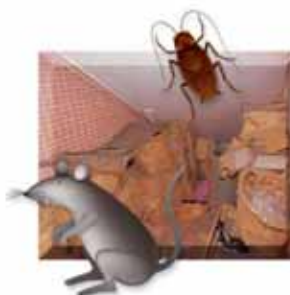
Infection

- Food handlers should be free from any illnesses such as gastroenteritis or flu
- Cease working and report to the manager when feeling ill



C. Pest control

Pests may contaminate food and cause foodborne illness. A pest control programme should be developed to eliminate pests and prevent pests from infesting your food premises. An effective pest control programme should be able to prevent access, deny harbourage and eradicate any pests present.



Design of facilities

- Seal all gaps around fittings or in walls or floors
- Keep doors to the outside closed at all times
- Fit windows open directly into food preparation areas with screens (with apertures of two mm² or less) to keep insects out
- Cover ventilation ducts and floor drains

Preventive measures

- Store food and supplies properly:
 - Cover them properly
 - Store them at least 15cm/six inches off the floor and 15cm/six inches away from walls
 - Store them at low humidity (50 per cent or less)
 - Apply first-in-first-out system
- Remove cartons, newspapers, etc. that may attract and harbour pests.
- Store and remove garbage properly and regularly. Keep refuse bins covered
- Keep garbage in sealed plastic bags and inside tightly covered refuse bins.
- Clean up spillages of food immediately
- Keep toilets clean and hygienic



Inspection

- Inspect both outside and inside of premises frequently (e.g. weekly) for signs of pests
- Check incoming food and supplies for signs of pests (e.g. any pest is harboured inside the packaging of food and supplies)
- An example of a pest control inspection record sheet is provided in *Appendix 14*

Elimination

- Use chemical, physical or biological means (e.g. rodent traps) where there are signs of pests
- Use a zapper or insecticutor to capture and kill flying insects. Ensure zappers are not above or within three metres of a food preparation or storage area
- Avoid spraying insecticide over food preparation surfaces
- Hire a professional pest control company when necessary
- An example of a pest control monitoring record sheet is provided in *Appendix 15*

D. Waste disposal

Waste can be regarded as any item of foods, ingredients, packaging materials, etc. which is not suitable for further use and intended to be disposed of. Waste should be controlled carefully since it presents a risk of contamination of food.

- Waste disposal bins should be placed near the working area of food preparation rooms and positioned conveniently to operating staff
- Waste disposal bins should be clearly distinguishable from other storage bins
- A defined area should be allocated for the storage of waste pending disposal
- When food waste is removed from food preparation area pending disposal, it must be placed in a tightly covered waste storage bin
- Plastic liners should be used in waste disposal and storage bins
- Waste disposal and storage bins should be emptied when full or on a regular basis
- Waste disposal bins should be cleaned and sanitised daily and placed upside down and off the floor to drain overnight



E. Staff training

Training offers food handlers a better understanding of how food can become contaminated, and how foodborne illnesses can be avoided through proper food handling procedures. Each food business must decide what training their food handlers need by identifying the areas of their work most likely to affect food hygiene and safety.

Examples of basic knowledge of food safety:

- Main factors contributing to outbreaks of foodborne illnesses
- Temperature control of potential hazardous foods
- Proper ways of using equipment (e.g. the skill of using thermometer, knowledge of handling cooking and storage equipment)

Examples of basic knowledge of food hygiene:

- Skills and significance of maintaining good personal hygiene practices
- Knowledge and skills of cleaning and sanitising
- Pest control

- It is a good practice for a business to identify the training needs of each staff member
- It is also a good practice to keep training records of every staff member
- Training needs should be reviewed on a regular basis and should be assessed against the role and responsibilities, existing skills, experience and previous training of the staff
- An example of a staff training record sheet is provided in *Appendix 16*

F. Handling customer complaints

Customer complaints should be handled carefully because they help reflect possible problems that may be overlooked by the management during food production. Depending upon the results of investigation, appropriate amendments to the FSP should be made where necessary.

- Establish complaint handling procedures
- Document all customer complaints
- Record details including the date, customers details, reasons for complaining and action taken
- An example of a customer complaint record sheet is provided in *Appendix 17*

For more information about Food Safety Plan, please browse the following websites:

Regional food safety authorities

Australia New Zealand Food Authority

《www.anzfa.gov.au/foodstandardscodecontents/index.cfm》

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

《www.inspection.gc.ca/english/index/fssae.shtml》

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

《www.cfsan.fda.gov/list.html》

Food Safety and Inspection Service (U.S.)

《www.fsis.usda.gov/Index.htm》

International organisations

Codex Alimentarius Commission

《[ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/standard/volume1b/en/RCP_001e.pdf](http://ftp.fao.org/codex/standard/volume1b/en/RCP_001e.pdf)》

Food and Agriculture Organisation

《www.fao.org/default.htm》

World Health Organisation

《www.who.int/fsf/aboutfos.htm》



Main factors contributing to outbreaks of foodborne illnesses

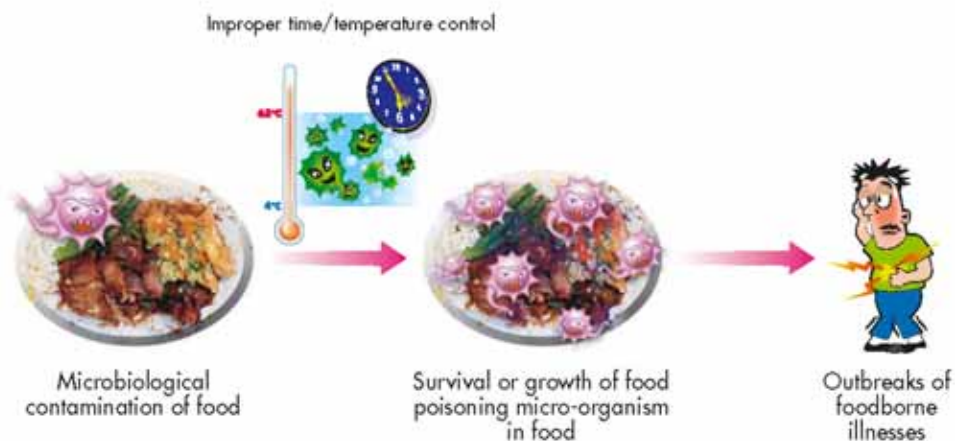
Below is a list of the most common factors contributing to outbreaks of foodborne illnesses. These factors can be categorised into two groups:

1. Microbiological contamination of food

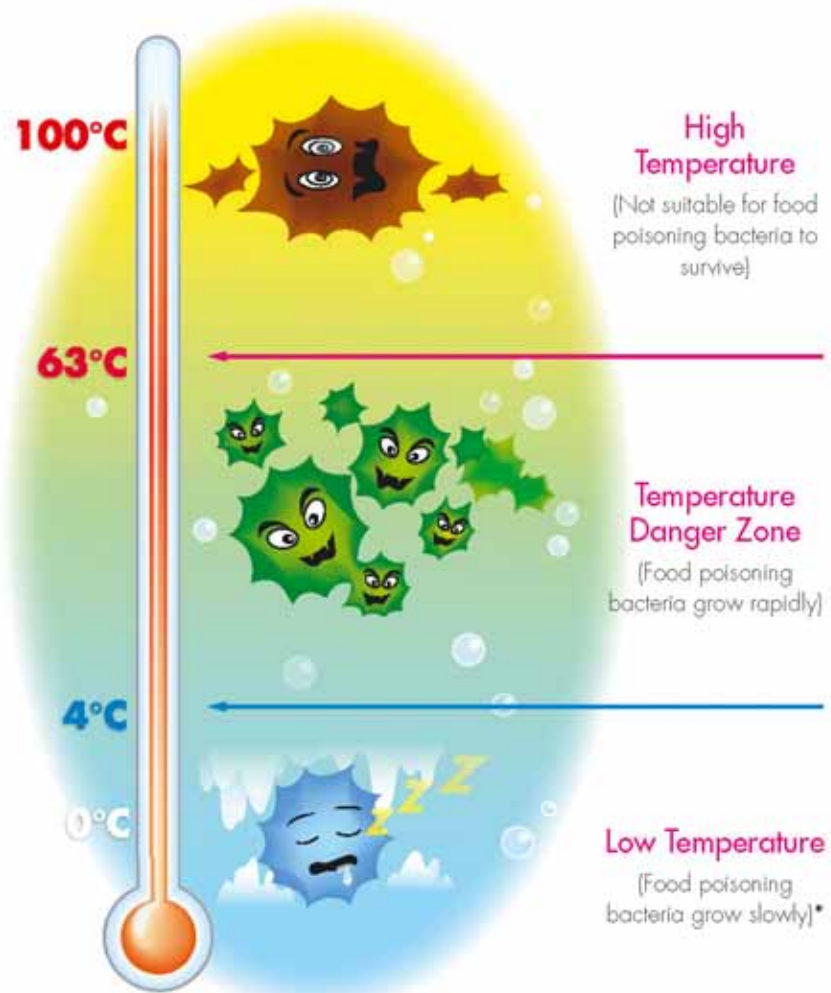
- i. Use of unsafe food source
- ii. Cross-contamination
- iii. Infected food handlers

2. Survival or growth of food poisoning micro-organisms in food (related to improper time / temperature control)

- i. Inadequate cooking
- ii. Prolonged storage of food between 4°C and 63°C (Temperature danger zone at Appendix 1(i))
- iii. Improper cooling
- iv. Inadequate reheating
- v. Inadequate thawing of food before cooking
- vi. Preparation of food too far in advance and storage of food at temperature danger zone
- vii. Improper handling of leftovers



Temperature danger zone

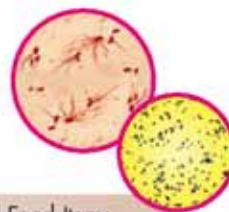


Food should be stored at 4°C or below or 63°C or above to retard the growth of food poisoning bacteria.

* Note: Some of the food poisoning bacteria can still grow at low temperature, e.g. *Listeria monocytogenes*.

Examples of hazards

A hazard is anything in food that may cause harm to consumers. Hazards may be biological, chemical or physical:



Biological

	Sources	Suspected Food Items
• <i>Salmonella</i> spp.	gastro-intestinal tract of humans and animals	Meat and its products, milk and eggs, etc
• <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	skin, hair, nose and throat of humans, and animals	Flour confection, milk and its products, egg products, ham and ready-to-eat foods (e.g. cooked food, sandwiches and sushi), etc
• <i>Vibrio parahaemolyticus</i>	marine environment and seafood	Shellfish to be eaten raw and undercooked shellfish, etc
• <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	soil, faeces of humans and animals, sewage and grease	Raw milk, soft cheese, poultry, meat and cold dishes (e.g. salad, coleslaw and sandwiches), etc
• Norwalk-like virus	Sewage and shellfish	Salad, raw vegetables and shellfish (e.g. oysters), etc
• Hepatitis A virus	Sewage and shellfish	Shellfish (e.g. clams and oysters), etc

Chemical

	Suspected Food Items
• Prohibited pesticides	Leafy vegetables
• Toxins (Fish)	Coral reef fish
• Mycotoxins	Corns, nuts/peanuts and their products, cereals and figs

Physical

• Glass fragments
• Metal fragments
• Stones

Food Safety Plan Worksheet

Production Flow Chart

What is a Food Safety Plan?

A Food Safety Plan is a plan based on the concepts of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).

The consumption of contaminated foods causes many cases of foodborne illness each year. Most foodborne illness is caused by foods handled, prepared or stored improperly by food handlers in the food industry. In order to control food safety problems and protect public health, food businesses may consider implementing the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system.

Basically, HACCP system is the systematic application of good practice to the prevention of food safety problems and hence production of safe food. Prevention has two key elements: (1) anticipation of the problems and (2) design of the right preventive solutions. Prevention should be active, not passive.

HACCP system has been adopted worldwide by many food manufacturing companies; however, a classic HACCP system is generally considered difficult to implement in the food service organizations due to multiplicity of food products and lack of standardized methods, etc. Food service organizations, however, can still devise and implement a suitable food safety plan based on the principles of HACCP.

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Benefits of Implementing a Food Safety Plan

In recent years, a Food Safety Plan based on HACCP concepts is internationally acknowledged as a tool for enhancing food safety.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) recognized HACCP as one of the systems to ensure food safety.

Benefits of a Food Safety Plan based on HACCP includes:-

- Traditional food management systems are reactive to food hazards. However, a Food Safety Plan applies a preventive approach to minimize food hazards.
- A Food Safety Plan acknowledges the responsibilities of the industry for food safety.
- A Food Safety Plan minimizes the limitations of traditional food management systems such as end-product testing and inspection.
- A Food Safety Plan improves consumers's confidence in the product.
- A Food Safety Plan minimize the possibility of food poisoning.
- In a long run, a Food Safety Plan lowers production cost on raw material wastage and food recall.

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Basic Requirements of a Food Safety Plan

A Food Safety Plan should include some basic activities which address hazard control more broadly. Basic activities include: cleaning and sanitation, personal hygiene practices, pest control, waste disposal, staff training and handling of customer complaint.

A. Cleaning and sanitation programme

Effective cleaning and sanitizing remove food residues and dirt and hence minimize the risk of food contamination and food poisoning. A cleaning programme should be developed to ensure that cleaning is conducted in a systematic and regular manner. A well-planned cleaning programme should include the following:

- areas and equipment to be cleaned
- frequency of cleaning required for each item
- the specific standard procedure
- equipment and methods to be used
- chemicals or systems to be used
- the staff responsible for each task



B. Personal hygiene practices

Good personal hygiene is essential for food safety. Disease-causing bacteria may be present on the skin and in the nose of healthy people. All food handlers must therefore maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness in order to avoid transferring pathogens to foods.

- Checklist for personal hygiene practices of food handlers
- How to wash your hands ?

C. Pest Control

Pest may contaminate food and cause foodborne illness. A pest control programme should be developed to eliminate pests and prevent pests from infesting your food premises. An effective pest control programme should be able to prevent access, deny harbourage and eradicate any pests present.



- Different approaches for pest control.

D. Waste Disposal

Waste can be regarded as any item of food, ingredients, packaging materials, etc. which are not suitable for further use and are intended to be disposed of. Waste should be controlled carefully since it presents a risk of contamination of foods.

- Waste disposal

E. Staff Training

Training offers food handlers a better understanding of how food can become contaminated, and how foodborne illness can be avoided through proper food handling procedures.

It is a good practice for a business to have a training plan in order to identify the training need for each member of staff, to keep records of the training completed by every member of staff, and to review regularly the role, responsibilities, the existing skills, experience and previous training of the staff.

F. Customer Complaint Record

Customer complaint helps to reflect the problem of the food production process. Complaints should be handled carefully. Appropriate amendment on the Food Safety Plan can be made if necessary.

- [How to make a customer complaint record?](#)

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Basic requirements of a Food Safety Plan

Checklist for Personal Hygiene Practices of Food-handlers

- ✓ Uniforms, aprons (or clothes) should be clean at the beginning of a work shift
- ✓ Wear a hair restraint (hat or hairnet)
- ✓ Keep fingernails short and clean
- ✓ Avoid touching nose, mouth, hair and skin during food preparation
- ✓ Do not smoke in food premises
- ✓ Do not cough or sneeze directly onto food. Wash hands after coughing or sneezing
- ✓ Wash your hands after blowing your nose
- ✓ Avoid wearing jewellery while handling and preparing food
- ✓ Avoid using strong perfumes/after shaves
- ✓ Do not wear uniforms or aprons outside the food preparation area
- ✓ Cover all wounds or cuts on hands or arms completely with bright-coloured waterproof wound strip
- ✓ Wear disposable gloves if there is a wound on the hand. Change both gloves and wound strip regularly
- ✓ Food handlers to be free from any illnesses such as gastro or the flu
- ✓ Cease work and report to the manager while ill

Hands must be washed before:

- ✓ Working
- ✓ Handling food and utensils

Hands must be washed after:

- ✓ Using the toilet
- ✓ Handling raw food
- ✓ Coughing, sneezing, eating, drinking or smoking
- ✓ Licking fingers
- ✓ Every break



- ✓ Touching pimples or sores
- ✓ Handling waste
- ✓ Carrying out cleaning duties
- ✓ Changing soiled clothes
- ✓ Touching ears, nose, hair, mouth, or other bare body parts
- ✓ Handling animals
- ✓ Any other unhygienic practice

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Basic Requirements of a Food Safety Plan

Different Approaches to Pest Control

Exclusion and restriction (preventing access and denying harbourage)

- ✓ Seal all gaps around fittings or in walls or floors
- ✓ Keep the doors to the outside closed at all times
- ✓ Fit windows open directly into food preparation areas with screens (with apertures of 2mm square or less) to keep insects out
- ✓ Cover ventilation ducts and floor drains
- ✓ Store and remove garbage properly and regularly. Keep garbage covered.
- ✓ Inspect regularly (e.g. weekly) for sign of pests both outside and inside
- ✓ Check incoming foods and supplies for sign of pests
- ✓ Store food and supplies properly:
 - ✓ Cover them properly
 - ✓ Store them at least 15cm/6 inches off the floor and 15cm/6 inches away from walls
 - ✓ Store at low humidity
 - ✓ Apply First-in-first-out system
- ✓ Remove cartons, newspaper, etc. that may attract and harbour pests
- ✓ Clean up spillages of food immediately
- ✓ Keep toilets cleaned and sanitized
- ✓ Keep garbage in sealed plastic bags and inside tightly covered refuse bins

Destruction

- ✓ Use chemical, physical or biological means, e.g., rodent traps, where there are sign of pests
- ✓ Use a zapper or insecticutor to capture and kill flying insects. Ensure zappers are not above or within 3 metres of a food preparation or storage area. Avoid spraying insecticide over food preparation surfaces.
- ✓ Hire a professional pest control company if necessary.

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Basic requirements of a Food Safety Plan

Waste Disposal

- ✓ Waste disposal bins are to be placed around the working area of food preparation rooms and positioned conveniently to staff and operations
- ✓ Waste disposal bins are clearly distinguishable from other storage bins
- ✓ Waste disposal bins in food preparation rooms need not be covered if they are in frequent use and are regularly emptied. Preferably, use bins with a pedal
- ✓ A defined area is to be allocated for the storage of waste pending disposal
- ✓ When food waste is removed from food preparation rooms pending disposal, it must be placed in a tightly covered waste storage bin
- ✓ Plastic liners are to be used in waste disposal and storage bins
- ✓ Waste disposal and storage bins are to be emptied when full or on a regular basis
- ✓ Waste disposal bins are to be cleaned and sanitised daily and placed upside down and off the floor to drain overnight

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5 Keys to Food Safety

Practical Tips for the Trade



Centre for Food Safety
Risk Communication Section



Content

- What is Foodborne Disease?
- Symptoms, causes and contributing factors of Foodborne Disease
- What are the 5 Keys to Food Safety?
- How to apply the 5 Keys to Food Safety
 - Purchase
 - Store
 - Prepare
 - Cook
 - Transport and Serve



What is Foodborne Disease?

- **Sickness caused by food that people eat**
- **Causes**
 - dangerous microorganisms and/or
 - toxic chemicals



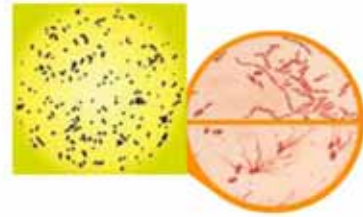
Common symptoms of Foodborne Disease

- **Most symptoms occur in 24 to 72 hours after eating**
 - stomach pains
 - vomiting
 - diarrhoea, etc
- **Most symptoms are mild**
- **Some diseases may severely affect infants, pregnant women, elderly and the sick**



What are the causes locally?

- In the past five years (2003-2007)
 - ❑ about **90%** of food poisoning cases were caused by **bacteria** and **viruses**
- In 2006, the top four commonest dangerous microorganisms
 - ❑ *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (40%)
 - ❑ *Salmonella* species (19%)
 - ❑ *Staphylococcus aureus* (19%)
 - ❑ Noroviruses (15%)



Local contributing factors

- In 2006, the top three contributing factors
 1. **inadequate cooking** (38%),
 2. **contamination by raw food** (15%)
 3. **poor personal hygiene** of food handlers (14%)
- More than half (64%) of the foodborne diseases occurred at **food premises**



What are the 5 Keys to Food Safety?

- Advocated by the World Health Organization to prevent foodborne diseases



1. **Choose** (Choose safe raw materials)
2. **Clean** (Keep hands and utensils clean)
3. **Separate** (Separate raw and cooked food)
4. **Cook** (Cook thoroughly)
5. **Safe Temperature** (Keep food at safe temperature)



5 Keys to Food Safety in Daily Operation

- Purchase
- Store
- Prepare
- Cook
- Transport and serve



Purchase - CHOOSE(1)

- Obtain food and food ingredients from **approved** and **reliable** sources



- confirm that the suppliers have obtained relevant and valid licences from the **Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)**

Please visit

<http://www.fehd.gov.hk/licensing/licence-type.html>

- don't** buy food from **illegal** or **questionable** source, e.g. food of unreasonably low price or meat with abnormal red colour



Purchase - CHOOSE(2)

- Use **fresh** and **wholesome** food ingredients and check the quality of the ingredients upon receipt

- fruits or vegetables are **not damaged** and **without bruised areas**
- canned foods are **not bulging or dented**
- jars are **not cracked** or have loose lids
- eggs in the carton are **not cracked** or leaking



- Food or food ingredients are stored at **safe temperature**

- hot foods at above 60°C**
- cold foods at or below 4°C**
- frozen foods at or below -18°C**



Purchase - CHOOSE(3)

- Do not use food beyond its expiry date
- Read food labels carefully and follow instructions
- Choose food before its expiry date
 - “use by” date
 - “best before” date
- Label and check the storage time of the food in the refrigerator
- Stick to the first-in-first-out principle for food storage

READ THE FOOD LABELS



Purchase - CHOOSE(4)

Difference between “use by” and “best before” date

	“use by” date	“best before” date
Example of Food	A cup of ice-cream	A pack of biscuit
Example of Expiry Date	1-1-2008 If the food is properly stored, it is recommended for use on or before 1-1-2008	1-1-2008 If the food is properly stored, it can be expected to retain its specific properties on or before 1-1-2008
Recommendations after the Expiry Date	Usually, the food is highly perishable. If you consume it after the date, there is a chance that you will suffer from foodborne disease	If you consume it after the date, the food may not be at its best flavour and quality

Store - SAFE TEMPERATURE



- Refrigerate cooked and perishable food **within 2 hours**
- Check and record the **temperature of the refrigerator** with a thermometer and ensure
 - ❑ fridge is at or below 4°C
 - ❑ freezer is at or below -18°C
- Don't overstuff the refrigerator



Store - SEPARATE

- Ideally, use **two separate refrigerators** for storing raw food and cooked or ready-to-eat food
- If raw food and cooked or ready-to-eat food have to be stored in the same refrigerator:
 - ❑ store food in **containers with lids**
 - ❑ store raw meat, poultry, and seafood **below** ready-to-eat food or cooked food in the fridge



Prepare - CLEAN (Personal Hygiene)

■ Wash hands frequently

- ❑ before handling food
- ❑ often during food preparation
- ❑ after handling raw meat or poultry
- ❑ after handling soiled equipment or utensils
- ❑ after coughing, sneezing, blowing nose, eating or drinking
- ❑ after touching ears, nose, hair, mouth or other parts of the body
- ❑ after handling rubbish
- ❑ after handling animals and chemicals
- ❑ after going to the toilet
- ❑ before wearing gloves and
- ❑ after engaging in any activities that may contaminate hands (e.g. handling money, carrying out cleaning duties)



Prepare - CLEAN (Personal Hygiene)

- ### ■ Wash your hands with **warm soapy water** for **20 seconds**
- ❑ wet hands under running water
 - ❑ rub hands together for at least 20 seconds with liquid soap
 - ❑ rinse hands under running water
 - ❑ dry hands with clean paper towels or air dryers



Prepare - CLEAN (Personal Hygiene)

- Food handlers should
 - ❑ wear **clean and light-coloured outer clothing** or protective overalls
 - ❑ wear **mouth masks** when handling food as far as possible
 - ❑ wear **disposable gloves** when handling ready-to-eat food
 - ❑ cover sore or cut on hands by waterproof bandages or gloves
 - ❑ keep nails short and unpolished



Prepare - CLEAN (Environmental Hygiene)

- Wash utensils and worktops with **hot water** and **detergent** after each use
- Keep kitchen clean and away from insects, pests and other animals
 - ❑ keep food **covered** or in **closed containers**
 - ❑ keep **rubbish bins** covered and remove rubbish **at least once a day**
 - ❑ keep **floors, surface channels** and **gratings** clean and clear from food remnants
 - ❑ keep food preparation areas in good condition, e.g. repair wall cracks or holes
 - ❑ use rodenticides or insecticides to kill pests but take care **not to contaminate food**
 - ❑ keep pets away from kitchen



Store - SEPARATE



- Use separate utensils to handle raw food and cooked or ready-to-eat food
- Label utensils (including cutting boards and knives) with different colours, e.g.
 - ❑ Red- Raw food
 - ❑ Blue- cooked food
 - ❑ Green- Ready to eat food
- Use one utensil to taste and another to stir or mix food



Cook - COOK thoroughly



- Thaw frozen food properly before cooking, put it
 - ❑ in microwave
 - ❑ in the fridge or
 - ❑ under running water



Cook - COOK thoroughly



- Ideally, use a food thermometer to check that the core temperature reaches **at least 75 °C**
- When you use the food thermometer, make sure you use it properly:
 - ❑ place the food thermometer **in the centre of the thickest part** of the meat
 - ❑ the food thermometer is not touching a bone or the side of the container
 - ❑ **clean** the food thermometer between each use



Digital Food Thermometer



Bi-metallic Stemmed Thermometer



Cook - COOK thoroughly



- If you do not have a food thermometer, cook or reheat food thoroughly until it is piping hot throughout and check
 - ❑ **meat and poultry:** **juices are clear, not red;**
 - ❑ **blood is not visible when you cut the cooked meat**
 - ❑ **eggs:** egg yolks are **not runny or liquid**
 - ❑ **soups and stews:** bring to a **boil** and continue to boil for **at least one minute**
- Stir, rotate and cover food when microwaving to ensure thorough cooking



Transport & Serve - SAFE TEMPERATURE

- **Never** leave cooked food at **room temperature** for **more than 2 hours**
 - Label foods to indicate how long they have been stored
- For **hot foods**, keep them at **above 60°C**
 - During transportation,
 - wrap them well and place in a **clean insulated container**
 - When serving, they should be held
 - in **warming device** or
 - on **preheated steam tables, warming trays, and/or slow cookers**
 - Check the temperature frequently to ensure it reaches more than 60°C



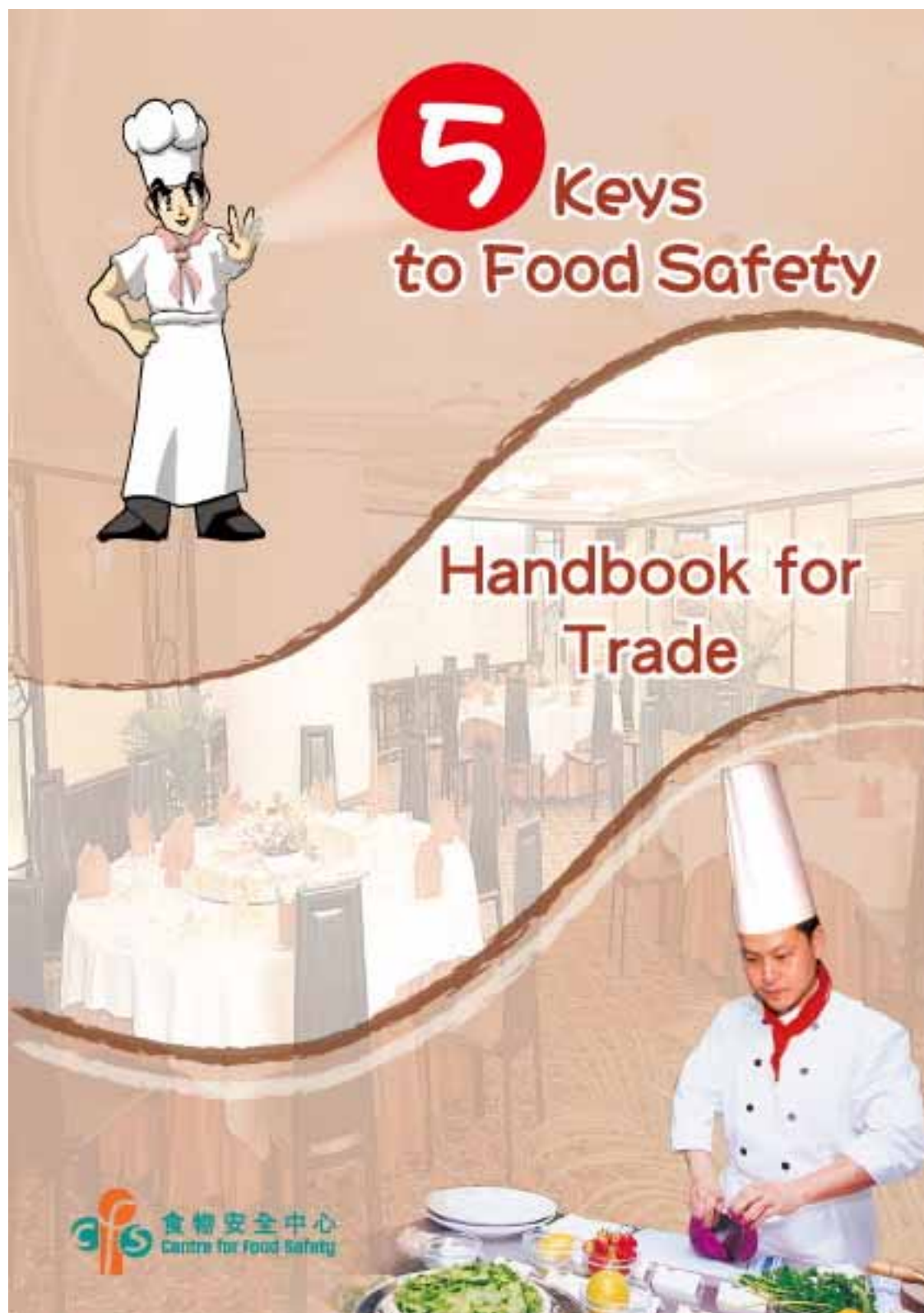
Transport & Serve - SAFE TEMPERATURE

- For cold foods, keep them **at or below 4°C**
 - During transportation,
 - place them in **cooler** with a cold source such as **ice or frozen gel packs**
 - When serving, they should be held in
 - **shallow containers** which are placed inside a deep pan filled partially with **ice** to keep food cold
 - drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently



Follow 5 Keys to Ensure Food Safety







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INTRODUCTION

Proper food handling can prevent most foodborne diseases. Stop microorganisms from making your consumers sick by following the 5 Keys to Food Safety.

WHAT IS FOODBORNE DISEASE?

- Sickness caused by food that people eat is called foodborne disease and is caused by dangerous microorganisms and/or toxic chemicals.
- The most common symptoms of foodborne disease are stomach pains, vomiting and diarrhoea. Most symptoms occur in 24 to 72 hours. Most are mild but some may severely affect **infants, pregnant women, elderly and the sick**. A very small percentage of foodborne diseases may lead to long-term health problems.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES LOCALLY?

- In the past five years, about 90% of food poisoning cases were caused by bacteria and viruses.
- In 2006, the top four commonest dangerous microorganisms were *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (40%), *Salmonella species* (19%), *Staphylococcus aureus* (19%) and *Noroviruses* (15%).

WHAT CONTRIBUTE TO FOODBORNE DISEASES LOCALLY?

- In 2006, the top three contributing factors were **inadequate cooking** (38%), **contamination by raw food** (15%) and **poor personal hygiene of food handlers** (14%).

WHERE DID FOODBORNE DISEASES OCCUR?

- More than half (64%) of the foodborne diseases occurred at **food premises** in 2006.

WHAT ARE THE 5 KEYS TO FOOD SAFETY?

The World Health Organization has advocated five simple and effective keys for people to follow to prevent foodborne diseases. They are:

1. **Choose (Choose safe raw materials)**
2. **Clean (Keep hands and utensils clean)**
3. **Separate (Separate raw and cooked food)**
4. **Cook (Cook thoroughly)**
5. **Safe Temperature (Keep food at safe temperature)**

Below are some practical tips that help you to apply the 5 keys in daily operation from purchase, storage, preparation, cooking to transportation and serving.

PURCHASE

CHOOSE

- Obtain food and food ingredients from **approved** and **reliable** sources
 - Confirm that the suppliers have obtained relevant and valid licences from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). Please visit <http://www.fehd.gov.hk/licensing/licence-type.html> for details
 - Don't buy food from illegal or questionable source, e.g. food of unreasonably low price or meat with abnormal red colour
- Use **fresh** and **wholesome** food ingredients and check the quality of the ingredients upon receipt
 - Fruits or vegetables are not damaged and without bruised areas
 - Canned foods are not bulging or dented or jars are not cracked or have loose lids
- Eggs in the carton are not cracked or leaking
- Food or food ingredients are stored at safe temperature, e.g. hot food at above 60°C, cold food at or below 4°C, frozen food at or below -18°C
- Do not use food beyond its expiry date
 - Read food labels carefully and follow instructions
 - Choose food before its expiry date, which may be either in the form of "use by" or "best before" date
 - Label and check the storage time of the food in the refrigerator
 - Stick to the **first-in-first-out** principle for food storage

Table: Difference between "use by" and "best before" date

	"use by" date 「此日期前食用」日期	"best before" date 「此日期前最佳」日期
Example of food	A cup of ice-cream	A pack of biscuit
Example of Expiry date	1-1-2008 If the food is properly stored, it is recommended for use on or before 1-1-2008	1-1-2008 If the food is properly stored, it can be expected to retain its specific properties on or before 1-1-2008
Recommendations after the Expiry date	Usually, the food is highly perishable. If one consumes it after the date, there is a chance that one will suffer from foodborne disease	If one consumes it after the date, the food may not be at its best flavour and quality

STORE

SAFE TEMPERATURE

- Refrigerate cooked and perishable food within 2 hours
- Check and record the temperature of the refrigerator with a thermometer and ensure the fridge is at or below **4°C** and the freezer is at or below **-18°C**
- Don't overstuff the refrigerator



SEPARATE

- Ideally, use two separate refrigerators for storing raw food and cooked food or ready-to-eat food
- If raw food and cooked food or ready-to-eat food have to be stored in the same refrigerator, do the following:
 - Store food in **containers with lids** to avoid contact between raw food and ready-to-eat food or cooked food
 - Store **raw** meat, poultry, and seafood **below** ready-to-eat food or cooked food in the fridge to prevent juices from dripping onto ready-to-eat food or cooked food



PREPARE

CLEAN – ALWAYS START WITH A CLEAN SCENE

KEEP YOURSELF CLEAN

- Wash hands
 - Before handling food and often during food preparation, after handling raw meat or poultry and after handling soiled equipment or utensils
 - After coughing, sneezing, blowing nose, eating or drinking, after touching ears, nose, hair, mouth or other parts of the body, handling rubbish, handling animals and chemicals, going to the toilet, before wearing gloves and after engaging in any activities that may contaminate hands (e.g. handling money, carrying out cleaning duties)
- Wash your hands with **warm soapy water** for **20 seconds**
 - Wet hands under running water
 - Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds with liquid soap
 - Rinse hands under running water
 - Dry hands with clean paper towels or air dryers
- Keep nails short and unpolished
- Food handlers should wear disposable gloves when handling ready-to-eat food. Discard gloves when damaged, soiled, or when interruptions occur in the operation
- Cover sore or cut on hands by waterproof bandages or gloves
- Food handlers should wear **clean and light-coloured outer clothing or protective overalls**. If clothes become soiled during food preparation, change or clean them as necessary. They should also as far as possible, wear mouth masks when handling food. Discard the masks when damaged, soiled, or after prolonged use



PREPARE

KEEP THE ENVIRONMENT CLEAN

- Wash utensils and worktops with **hot water** and **detergent** after each use
- Keep kitchen clean and away from insects, pests and other animals
 - Keep food covered or in closed containers
 - Keep rubbish bins covered and remove rubbish at least once a day
 - Keep floors, surface channels and gratings clean and clear from food remnants
 - Keep food preparation areas in good condition, e.g. repair wall cracks or holes
 - Use rodenticides or insecticides to kill pests but take care not to contaminate food
 - Keep pets away from kitchen
- You can also follow the suggested cleaning programme in the **Appendix**



SEPARATE

- Use separate utensils to handle raw food and cooked food or ready-to-eat food such as fruits, sushi, or poached chicken
- Label utensils (including cutting boards and knives) with different colours, e.g.
 - Red – Raw food**
 - Blue – Cooked food**
 - Green – Ready-to-eat food**
- Use one utensil to taste and another to stir or mix food

COOK

COOK

- Thaw frozen food in microwave, fridge or under running water before cooking
- Ideally, use a food thermometer to check that the core temperature reaches at least **75°C**. There are different types of food thermometers in the market (details in **Appendix**). When you use the food thermometer, make sure you use it properly:
 - Place the food thermometer in the **centre of the thickest part** of the meat
 - The food thermometer is not touching a bone or the side of the container
 - Clean the food thermometer between each use
- If you do not have a food thermometer, cook or reheat food thoroughly until it is piping hot throughout and check
 - For meat and poultry, make sure that juices are clear, **not red**, blood is not visible when you cut the cooked meat
 - Egg yolks are not runny or liquid
 - Bring soups and stews to a boil and continue to **boil** for at least **one minute**
- Stir, rotate and cover food when microwaving to ensure thorough cooking



TRANSPORT AND SERVE

SAFE TEMPERATURE

- For hot food, keep them at above **60°C**
 - During transportation, wrap them well and place in a clean insulated container
 - When serving, they should be held in warming device, or on preheated steam tables, warming trays, and/or slow cookers
 - Check the temperature frequently to ensure food reaches more than **60°C**
- For cold food, keep them at or below **4°C**
 - During transportation, place them in cooler with a cold source such as ice or frozen gel packs
 - When serving, they should be held in shallow containers which are placed inside a deep pan filled partially with ice to keep food cold. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently
- **Never** leave cooked food at **room temperature** for more than **2 hours**
 - Label food to indicate how long they have been stored



CHECKLIST OF 5 KEYS TO FOOD SAFETY

When purchasing food and food ingredients:

Source from suppliers who have obtained relevant and valid licences from FEHD ☐

When receiving goods:

Check that food is stored at proper temperature and storage conditions ☐

Check the expiry date of the prepackaged food ☐

During food storage:

Stick to the first-in-first-out principle ☐

Store cooked and perishable foods in the refrigerator within two hours if not used immediately ☐

Label and check the storage time of food in the refrigerator ☐

When using the refrigerator:

Do not overstuff it ☐

Check and record the temperature of the refrigerator to ensure that the fridge is kept at 4°C or below; freezer is kept at -18°C or below ☐

Store food in containers with lids ☐

Store raw food in separate refrigerators or under the cooked food or ready-to-eat food in the same refrigerator ☐

Before preparing food, keep yourself clean:

Wear clean and light-coloured outer clothing ☐

Cover sore and cut by waterproof bandages or gloves ☐

Nails are short and unpolished ☐

Wash hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds ☐

Wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat food and change them regularly ☐

Before preparing food, keep the environment clean:

Keep food preparation areas free from insects, pests and other animals ☐

Floors, surface channels and gratings are clean ☐

Cover rubbish bins and remove rubbish daily ☐

Cover food well ☐

CHECKLIST OF 5 KEYS TO FOOD SAFETY

During food preparation:

- Use separate knives and cutting boards for raw food and cooked food ☐
- Wash hands between handling raw food and cooked food ☐
- Thaw frozen food in microwave, fridge or under running water ☐
- Cook food thoroughly and use a food thermometer to check that the core temperature reaches at least 75°C ☐
- Bring soup and stews to a boil and keep for at least one minute ☐
- Check that juices of poultry and meat are clear, not red ☐
- Check that egg yolks are not runny or liquid ☐
- Stir and rotate dish in the microwave ☐
- Use separate dishes and bowls for raw food and cooked food or ready-to-eat food ☐

After food preparation:

- Wash utensils and worktops with hot water and detergent ☐

When transporting food:

- Wrap hot food well and place in a clean insulated container ☐
- Store cold food in a cooler with a cold source ☐

When serving food:

- Keep hot food at above 60°C ☐
- Keep cold food at or below 4°C ☐

APPENDIX: A SUGGESTED CLEANING PROGRAMME

Item		Least Frequency	Equipment and Chemicals	Method
Structure	Floors	End of each day or as required	Brooms, damp mops, brushes, detergents and sanitizers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sweep the area 2. Apply detergent and mop the area 3. Use scrub for extra soil 4. Rinse thoroughly with water 5. Remove water with mop
	Walls, windows and ceiling	Monthly or as required	Wiping cloths, brushes and detergents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove dry soil 2. Rub with wet cloth or rinse with water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Wipe with wet cloth or rinse with water 5. Air dry
Food Contact Surfaces	Work tables and sinks	After use	Wiping cloths, detergents and sanitizers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove food debris and soil 2. Rub with wet cloth or rinse with hot water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Wipe with wet cloth or rinse with water 5. Apply sanitizer 6. Air dry

APPENDIX: A SUGGESTED CLEANING PROGRAMME

Item		Least Frequency	Equipment and Chemicals	Method
Equipment	Utensils, cutting boards, knives and other cooking equipment	After each use	Wiping cloths, brushes, detergents and sanitizers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove food debris and soil 2. Rinse with hot water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Rinse with water 5. Apply sanitizer/boiling water 6. Air dry
	Refrigerators, freezers and storage areas	Weekly or as required	Wiping cloths, brushes and detergents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove food debris and soil 2. Rub with wet cloth or rinse with water 3. Apply detergent and wash 4. Wipe with wet cloth or rinse with water 5. Dry with clean cloths/air dry
Hand Contact Surfaces	Door knobs	Daily	Damp cloths and detergents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove debris 2. Apply detergent 3. Rinse with damp cloths 4. Dry with towels/air dry
Carpet	Floors	Monthly	Steam/chemicals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove debris 2. Apply chemicals 3. Vacuum dry

List of bactericidal agents approved by FEHD can be obtained at the following <http://www.fehd.gov.hk/howto/series/doc/bactericidal-allreport.pdf>

APPENDIX: COMMON TYPES OF FOOD THERMOMETERS

1. Bi-metallic Stemmed Thermometers

Bi-metallic stemmed thermometers are the commonest type of food thermometers. These thermometers read the temperature from the tip and up the stem for 50 mm to 76 mm and the measured temperature is the average of the temperatures along the sensing area. They are, therefore, more suitable for measuring the core temperature of **thick food** (any food more than 76 mm thick) because the entire sensing area of the thermometer must be inside the food. Depending on the types, these thermometers give readings within 20 seconds to 2 minutes.

Diagram 1:
Bi-metallic Stemmed
Thermometer



2. Thermocouple Thermometers and Thermistor Thermometers

Thermocouple thermometers and thermistor thermometers measure temperatures through a sensor in the tip of the stem. They give readings quickly (within 10 seconds) and since the sensor is in the tip, these thermometers can measure temperatures in **thin and thick foods** conveniently. These



Diagram 2 and 3:
Digital Food Thermometers

thermometers may also be called **"digital food thermometers"** because measured temperatures are normally indicated on a digital display.

3. Infrared Thermometers

Hand-held, portable infrared thermometers measure the surface temperature, in less than 1 second, of food and packages of food without contact by measuring the amount of radiant energy emitted from the surface. Infrared thermometers are useful for checking the **storage temperature in freezers and refrigerators, temperature of food held in hot holding equipment and temperature of incoming food products**. They are, however, unsuitable for measuring the centre temperatures of food during cooking or cooling as only the surface temperature can be measured. Besides, they cannot accurately measure the temperature of metal surfaces and reflective foils.



Diagram 4:
Infrared Thermometer

Glass thermometers are filled with mercury or spirits. They are not recommended to be used for measuring the temperature of food because the glass and the inner liquid pose physical and chemical hazards.

There are other thermometers designed specifically to measure certain food items or food processes. These include candy / jelly / deep fry thermometers, oven thermometers, single-use temperature indicators, etc.



Food Safety Express for Food Trade

4th Issue 2008

Feature Articles

(I) Learn the 5 Keys to Food Safety to minimise hazards and risks

Proper food handling can effectively prevent foodborne diseases. Based on the recommendations of the World Health Organisation, the Centre for Food Safety has formulated the "5 Keys to Food Safety" to promote the proper handling of food to the public.



What are the 5 keys to Food Safety?

What are the 5 keys to Food Safety?

1. Choose

Smart consumers should patronise reputable shops with good hygiene conditions to choose food ingredients that are e.g. choose fruits or vegetables without any damaged and bruised surface; do not choose canned food whose container is dented or cracked. Consumers should also read food labels carefully and not purchase food beyond its expiry date.

2. Clean

Dirty hands or unclean utensils may transmit pathogenic bacteria. To minimise the risk, keep clean and pay attention to hygiene when preparing food. Do remember to wash hands thoroughly with warm water and liquid soap before handling and during consumption of food and after disposal of rubbish.

Each time after using utensils and worktops, wash them in hot water with detergent, and then use a clean cloth to wipe off the remnants and grease to minimise the growth of bacteria.

As kitchen is a place where food is prepared and cooked, it must be kept clean. Food remnants should be wrapped into covered rubbish bins to eliminate pest.



3. Separate

Various foodborne diseases are caused by cross contamination. Cross contamination refers to the transmission of bacteria from one food item to another. Bacteria may be transmitted by direct transmission (when a food item or its juice comes into contact with another food item) or indirect transmission (through hands, cutting boards, towels etc.). As a first step to minimise cross contamination, raw and cooked food should be separated.

Use separate utensils (including cutting boards and knives) marked with labels of different colours to handle raw food (such as poached chicken and fruits). Separate utensils should also be used for tasting, stirring and mixing food.



4. Cook

Given that about 20% of foodborne diseases are caused by inadequate cooking, thorough cooking can reduce the risk of foodborne diseases.

Frozen food should be thawed properly before cooking, for example putting it in microwave ovens, fridges or under running water.

High temperature cooking can normally kill foodborne bacteria. When you are cooking, use a food thermometer to check if the temperature of the food has reached at least 75°C. If you do not have a food thermometer, cook or reheat food thoroughly until piping hot. Make sure that juices are clear, not red and blood is not visible when cutting the cooked poultry and meat. Bring them to a boil and continue to boil for at least one minute.

Stir, rotate and cover food when microwaving to ensure thorough cooking.



5. Safe Temperature

Cooked and perishable food should be kept in a refrigerator within two hours after purchase.

A thermometer should be used to measure the temperature of the refrigerator to ensure that the fridge is kept at or below -18°C .

Cooked food if not properly stored is prone to deterioration and conducive to bacterial growth. Hence, food should be after cooking and should not be kept at room temperature for more than two hours. Cooked food not intended for should be kept above 60°C .

Implementing the “5 Keys to Food Safety” is easy in your daily life. Food is more enjoyable if it is safe. By following “Food Safety”, food safety is in your hands.



II. Enjoying “Poon Choi” in Winter

Winter is the perfect time for enjoying “poon Choi”. As “poon Choi” comprises a great variety of food ingredients, involves a number of processing steps and takes a relatively longer time, cross contamination is more likely to happen. Handlers should pay attention to various risks when preparing “poon Choi” so as to ensure food safety and avoid incidents.

Plan the Preparation of “Poon Choi” Well :

1. Estimate the required manpower, ingredients, space and cooking utensils as early as possible, pay special attention to sufficient stoves, refrigerating equipments and hot holding equipments;
2. Do not take orders that you cannot meet;
3. Time the preparation of all foods as precisely as possible so that each food is cooked at the right time. Avoid too early.

Purchasing of Ingredients and Receiving:

1. Purchase quality food ingredients from reputable suppliers;
2. When receiving food ingredients, check the quality, e.g. whether the packaging is intact and whether the storage is appropriate, etc.

Storage Facilities and Temperature Control

1. Adopt “first-in-first-out” principle for food storage;
2. Reserve sufficient space in the refrigerator for storing food ingredients. The temperature of the fridge and freezer should be below 4°C and -18°C separately;
3. When raw and cooked foods are stored in the same refrigerator, cooked food should be kept above raw food to avoid contamination;
4. Cooked food should be kept above 60°C and should be covered properly to prevent cross contamination.

Food Preparation

1. All food contact surfaces such as dining utensils, cutting boards and cooking utensils should be cleansed and disinfected before preparing “poon Choi”;
2. Thaw frozen food in the fridge or under running water;
3. Cook all food thoroughly and store them separately to avoid cross contamination.

Personal Hygiene

1. Maintain good personal hygiene. Food handlers with symptoms of infectious diseases like gastroenteritis and food;
2. Wash hands thoroughly with warm water and liquid soap before handling food, after going to the toilet or touching refuse).

Delivery

1. Deliver the “poon Choi” to its destination as soon as possible and avoid keeping it at room temperature for a long time;
2. Keep the “poon Choi” in a clean and covered insulated container;
3. Keep the delivery vehicle clean.

Reminding Customers How to Handle “Poon Choi”

1. Remind customers to consume the “poon Choi” as soon as possible;
2. Remind the customers to store the “poon Choi” in a refrigerator within two hours and reheat it thoroughly before not consumed immediately;
3. Tell the customers how the “poon Choi” should be reheated and whether the original container can be used



III. Observe good hygiene practices when enjoying hotpot



As the weather is getting cold, many people in Hong Kong love to gather around the table to enjoy hotpot. With various meats, vegetables and seafood such as shellfish and raw oysters, hotpots are served with different “soup bases” and a hotpot is indeed savoury. There are, however, potential risks in enjoying hotpot. If the food is not handled properly or it may contain pathogens such as *Escherichia coli*, *Vibrio cholera*, *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, Norovirus, Hepatitis A virus which may cause food poisoning or other intestinal infection.

To ensure food safety and maintain good business reputation, the restaurant management must strictly follow the

Safety" when serving hotpot to customers to minimise their risk of getting sick.

1. Purchase fresh ingredients

- Buy ingredients from reputable licensed suppliers.
- Upon receipt of the food ingredients, check whether the food is fresh, packaging is intact and read the food label to avoid buying contaminated or expired food items.
- Keep the invoices for 60 days so that problematic food can be traced.

2. Store food in suitable environment and at appropriate temperature

- Fresh hotpot ingredients should be put in a clean container with cover and stored in a refrigerator at or below 4°C to be served.
- Never thaw food at room temperature to prevent bacterial growth. Frozen food should be thawed in fridges or microwaves.
- Do not display too many food items, and the food displayed should not be kept at room temperature for more than 2 hours. The display of food should always be kept clean.



3. Keep food, utensils and hands clean

- Wash food ingredients thoroughly. Vegetables should be washed and then soaked in clean water for about an hour to remove pesticides.
- Handle shellfish with care. Scrub and wash the shells and keep them in clean water for at least half a day to remove their internal organs.
- Food handlers must observe good personal hygiene. They must wash their hands thoroughly with liquid soap and after handling food, and after going to the toilet.
- Bowls and dishes that have been used for holding raw food must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before reuse.



4. Handle raw food and cooked food separately

~ Provide customers with two separate sets of chopsticks and utensils for handling raw food and cooked food to reduce the risk of cross contamination.

~ Raw food and cooked food should be kept separately to reduce the risk of cross contamination.



5. Cook food thoroughly

~ Fish and meat should be cut into thin slices. Meatballs should be cut open in the centre to speed up heating.

~ Advise customers verbally or by notices to remind them to cook food thoroughly before consumption.

IV. Apply Desiccant Safely

To preserve quality, control humidity, minimise mould growth and extend shelf-life, desiccants are added to the packaged food in the market, such as ready-to-eat seaweeds, biscuits or pastries. Two most commonly used desiccants are calcium oxide and silica gel.

Silica gel / silica dioxide is a natural mineral which changes to molecular or bead form after purification and process. It is biologically inert. Therefore, no harmful health effects will be caused even if they are accidentally ingested in small amounts.

Calcium oxide, also called quicklime, is a white powder which can control humidity effectively by keeping the relative humidity low. It is widely used for packaging dehydrated foods or foods that need to be stored in environment with low humidity (e.g. dried fruits). In contact with moisture, calcium oxide becomes caustic and may cause burning sensation, stomach cramps and other health effects if accidentally consumed.

Other desiccants include activated carbon, clay and calcium chloride, etc. They are less commonly used due to higher costs.

There are occasional incidents of accidental consumption of desiccants. To prevent accidental consumption by consumers, food manufacturers are advised to follow the recommendations below:

1. Use food-grade desiccants.
2. The desiccant used should be properly sealed, e.g. sealed in small sachets. Upon exposure to the air, the desiccant may become moist and liquefied, resulting in leakage.
3. The sealed sachet containing the desiccant should be made of food grade material and use non-toxic ink for printing.
4. The sealed sachet containing the desiccant should be of appropriate size to forestall accidental chewing or swallowing.
5. The sealed sachet containing the desiccant should carry bilingual warnings, e.g. "Do Not Eat" or "不可食用".

V. Melamine in Mainland's Milk Powder Incident

In September 2008, cases of kidney stones affecting infants who had consumed melamine-tainted infant formula from the Mainland. Such cases gave rise to grave public concern. The Mainland authority subsequently announced that a number of infant formulae made and sold in the Mainland were found to contain melamine, with the Sanlu brand having the highest level (up to 0.6g/kg). Melamine at this level may affect the elimination of this chemical from the infant's body and result in kidney development of urinary stones.

Even though Sanlu infant formula was not available in Hong Kong, follow-up actions undertaken by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) to safeguard public health and safety. To safeguard public health and safety, CFS conducted food tests actively and announced the latest information through press releases and the CFS web site. A hotline was also set up to answer public enquiries.

What is Melamine?

Melamine is an industrial chemical used for the production of melamine resins, which are used in glues, paper, tea including tableware, kitchen utensils, etc. Apart from the potential adulteration of food, exposure to melamine for the been considered to be low. Use of melamine as a food ingredient or a food additive is strictly forbidden in all countries. People added melamine to foods in the manufacturing process to cause a false increase in the measurement of protein by boosting their nitrogen levels.

Health Effects of Melamine

Melamine has low oral acute toxicity. However, excessive exposure to melamine has been found to cause urinary stones in animals. Also, laboratory studies showed that melamine did not damage genetic materials in cells, and there was no evidence that melamine can cause human cancers or malformation in fetus. However, intake of a significant amount of melamine can cause crystal formation in urinary tract. In severe cases, these crystals can form kidney stones, blocking the small tubes in the production of urine, causing kidney failure and death in some serious cases.

Infants are particularly vulnerable and at risk of developing adverse health effects as a result of consuming melamine because milk is their major food, and the amount of melamine intake per body weight is much higher than that of adults. According to the epidemiological information obtained from the Mainland, over 99% of the victims were 3 years or below. Affected children may experience symptoms of irritability of unknown reasons, blood in urine, little acute renal failure), stones in urine, high blood pressure, or pain over the kidney region.

Safe Intake Level of Melamine

Melamine can be present in the environment as a metabolite of the pesticide cyromazine. Traces of melamine may be from environmental contamination or through migration of melamine from food-handling utensils made of melamine. The "tolerance" approach is not applicable to melamine.

Under the amended Harmful Substances in Food Regulation (Cap. 132AF), milk, any food intended to be consumed by children under the age of 36 months and any food intended to be consumed principally by pregnant or lactating women shall not exceed 1 mg/kg. For other foods, the melamine level shall not exceed 2.5 mg/kg. The legal limit adopted in Hong Kong is stringent enough to protect the health of both children and adults. With normal food intake, even if each day by a person contain melamine, provided the melamine levels in all the foods comply with the legal limit, it is safe.

Surveillance and Support Action of CFS

Since September 2008, the CFS has been testing various infant formulae, milk, milk products and other food products including ice-cream, ice-lolly, yogurt, baby food, nutritional supplements, instant drink mixes, biscuits, cakes, bread, chocolate, etc. The CFS has, on the recommendation of the Expert Group on Melamine Incident, expanded the food safety testing to food raw materials (e.g. eggs), meat and vegetables in the second phase of testing. Upon the conclusion of the second phase on November 16, CFS has entered into the third phase since 17 November, in which samples of food types found unsafe in the first two phases have been retaken for testing.

The latest results on the testing of food samples are available at the following web page:

http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/whatsnew_fstr/whatsnew_fstr/melamine_result.html

Advice to Trade

1. Traders should not sell food products that have been found to contain melamine or use them as ingredients.
2. Traders should ensure that their food products comply with the legal standards for melamine and are fit for human consumption.

Readers' Corner

Hazards of Seafood, Sushi and Sashimi - *Vibrio Parahaemolyticus*



Delicious foods from all over the world are available in Hong Kong, which is reputed as a fine dining hub. Seafood is a favourite of Hong Kong people. Sushi and sashimi, known for their freshness, have been very popular in recent years but pose hazards to our health despite their good taste. Seafood may contain *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, and will easily catch bacteria if not handled properly. Food handlers should pay extra attention in the preparation or supply of these foods.

Vibrio parahaemolyticus as a cause of food poisoning

Vibrio parahaemolyticus is a halophilic vibrio often found in the marine environment and seafood. This bacteria is highly pathogenic and can breed exponentially in room temperature of 18 ° C to 22 ° C in a few hours, and are one of the common causes of food poisoning. Consumption of seafood (in particular shellfish) that has not been thoroughly cooked may cause bacterial infection.

One may develop symptoms including diarrhoea, vomiting, mild fever and abdominal pain, etc. usually within 24 hours of infection. They can recover after replenishing with water and electrolyte together with adequate rest. However, young persons suffering from gastric diseases will easily get dehydrated upon infection. In this case, antibiotics treatment may be necessary.

Vibrio parahaemolyticus can be destroyed by heating at or above 75 ° C continuously for 30 seconds. Therefore, to prevent food poisoning is to cook food thoroughly.

Advice to trade:



Acquire and provide fresh ingredients

~ Patronise licensed and reputable suppliers when purchasing food ingredients.

Pay attention to the colour and odour of food (Do not serve any food that is pale-coloured or with a foul smell).

~ State clearly the expiry date, do not sell expired foods.

Keep clean

~ Staff should observe personal hygiene, always wash their hands before preparing food and after going to the toilet.

Handle raw and cooked food separately

~ Observe food hygiene to prevent cross contamination of raw and cooked food.

Cook food thoroughly

~ Seafood must be cleaned and cooked thoroughly.

Keep food at safe temperature

~ Sushi and sashimi are foods with short shelf-life. It is necessary to provide customers with chilling equipment (e.g. such as ice cubes, ice bags) for food transportation and storage. Advise customers to consume the food soon after leaving it at room temperature for a long period.

Food News

Dietary fibre



This issue focuses on a food nutrient called dietary fibre, i.e., the item recommended for a “High” intake in the healthy eating guidelines “3 Low, 1 High” launched in recent years. Dietary fibre is mainly obtainable from vegetables, fruits, whole grain cereals and legumes, etc. Dietary fibre can be divided into soluble fibre and insoluble fibre. Although neither is absorbed in the small intestine, both are indispensable to health. The questions and answers below can help you understand more about dietary fibre.

Q1: Which one of the two dietary fibres is more important to human health?

A1: Both of them are beneficial to our health in their own way. Insoluble fibre (mainly from whole grain cereals and legumes) stimulates intestinal movement, facilitates defecation and promotes intestinal health, whereas soluble fibre (mainly from fruits and oatmeal) helps to lower blood cholesterol level and stabilise blood sugar level. Increased consumption of foods rich in dietary fibre can provide other health benefits such as weight management. In this way, we can kill many birds with one stone.



Q2: What is the adequate daily intake of dietary fibre?

A2: The World Health Organisation recommends a daily intake of not less than 25g of dietary fibre for an average consumption of 400g (about 10 taels) or above of vegetables and fruits for an individual to lower the risk of obesity and diseases. On top of taking enough dietary fibre, don't forget to drink enough water (about 6 to 8 glasses daily) as a complement.

Q3: How can the daily intake of dietary fibre be increased?

A3: We should choose cereals and cereal products with high dietary fibre content, for example, red rice / brown rice, whole wheat bread instead of white bread; oatmeal porridge instead of congee, etc. In addition, we should have at least three servings of vegetables each day. Do note that the content of dietary fibre in fruits and vegetables will be reduced if they are turned into juices.



Critical Control Point of Preparing Steamed Plain Chicken (For Trade)

Poached chicken is a popular food on the menu of local Chinese restaurants. It is prepared by stewing a raw chicken. When preparing poached chicken, need to pay attention to some critical points on safety during preparation of poached chicken. We have chosen the most common type of poached chicken, to illustrate the critical control points that should be noted during preparation. If followed correctly, consumers can enjoy food safely.

Ingredients

1 raw chicken.....	1.2 kg (about 2 catties)
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Steps

1. Rinse the chicken.

2. Soak the whole chicken in boiling water. Then switch to low heat and stew the chicken for about 30 minutes.
3. Cool the poached chicken and chop it for serving .



Guidelines on Production of Steamed Plain Chicken

(1) Purchase and receipt

- Purchase raw chicken from a reliable and hygienic supplier.
- Inspect the storage conditions and temperature of the chicken upon receipt to ensure that the chicken is not contaminated.

(2) Storage

- Store the chicken immediately at safe temperature
 - If the chicken is not for immediate preparation, it should be properly covered and stored in the refrigerator under cooked food or ready-to-eat food to prevent cross-contamination. The best practice is to use two separate drawers for storing raw food and cooked food. The temperature inside the refrigerator should be checked and recorded with a thermometer to ensure that the fridge remains at 4 °C or below.

(3) Preparation

- Before cooking / during preparation, wash hands thoroughly with warm water and liquid soap.
- Before cooking, rinse the chicken.

(4) Cooking

- The chicken should be thoroughly cooked before consumption. When the steamed plain chicken is cut, its meat should be white and not red, and blood is not visible.
- Use a clean food thermometer to measure the core temperature of the thickest part of steamed plain chicken. It should be at least 75 °C. (CCP)

(5) Cooling

- Cool the steamed plain chicken from 60 °C to 20 °C within 2 hours. (CCP)
- Use potable water to cool the steamed plain chicken.



(6) Chopping

- Before and after handling food, wash hands thoroughly with warm water and liquid soap.
- Before and after handling food, rinse all food contact surfaces (including worktops, chopping boards, utensils, etc.).
- Use two different sets of tools (including knives and chopping boards) for handling raw food and cooked food.

(7) Keeping and consumption

- During display, the steamed plain chicken should be kept in a showcase that is insect- and dust-proof.
- Record the time to indicate how long the steamed plain chicken has been stored at room temperature. Do not store chicken at room temperature for more than 4 hours. (CCP)
- If the steamed plain chicken has been held at room temperature for less than 2 hours, it should be refrigerated immediately. The 2-hour limit is up.
- If the steamed plain chicken has been held at room temperature for 2 to 4 hours, it should be consumed with caution and should not be returned to the refrigerator.
- If the steamed plain chicken has been held at room temperature for more than 4 hours, it should be discarded.

(8) Management System

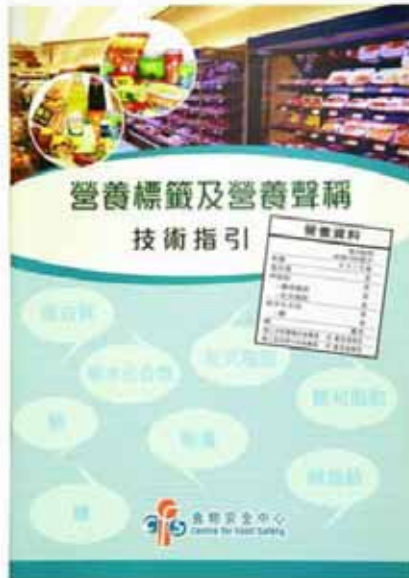
- A preventive food safety management system (such as the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) should be implemented to identify and control any food safety problems that may emerge during production.

Briefing of Activities

I. Workshop on Nutrition Labelling Scheme

To facilitate better understanding and compliance of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has been conducting workshops for members of the food trade since this July. So far, workshops have been conducted for small and medium-sized food businesses, organic or health foods, food traders, laboratory service providers, food manufacturers, food importers/suppliers. The most recent one, targeting bakery operators, were held on October 16. For further details, please visit: www.cfs.gov.hk

http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/food_leg/food_leg_Workshop_on_Nutrition_Labelling_Scheme.html



The CFS has also prepared relevant Guidance Notes setting out details of the Scheme. The Guidance Notes, together with the workshops, are available at:

http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/food_leg/food_leg_nl_guidance.html

Copies of the *Technical Guidance Notes on Nutrition Labelling and Nutrition Claims* and *Method Guidance Notes on Nutrition Claims* can also be obtained from the Communication Resource Unit of CFS at 8/F Fa Yuen Street Mun 123A Fa Yuen Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon.

II. Interviews with signatories of the Food Safety Charter

With a view to setting a good example for the food trade to help build a food safe city, the Centre for Food Safety campaign to promote the “5 Keys to Food Safety” in mid-2008, invited food trade associations and licensed food premises to sign the Food Safety Charter. The response is encouraging with a total of 20 food trade associations and over 1 500 food premises signing the Charter as at 1 st of November.



One of the signatories, Mr CHE, said that apart from price and taste, the hygienic condition of food premises was customers' concerns. Food hygiene and food safety, therefore, had been the focus of his Japanese restaurant with the Charter. Shortly after learning of this CFS campaign, Mr CHE enrolled to become one of the first signatories to participate within his association. He found the *5 Keys to Food Safety – Handbook for Trade* published by the CFS very useful in educating his staff about food safety.

Mr CHE was a “hands-on” person. He went to the market and made purchases by himself every two to three days. He believed that food ingredients must be purchased from reliable and reputable suppliers. He would educate his staff on proper food handling and arrange for them to receive training on the “5 Keys to Food Safety”, so that they could be familiar with the food safety measures and recognise the importance of food safety.

He always reminded his staff to purchase fresh and wholesome food ingredients, check their quality upon receipt, and in the course of food preparation, ensure food safety to avoid problems arising from the food. He considered this as a way of reducing production cost in addition to minimising raw material wastage and product recall.

As a catering operator for over 20 years, Mr CHE had been striving to provide quality customer-oriented services. He encouraged his staff to apply the “5 Keys to Food Safety” in their daily work, so that customers would be impressed not only by the quality of the food but also by the sincerity in promoting food safety. As Mr CHE said, the financial tsunami had made customers more prudent in their spending, so operators had to be more conscious of food safety and quality in order to stand out in the industry.

Another signatory, Mr WONG, considered that strict compliance with food safety rules was the key to customers' confidence because Hong Kong was a world-class metropolis, but also because both local and overseas customers were expected to eat. As a professional catering operator who ran a renowned western restaurant, Mr WONG said that apart from ensuring food quality, more importantly, signing the Charter helped to disseminate food safety messages to his staff and customers. Promoting food safety was well-evidenced in the kitchen of his restaurant where the “5 Keys to Food Safety” posters were posted on the walls as a regular reminder to his staff. To Mr WONG, staff training was very important. He never missed the annual training held by the Government and arranged for his staff to attend whenever possible in the hope that they could refresh their knowledge and share new information with their colleagues.

Mr WONG opined that the key to become a more reputable restaurant was enhanced environmental hygiene and food safety. Customers naturally patronised more if they had confidence in a restaurant. He appealed to the trade to attach great safety and join hands in keeping Hong Kong a food paradise.

Information and details of the Food Safety Charter activities (including the invitation letter, application form and available at:

http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/whatsnew_fstr/whatsnew_fstr_food_safety_charter.html

The signatory list can be found in the following web site (for ease of reference, food premises are listed by name, district and address):

http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/whatsnew_fstr/whatsnew_fstr_Signatory_List_for_licensed_food_premises.html

Legal Corner

I. Regulations on Melamine

In response to recent incidents of melamine found in dairy products of Hong Kong and the Mainland, the Government has amended the Harmful Substances in Food Regulations (Cap. 132AF), which has already come into effect to protect public health.

Under the Regulations, milk, any food intended to be consumed principally by children under the age of 36 months or by pregnant or lactating women shall not contain melamine exceeding 1 mg/kg. For other food, the limit shall not exceed 2.5 mg/kg. "Milk" means cows milk, buffaloes milk and goats milk, and includes cream, milk powder, milk beverage, but does not include dried milk, condensed milk or reconstituted milk; "milk beverage" means any liquid combining liquid milk fat with other solids derived from milk, whether exclusive of any food additive or otherwise.

According to the amended Regulations, any person who imports, consigns, delivers, manufactures or sells food with melamine that exceeds the statutory limit commits an offence.

II. The Public Health and Municipal Services (Amendment) Bill 2008

There is an increasing number of food incidents happening all over the world and food safety is a concern of the general public. The Government has the responsibility to ensure that the food they supply is safe and fit for human consumption. They also have the duty to stop supplying problem food to the market and recall problem food that has already been supplied to protect the health of the public.

In view of this, on October 24, the Government gazetted the Public Health and Municipal Services (Amendment) Bill 2008 to empower the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH) to make orders administratively to prohibit the sale of problem food, and direct that problem food supplied be recalled, to ensure food safety and protect public health. The Bill was passed by the Legislative Council on November 5.

Under the Public Health and Municipal Services (Amendment) Bill 2008, DFEH may make orders administratively to prohibit the sale of problem food on grounds to believe that the making of the order is necessary to prevent any danger to public health.

DFEH will take into consideration the following factors in deciding whether to make the order:

1. information or document provided by the food traders, if any, on the safety of the food;
2. results of food tests conducted by the Public Analyst, if available;
3. results of food tests conducted by food safety authorities of other countries or places;
4. food alerts issued by food safety authorities of other countries or places;
5. time required for conducting the food test;
6. the exposure of the general public and/or particular vulnerable groups to the food;
7. consumption pattern relating to the food;
8. statutory standard of the concerned substances in the food, if any;
9. availability of information on the contamination of a particular batch or consignment of the food;
10. availability of information on the contamination of a particular food factory or the whole region; and
11. any other relevant considerations.

Given that more than 90% of the food in Hong Kong is imported, a prohibition of import order is a highly effective measure to stop problem food from entering the Hong Kong market.

For the latest information on the Public Health and Municipal Services (Amendment) Bill 2008, please visit <http://www.dfeh.gov.hk>.



溫度控制的重要

將食物貯存在不適當的溫度下，容易滋生細菌，例如沙門氏菌、金黃葡萄球菌、副溶血性弧菌等。由購買、製造、存放以至進食的整個流程中，正確的溫度控制可有效預防食物中毒。適合細菌生長的溫度範圍稱為“危險溫度範圍”，亦即指攝氏4至60度之間。

Importance of temperature control

Storing food at improper temperature will allow the growth of bacteria, such as *Salmonella*, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*. Proper temperature control throughout the food preparation process from purchasing, production, storing to serving can prevent food poisoning. Most bacteria grow and multiply rapidly at temperature **between 4°C and 60°C**. This temperature range is called “Temperature Danger Zone”.

要有效地預防細菌滋生，食物須存放在適當的溫度下，
切忌把食物放於攝氏4至60度之間。

To prevent bacterial growth, food should be kept at proper temperature. Avoid the “Temperature Danger Zone” between 4°C and 60°C.



低溫貯存只可抑制細菌生長，而高溫才是消滅細菌的最有效方法。食物要徹底煮熟，令其中心溫度達至**攝氏75度或以上**。使用食物溫度計可有效地監察食物的溫度。

Keeping food at a low temperature can only inhibit bacterial growth. The most effective way to destroy bacteria is high temperature treatment. Therefore, food should be cooked thoroughly and the core temperature of food should reach **at least 75°C**. Using a food thermometer can measure and monitor the temperature of food effectively.

要有效地消滅細菌，食物必須徹底煮熟，
食物的中心溫度須達至攝氏75度或以上。
To destroy bacteria, food should be cooked thoroughly
with core temperature of at least 75°C.



溫度控制小貼士 Tips for proper control of temperature

食物貯存 Food storage



- 容易變壞的食物*（如牛奶及肉類）應存放在
 - ◆ 攝氏4度或以下；或
 - ◆ 攝氏60度或以上。
- 冷凍食物應存放在攝氏4度或以下的雪櫃內，冷藏食物則應存放在攝氏零下18度或以下的雪櫃內。

- Perishable food* (such as milk and meat) should always be kept at temperature of either
 - ◆ 4°C or below; or
 - ◆ 60°C or above
- Chilled and frozen food should be stored at 4°C or below and -18°C or below respectively.

* 容易變壞的食物應在食用期限前盡快進食。

* Perishable food should be consumed as soon as possible before the date of expiry.

解凍食物 Thawing



- 冷藏食物不應在室溫下解凍，正確的解凍方法是：
 - ◆ 在攝氏0至4度的雪櫃內解凍；
 - ◆ 在流動的冷自來水下解凍；或
 - ◆ 使用微波爐解凍。
- Frozen food should not be thawed at room temperature. Proper methods are:
 - ◆ thawing in the refrigerator (i.e. under 0–4°C);
 - ◆ thawing under cold running water; or
 - ◆ using a microwave oven.

烹煮/翻熱 Cooking and reheating



- 食物要徹底煮熟或翻熱，直至中心溫度達攝氏75度或以上。
- Food should be cooked or reheated thoroughly until its core temperature reaches at least 75°C.

食物展示 Food display and serving



- 容易變壞的食物應展示在
 - ◆ 攝氏4度或以下；或
 - ◆ 攝氏60度或以上。
- 如食物貯存、輸送及展示在危險溫度範圍（攝氏4至60度）內，停留時間的總和**不應超過4小時**。
- Perishable food should be displayed at either
 - ◆ 4°C or below; or
 - ◆ 60°C or above.
- If food is stored, delivered and displayed within the "Temperature Danger Zone (4°C to 60°C)", **the total keeping time should not exceed 4 hours.**

查詢

食物環境衛生署

24小時熱線： 2868 0000
傳達資源小組： 2381 6096
網址： www.cfs.gov.hk
電郵： enquiries@fehd.gov.hk

Enquiries

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

24-hour Hotline: 2868 0000
Communication Resource Unit: 2381 6096
Website: www.cfs.gov.hk
E-mail: enquiries@fehd.gov.hk



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食物安全水平高 重點控制要做好

Adopt Food Safety System - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point



"Vibrio Parahaemolyticus"

Food Poisoning



What is *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*?

Vibrio parahaemolyticus is a halophilic vibrio naturally found in the marine environment and seafood.

In Hong Kong,

Vibrio parahaemolyticus is one of the most frequently isolated food poisoning organisms.

Vibrio parahaemolyticus can be destroyed by heating at 75°C or above for several minutes.



Food poisoning caused by *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*

Incubation period – 4-30 hours, usually 12-24 hours.

Symptoms – abdominal pain, diarrhoea, vomiting, occasionally with mild fever.

Food involved

Seafood is commonly contaminated with *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*.

For example:

- fish;
 - molluscs;
 - crustacean;
 - shellfish such as shrimps, crabs, lobsters, octopus, squids, jellyfishes and oysters, etc.
- Improper handling of food causes cross-contamination and makes other foods, such as siu mei and lo mei, contaminated with

Vibrio parahaemolyticus.

Mode of transmission

Vibrio parahaemolyticus are usually transmitted to men by consumption of raw or undercooked seafood or cooked food that has been cross-contaminated with the bacteria without further cooking.



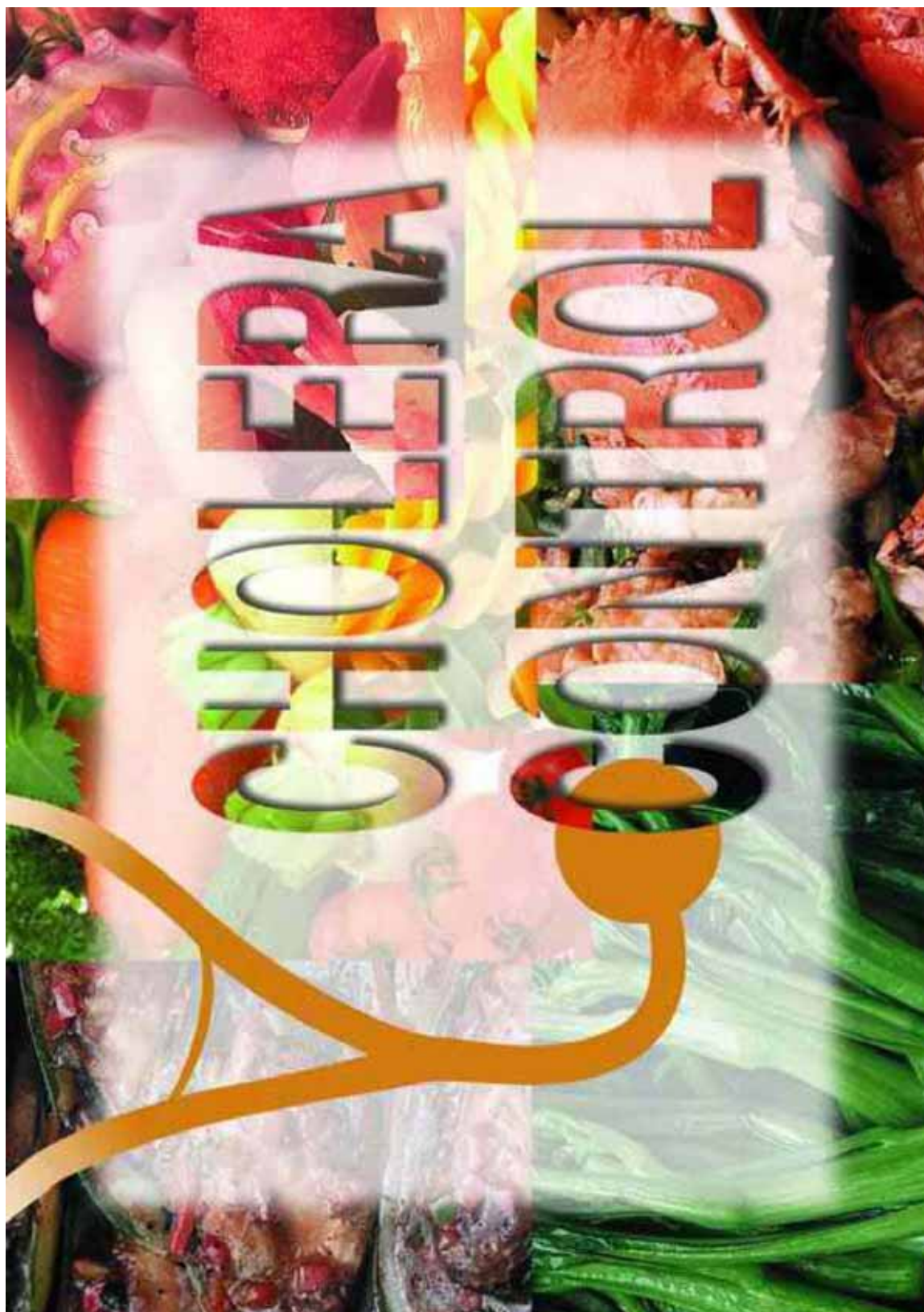
Prevention

1. Avoid cross-contamination:
 - use separate equipment for handling of raw food and cooked food;
 - store raw food and cooked food separately; and
 - wash hands before handling food.
2. Cool food rapidly and store food in refrigerators below 4 °C to prevent bacterial growth.
3. Cook food thoroughly before consumption.
4. Avoid eating raw or undercooked seafood.
5. For seafood eaten raw, such as sashimi, the following should be observed :
 - pay special attention to avoid cross-contamination;
 - reserve a specific portion of a refrigerator or a designated refrigerator for storage of seafood;
 - purchase seafood from reliable and reputable sources; and
 - consume seafood immediately after taking home.



Enquiry:

For further enquiries and information, please call the Communication Resource Unit of Food and Environmental Hygiene Department at 2381 6096 or 24-hour hotline 2868 0000.





Special attention to food, environmental and personal hygiene can prevent cholera.

(1) Food Hygiene

Purchase of food

- Buy raw materials from reliable sources for food production;
- Don't buy food from unlicensed food premises or illegal hawkers;
- Don't buy exposed food and food which looks, smells or tastes abnormal.

Handling of food and equipment

- All food should be washed thoroughly before cooking;
- Raw and cooked food should be handled with separate utensils (e.g., separate chopping boards for raw and cooked food);
- Keep raw and cooked food separately. Place cooked food in the upper part of the refrigerator so as to prevent it from being contaminated by dripping of raw food;



- Thaw frozen food completely to ensure thorough cooking. Defrost process should be made inside the refrigerator below 4°C;
- Keep cleansed crockeries in a dust- and insect-proof cupboard.

Cooking and Storage of food

- Ensure thorough cooking of food and reheating of leftovers before consumption;
- Boil water before drinking;
- All perishable food should be stored at a temperature below 4°C or above 60°C;
- Avoid keeping live fish or shellfish in water from unreliable source. Fish tanks should be cleansed at regular intervals. Fish tank water should be filtered and changed frequently. All food business licence holders should keep live fish or shellfish in water of quality not below the standard specified in Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, Chapter 132.

(2) Environmental Hygiene

- Unhygienic environment attracts rats and insects and leads to contamination of food. Always keep the inside and outside of the premises clean;
- Ensure proper disposal of faecal matter so as to avoid contamination;
- Put refuse in a dustbin with proper lid and clean up regularly.



(3) Personal Hygiene

- Keep hands clean. Wash hands with soap and water after visiting toilet and before eating and handling food;
- Wear clean washable outfit at work;
- In case of gastro-intestinal disturbances like vomiting and diarrhoea, don't handle or cook food.

Hygienic Rules for Processing Shellfish

Most shellfish obtains nutrients by filter feeding method. They are easily infected by *Vibrio cholerae*. People eating contaminated shellfish will contract cholera. When processing seafood like shrimps, lobsters, crabs, oysters, clams, mussels and scallops, the following rules help preventing cholera:

Purchase

- Buy only those shellfish which are fresh, with intact shell and free from abnormal odour;
- Check if the container and water for holding the shellfish are clean;
- Don't patronise illegal hawkers as their source of supply may not be safe.



Washing

- Scrub and rinse the shellfish in clean water;
- Remove the viscera.

Cooking

- Cook thoroughly before consumption;
- Remove the shell before cooking as it impedes heat penetration;
- Ensure thorough cooking of the shellfish before consumption. In particular the Pacific oysters should not be eaten raw and should be cooked in boiling water for not less than five minutes;



- When having hotpot, use separate chopsticks and utensils for handling cooked and raw food.

Public should only buy and consume shellfish that are to be eaten raw (e.g. rock oysters, lobster sashimi, geoduck sashimi) from reliable and reputable food premises.



CHOLERA

is an infection caused by *Vibrio cholerae*. Its incubation period ranges from a few hours to five days. Symptoms can include diarrhoea and vomiting. The rapid onset of severe watery diarrhoea will cause dehydration. If treatment is delayed or inadequate, death may follow very shortly. Cholera is transmitted by eating food or drinking water soiled by patients or carriers.

Enquiry:

For further enquiries and information, please call Communication Resource Unit of Food and Environmental Hygiene Department at 2381 6096 or 24-hour hotline 2868 0000.



Listeria





What is Listeria

Listeria monocytogenes is a kind of bacteria commonly found in nature (e.g. soil, water) and may be found in some foods. Such bacteria can survive and multiply at temperature as low as -0.4°C , but it can be easily destroyed at normal cooking temperature. Eating foods contaminated by the bacteria may result in listeria infection (listeriosis).

Signs and Symptoms of Listeria Infection (Listeriosis)

The disease symptoms are variable and depend on the individual's susceptibility. Flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, vomiting, diarrhoea may occur from 12 hours to a few days after eating contaminated foods, but symptoms may develop only after weeks. Although listeriosis is uncommonly reported in Hong Kong and causes few or no symptoms in healthy people, it can be very dangerous for pregnant women, newborns, the elderly and people with low immunity. In serious cases, listeriosis can result in septicemia, meningitis and encephalitis. Infected pregnant women may transmit the bacteria to their fetuses, leading to miscarriage, still birth, premature birth or serious illnesses in the newborn baby.



Preventive Measures

1. Choose Safe Food

- Pregnant women, the elderly and people with low immunity should avoid the high risk foods. Foods that may contain listeria are mostly chilled ready-to-eat foods and refrigerated foods. These include:

- ◆ soft cheeses
- ◆ ready cooked, cold chickens (whole or sliced)
- ◆ cold meats
- ◆ pates
- ◆ prepared and stored salads (such as salads in salad bars of restaurants, supermarkets or delicatessens)
- ◆ raw seafoods (such as sashimi and oysters)
- ◆ smoked seafoods (such as smoked salmon)
- ◆ unpasteurised milk
- ◆ foods made from unpasteurised milk
- Check that the food package is intact and the expiry date on the label is not overdue.
- Do not buy foods and drinks from illegal hawkers.



2. Store foods properly

- Store hot foods at 60°C or above.
- Keep perishable foods, such as meat, milk and egg products, in refrigerator at 4°C or below.
- Put ready-to-eat foods at upper compartments and raw foods at lower compartments of a refrigerator to avoid cross contamination.

3. Practise good food and personal hygiene

- Wash raw vegetables and fruits thoroughly before eating.
- Thaw frozen foods in refrigerator. Do not thaw at room temperature.
- Cook raw foods thoroughly.
- Re-heat leftover foods thoroughly.
- Separate raw foods from cooked foods. Cooked foods should be covered properly to avoid cross contamination.
- Use separate equipment to handle raw and cooked foods. Wash equipment and hands thoroughly after handling raw foods.
- Wash hands thoroughly after visiting toilet and before and after food preparation.



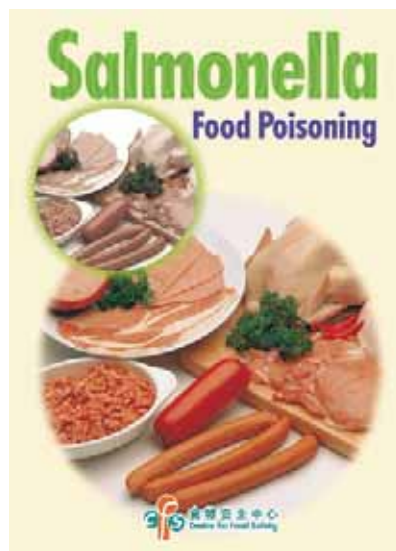
Enquiries

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Enquiry Hotline: 2868 0000

Source of photo:

Microbiology Division, Public Health Laboratory Services Branch,
Centre for Health Protection

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Prevention

1. **THAW** frozen food slowly in the refrigerator or in a bowl of cold water. Do not thaw in hot water, as this can allow bacteria to grow.
2. **COOK** food thoroughly. Cook eggs, especially breakfast, thoroughly.
3. **EGGS** should be thoroughly cooked until the yolk is solid.
4. **DO NOT** eat food that has been cooked and then reheated.
5. **REFRIGERATE** food promptly. Refrigerators should be kept at 4°C or below. Do not store food at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
6. **LEFTOVERS** should be discarded. If stored, it should be properly reheated.
7. **DO NOT** eat food that has been handled by someone who is ill.
8. **DO NOT** eat food that has been handled by a pet.
9. **KEEP** the kitchen and surrounding area clean and hygienic.
10. **WASH** hands and surfaces after handling food.

Boiling

For further information, please contact the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department at 2381 6000 or 2381 6000.



What is Salmonella?

Salmonella is a bacteria that causes food poisoning. It is a common cause of food poisoning. There are over 2,500 different serotypes of salmonella which cause food poisoning.



Salmonella Food Poisoning

Incubation Period: 6-72 hours, usually 12-72 hours.

Symptoms: Nausea, fever, abdominal pain, diarrhea and sometimes vomiting. The symptoms usually last for 4-7 days.

Foods Involved

Typical foods that have been most often associated with salmonella include:

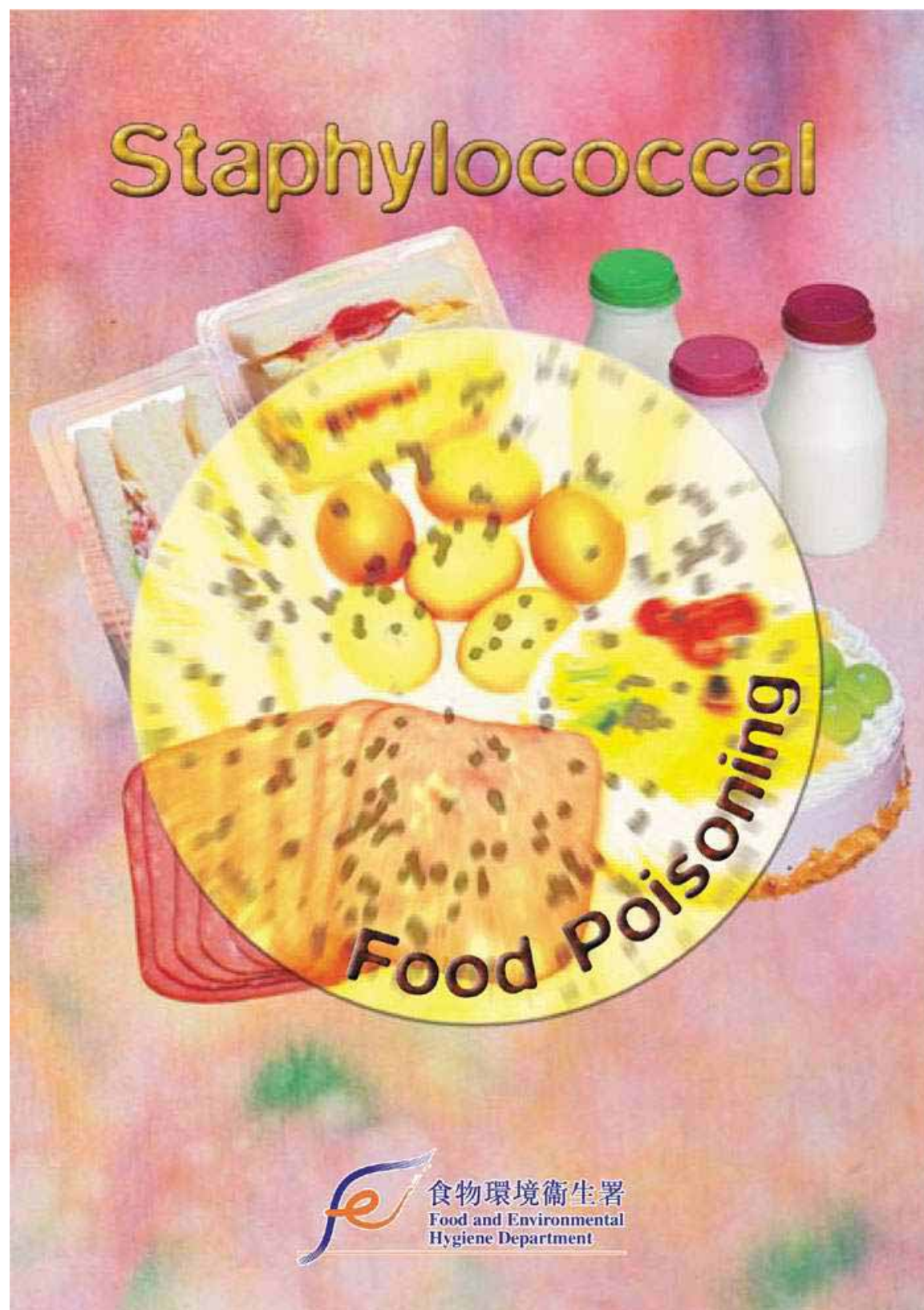
- raw and undercooked meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs
- raw milk and dairy products
- eggs and egg products, unless cooked and eaten

Mode of Transmission

Salmonella is usually transmitted from food that is contaminated. It can also be transmitted from a person to another person, or from a pet to a person.

Enquiries:
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
24-hour hotline: 2381 6000
Communication Resource Unit: 2381 6000
Website: www.fehd.gov.hk
E-mail: enquiries@feh.gov.hk





Foods Involved

Foods that are frequently incriminated in Staphylococcal food poisoning include:

- salad
- bakery products, such as fresh cream cakes
- milk and dairy products
- sandwiches
- meat and meat products, such as sliced and processed meat, meat pies and cured hams
- poultry and egg products



Mode of Transmission

Staphylococcus aureus can be passed from men to foods. In those foods that require considerable handling during preparation but without subsequent cooking, the toxin-producing *Staphylococci* multiply and elaborate toxins which cause illness.



Prevention

1. Food handling time should be reduced to an absolute minimum. Proper handling, storage and thorough cooking of food are required and do not keep food at room temperature longer than necessary.
2. If food is not to be consumed immediately, store it at temperature below 4°C or above 60°C.
3. Leftovers should best be discarded. Otherwise, they should be properly stored in refrigerators.
4. Persons suffering from respiratory tract infections should be temporarily excluded from food handling.
5. Promote personal cleanliness among food handlers.
6. Cover cuts or septic wounds with water-proof dressings to prevent contamination of food by bacteria.
7. Hands should be washed with water and soap before handling food and in any case, avoid touching cooked food with bare hands.
8. Do not cough or sneeze around food. Never smoke or eat in the kitchen.
9. Keep the kitchen and its surroundings clean. Wash, handle, sanitise and store utensils and equipment properly.



Enquiry:

For further enquiries and information, please call
**Communication Resource Unit of Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department at 2381 6096 or 24-hour hotline 2868 0000.**

Published by Food and Public Health Branch,
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (06/04)

Norovirus

A foodborne pathogen you should know



Norovirus is recognised as the most important cause of non-bacterial outbreaks of gastroenteritis worldwide. Although it is a serious problem in many countries, this foodborne hazard can be prevented easily. Let us know more about the virus!

Q: What is norovirus?

A: Norovirus is known as Small Round Structured Virus (SRSV). Gastroenteritis caused by norovirus is usually mild and self-limiting. Symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, non-bloody diarrhoea and abdominal cramps. According to literature, norovirus is a common pathogen of viral gastroenteritis and noroviral gastroenteritis is more common in winter.



Q: How does norovirus spread?

A: The only known host for norovirus is infected human. It can be spread by fecal-oral route via contaminated food and water. Other major modes of transmission include person-to-person spread, contact with contaminated object and aerosol spread.

Q: Which kinds of food are commonly identified as the source of outbreaks?

A: As norovirus is commonly found in sewage-contaminated water, the shellfish harvested from polluted water or vegetables irrigated with polluted water are very likely to be contaminated. Ice, salad, raw vegetables and shellfish have been identified as the media of food poisoning outbreaks caused by norovirus.



Therefore, consumption of these contaminated foods poses a high risk of norovirus infection.

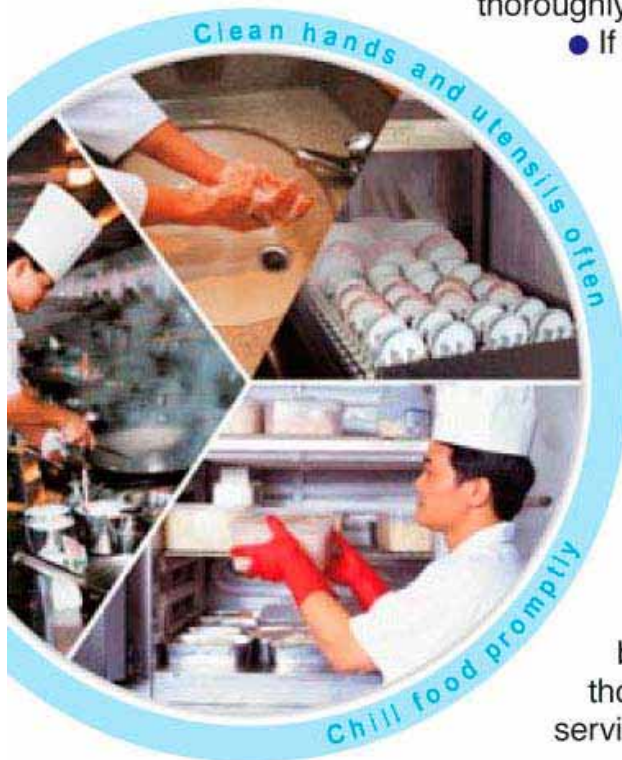
Q: How to prevent norovirus infection?

A: The key to the prevention of norovirus infection is the strict observance of food, personal and environmental hygiene.



Advice to the public

- The public should patronise licensed and reputable food premises, especially when eating high risk food like raw oysters.
 - All foods, in particular shellfish, should be cooked thoroughly before consumption.



- If vegetables are eaten raw or for salad preparation, they must be thoroughly washed and well covered in refrigerators at 4°C or below.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after using the toilet, before handling food or before eating.
- Travellers visiting places appeared to have polluted water are advised to drink pasteurised milk or bottled beverages without ice and eat thoroughly cooked food while serving hot.

Advice to the trade

- All foods, especially shellfish, should be purchased from reliable and reputable suppliers.
- Importers are strongly encouraged to obtain health certificates issued by the health authority of the country of origin to certify the foods concerned are fit for human consumption.
- Food handlers with symptoms of vomiting or diarrhoea should not handle food until they are symptom-free for at least two days.

For further information,
please contact the Communication Resource Unit of the
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.
Address: 8/F, Fa Yuen Street Municipal Services Building,
123A Fa Yuen Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon

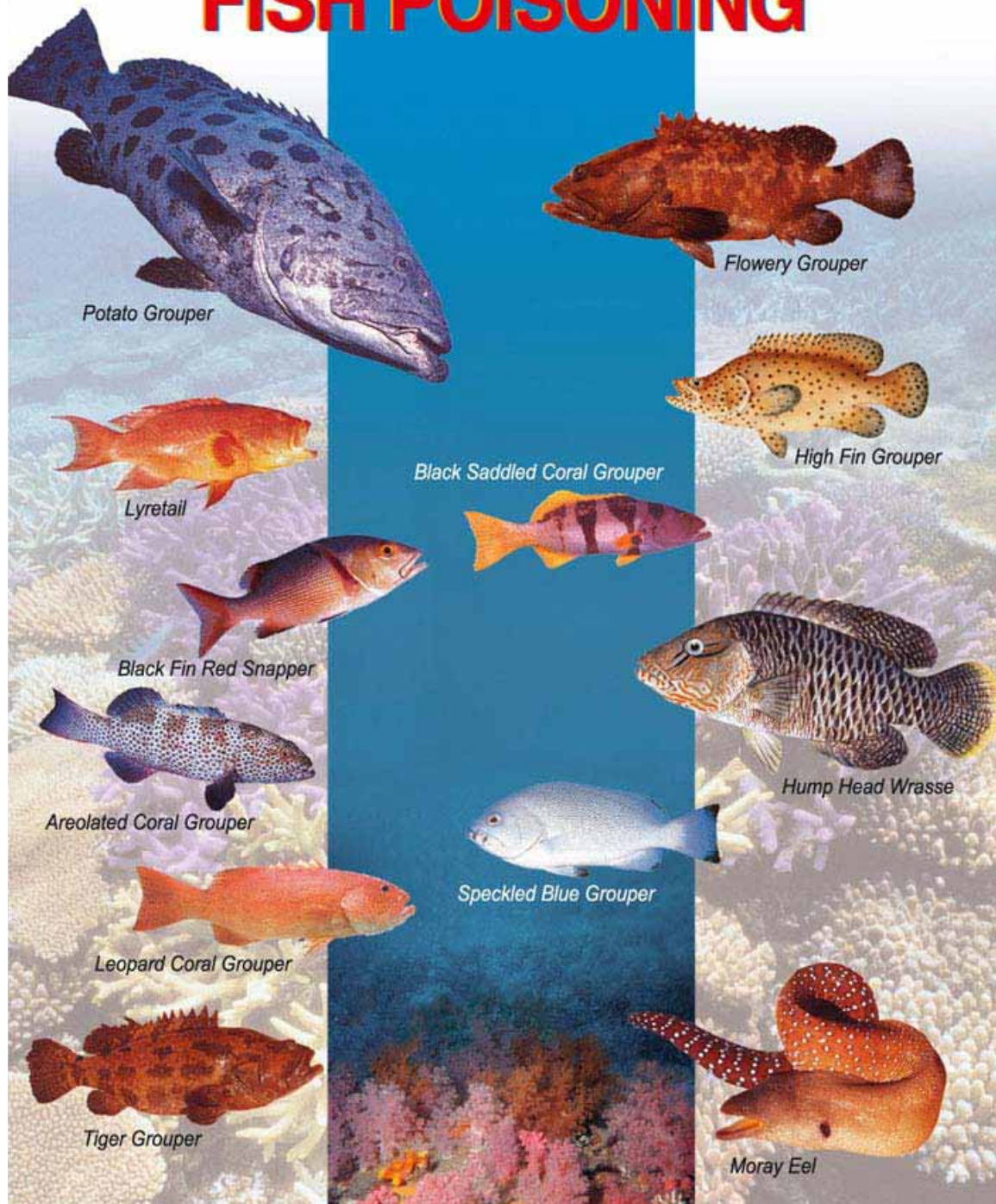
Tel: 2381 6096

FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Enquiry Hotline : 2868 0000
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Website : www.fehd.gov.hk

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MIND CIGUATERA FISH POISONING



Black Saddled Coral Grouper

Ciguatera fish poisoning is a food intoxication caused by consumption of fish containing ciguatera toxin.

The ciguatera toxin originates from dinoflagellates, a marine micro-organism, which attach and grow on dead coral reef and marine algae. The toxin passes up the food chain from herbivorous fish, carnivorous fish, predatory fish and finally to man. The toxin load becomes more concentrated as it moves up the food chain. The larger the fish, the higher the concentration of toxin.

Toxin accumulates more in the fish roe, liver, guts, head and skin. Ciguatera fish do not have any symptoms and therefore cannot be identified by inspection, appearance, smell, taste and texture.

Usually, fish that feed and dwell at coral reef are more likely to contain ciguatera toxin. Common ones are: Moray Eel, Potato Grouper, Speckled Blue Grouper, Tiger Grouper, High Fin Grouper, Hump Head Wrasse, Areolated Coral Grouper, Black Saddled Coral Grouper, Lyretail, Black Fin Red Snapper, Flowery Grouper and Leopard Coral Grouper.

Ciguatera causes gastrointestinal and neurological symptoms several hours after consuming toxic fish. Lasting for several days to weeks, the principal symptoms include: vomiting; diarrhoea; numbness of extremities, mouth and lips; reversal

Moray Eel

High Fin Grouper

Lyretail

Black Fin Red Snapper

Tiger Grouper

Hump Head Wrasse

Speckled Blue Grouper

of hot and cold sensation, as well as muscle and joint aches. Cardiovascular symptoms such as bradycardia and hypotension, though less common, may also appear.

The intoxication does not confer immunity but would rather sensitise the patient when he/she is exposed again to the toxin of an even lower concentration. Patients are advised not to drink alcoholic beverages and eat nut or seed products as these foods will increase the severity of the symptoms.

Prevention of Ciguatera Fish Poisoning : Consumers

- Eat fewer coral reef fish :
- Eat small amount of coral reef fish at any one meal :
- Avoid consuming the roe, liver, guts, head and skin of coral reef fish :
- Avoid consuming alcoholic beverages, nut or seed products when consuming coral reef fish or when suffering from ciguatera fish poisoning :
- Buy coral reef fish from reputable and licensed seafood shops; and
- Seek medical advice and treatment immediately if you have ciguatera fish poisoning symptoms.

Seafood Traders

- Comply with the requirements stipulated in the **Code of Practice on the Import and Sale of Live Marine Fish for Human Consumption***, for example:

✿ Importers are required to report to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department for every import of live coral reef fish.

✿ Importers, wholesalers and retailers should avoid importing, purchasing and selling fish known to have a high risk of carrying ciguatera, and coral reef fish from unknown or suspicious sources.

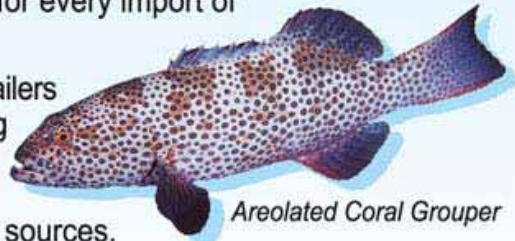
✿ Importers, wholesalers and retailers should keep accurate records of the supplies and distribution of all live marine fish for source tracing if any problem arises.

- Keep coral reef fish of different sources or suppliers in different fish tanks or zones.

*The Code of Practice can be downloaded from http://www.fehd.gov.hk/safefood/library/Ciguatera_fish/fish_cop.html



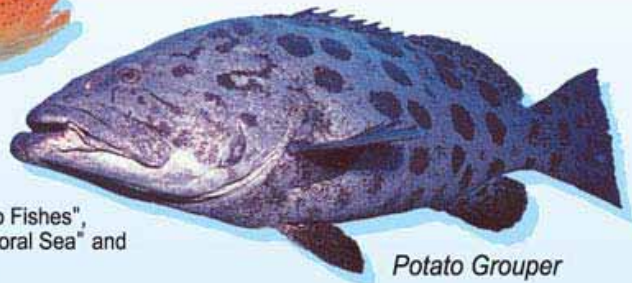
Flowery Grouper



Areolated Coral Grouper



Leopard Coral Grouper

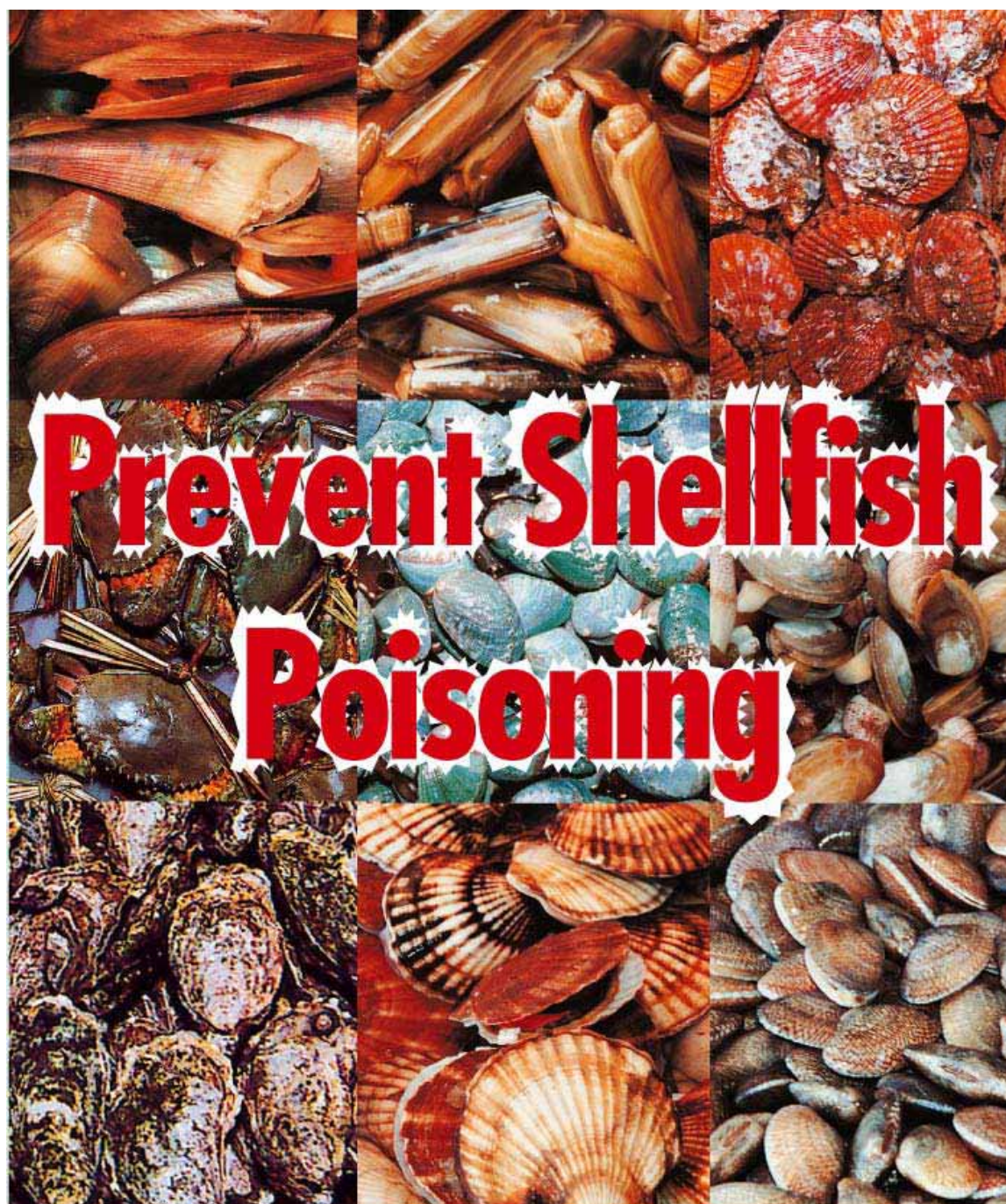


Potato Grouper

Pictures adopted from "Grant's Guide to Fishes",
"Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea" and
"World Wide Fund Nature Hong Kong"
Photographer: Jo Ruxton



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Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
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Poisoning can result from ingestion of shellfish contaminated with phycotoxins. These toxins are produced by free-living micro-algae, upon which the shellfish feed. Bivalve shellfish such as clams, mussels, oysters, fan shells and scallops are common vehicles responsible for shellfish poisoning. This is because they are filter-feeders and naturally ingest the toxic algae in water. When the algae are toxin-producing, the toxins will be concentrated in the shellfish tissue, particularly in the viscera. The amount of toxin in the shellfish depends on the number of toxic algae ingested.



Harmful Algal Bloom (Red Tide)

Harmful algal bloom, commonly known as red tide, occurs when the micro-algae grow very fast and densely accumulate in water to the extent that visible coloured patches appear. The occurrence of such algal "blooms" is a natural phenomenon. The concentration of toxin in shellfish living in the affected seawater rapidly increases. These toxins often cause little or no ill-effect on the shellfish. However, shellfish can concentrate the toxins and act as a vector transferring these toxic compounds further up the food chain to carnivores, such as fish and crabs, and are ultimately consumed by humans.

Toxic Algae - Dinoflagellates

Dinoflagellates, a group of unicellular flagellated micro-algae, are notorious for the production of certain potent toxins. The toxins are heat-stable and cannot be destroyed by normal cooking. Dinoflagellates produce two types of toxins. One causes gastrointestinal problems and the other causes respiratory paralysis.

Classes of Shellfish Poisoning

Four major classes of shellfish poisoning associated with red tide phenomenon have been identified:

- * Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP)
- * Diarrhoetic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP)
- * Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning (NSP)
- * Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP)



Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP)

PSP is a life-threatening syndrome.

Symptoms are mainly neurological and their onset is rapid. Symptoms include tingling, numbness, burning of the perioral region, ataxia, fever, rash and staggering. These may last for a few days followed by spontaneous recovery.

However, there are some severe cases that may result in respiratory arrest within 24 hours of consumption of toxic shellfish.



Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP)

This is the second commonest shellfish poisoning that may affect humans. As the name implies, symptoms of DSP are gastrointestinal in nature. Symptoms, usually begin within 30 minutes to a few hours after consuming contaminated shellfish, include diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, chills, and moderate to severe abdominal pain and cramps. Complete recovery is expected within three days. No known fatality has occurred.

Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning (NSP)

NSP is rare and not a life-threatening syndrome. Symptoms tend to be mild and usually include tingling of facial muscles, cold and hot sensory reversal, bradycardia and dilation of pupils. Symptoms may resolve quickly and completely within a few days.

Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP)

ASP is caused by marine diatoms and characterised by both gastrointestinal and neurological disorders. Symptoms include vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, headaches and in particular a short-term memory loss. ASP could be life-threatening.

Precautions

- * Buy shellfish from reputable and licensed seafood shops.
- * Eat a smaller amount of shellfish in any one meal, and avoid eating the viscera, gonad and roe.
- * Toxins that are heat-stable cannot be destroyed through cooking. However, thorough cooking to boiling temperature may highly reduce the risk caused by microbiological contamination.
- * Children, patients and the elderly may be susceptible to poisoning and should be cautious in consuming shellfish.
- * When symptoms occur after consuming shellfish, seek medical advice immediately from nearby hospitals and save leftovers for investigation and laboratory testing.

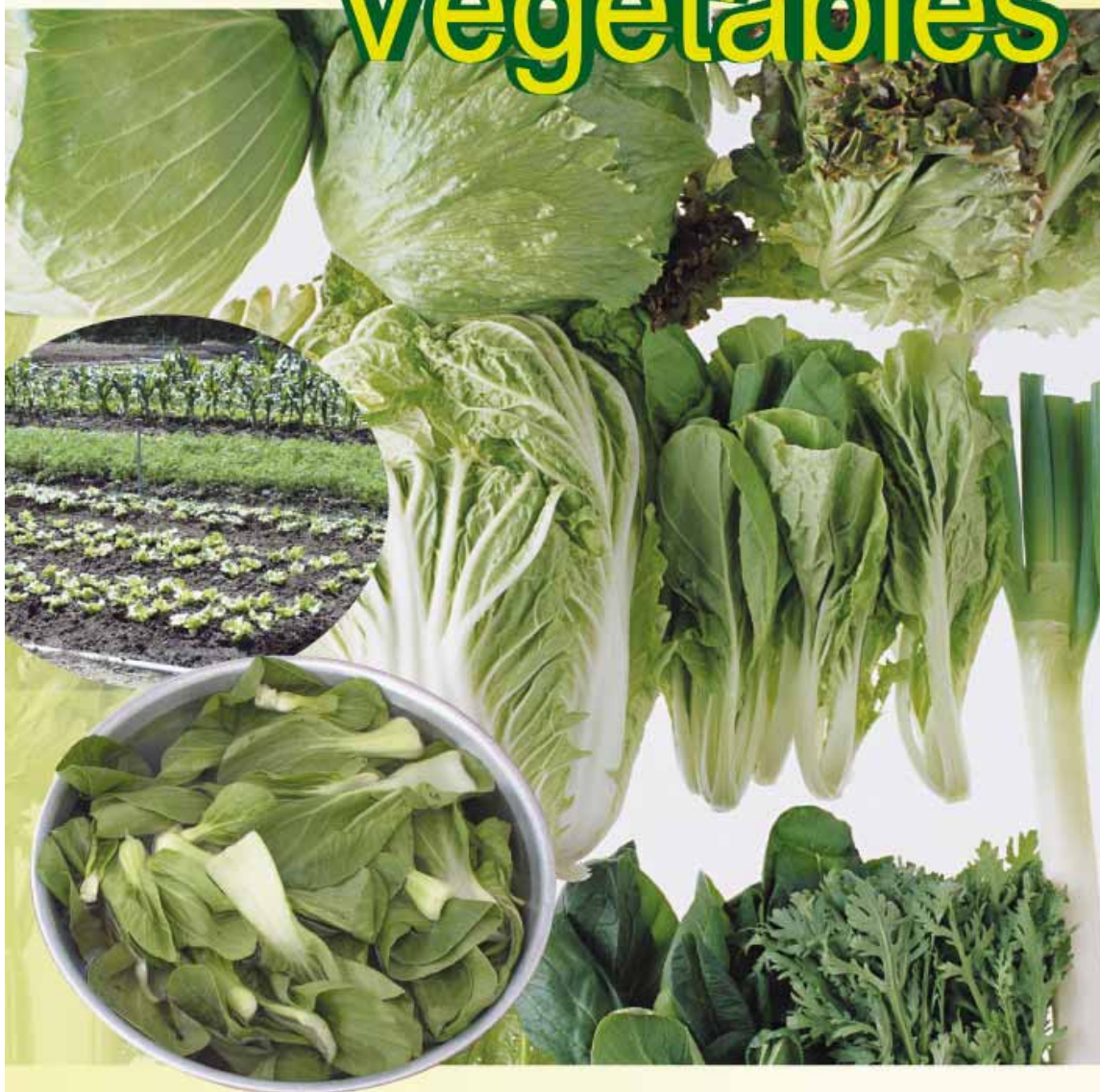
For further information,
please contact the Communication Resource Unit.
Tel: 2381 6096
Address: 8/F, Fa Yuen Street Municipal Services Building,
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Enquiry Hotline 2868 0000
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Proper Handling of **Vegetables**



Vegetables are essential in a balanced diet. They are good sources of dietary fibres, vitamins and minerals. Vegetables help promoting gastrointestinal health and reducing the risk of certain chronic diseases, such as cancers and cardiovascular diseases.

Pesticides are substances used to kill or control unwanted insects, plants, fungi, rodents or other pests. Insecticides, herbicides, rodenticides and fungicides are some commonly used pesticides. Proper use of pesticide on vegetables can reduce crop damage by insect pests and fungi, reduce soil erosion upon the removal of weeds, as well as increase the crop yield. Consumers' health and living quality are thereby enhanced with the provision of a large variety of pest and disease free, safe and wholesome vegetables at reasonable price. However, if pesticide is used improperly, consumers may ingest excessive amount of pesticide residue, which may affect their health.

Pesticide residue present in vegetables may be resulted from:

- direct or excessive use of pesticide on vegetables;
- insufficient time allowed for the breakdown of pesticide to a safe level before harvesting; or
- environmental contamination.

Symptoms of an acute pesticide poisoning include vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, dizziness and numbness. In severe cases, the victims may even have difficulties in breathing, blurred vision and convulsion; while a chronic poisoning may damage the nervous system or other organs such as the liver and kidneys. Some pesticides may be transferred to an embryo via the placenta or to a baby via breast feeding, thereby affecting their development.

Pesticide residual problems are more commonly seen in leafy vegetables such as Chinese flowering cabbage, Chinese lettuce, Indian lettuce, watercress and cauliflower.



Monitoring and Control of Vegetables on Sale in Hong Kong

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) operates a food surveillance programme and regularly takes samples of vegetables at import, wholesale and retail levels for testing.

Most of the vegetables on sale in Hong Kong come from the Mainland. All vegetables imported from the Mainland must come from registered farms or purchasing stations under the supervision of the Mainland monitoring authorities. CFS has a Food Control Office at Man Kam To. When the vegetables reach Man Kam To, the CFS will inspect relevant documents including the Pesticide Declaration Certificate, Monitoring Card, etc. Random samples of vegetables will also be collected for testing of pesticide residues at the Man Kam To Food Laboratory whenever necessary.

In addition, the CFS also collects vegetable samples at the wholesale and retail levels for the test of pesticide residue by the Government Laboratory. Furthermore, vegetable samples will also be collected and tested for heavy metals.

The CFS currently takes reference from the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) recommended by Codex Alimentarius Commission in determining whether vegetables contain excessive pesticide residue.

MRL is the maximum concentration of a pesticide residue permitted in a food commodity when the Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) is observed. According to the GAP, one should apply only the minimum amount of approved pesticide necessary to control pest, thereby protecting the health of consumers. The primary aims of setting MRLs for pesticides in food are to safeguard public health and to provide an indicator for the trade.

Foods containing pesticides below MRLs are considered wholesome and fit for human consumption. However, pesticide residue level exceeding the MRL does not necessarily mean that there is an immediate health risk. There is no cause for undue alarm. An excess in the pesticide residual level reflects an improper use of pesticide or a contamination of the vegetables, which requires rectification at the sources.

Advice to the Public

1. To reduce the health risk of pesticide residue due to consumption of pesticide-tainted vegetables, members of the public can wash vegetables well in clean running water for several times; then soak them in water for one hour or blanch them in boiling water for one minute and discard the water. Both measures can be adopted together for further risk reduction.
2. Concerned individuals, who wish to further reduce their intake of pesticides, may remove the outer leaves or peel the vegetables.
3. Members of the public are advised to take a balanced diet and eat a variety of vegetables to avoid excessive exposure to certain contaminants from a small range of food items.
4. One should seek medical advice if feeling unwell after eating vegetables.



Advice to the Trade

When using pesticide, farmers should follow the GAP which includes:

- use only approved pesticides;
- apply only the minimum amount of pesticide necessary to control pest;
- do not harvest vegetables within two weeks after the last pesticide treatment.

For any enquiry, please call the FEHD's hotline 2868 0000.

給業界的建議 Advice to Trade

(一) 原材料的處理

1. 向可靠的供應商購買原材料。
2. 徹底清洗所有蔬菜和生果。
3. 徹底煮熟雞蛋、家禽、肉類及海產。
4. 使用經巴士德消毒法除去病菌的雞蛋 (pasteurised eggs) 或蛋類產品來配製沙律醬料。
5. 醬料包裝經開啟後，便應貯存在攝氏四度或以下的冷凍櫃內。
6. 不論是冷凍的原材料(例如肉類、海產、切開的生果和蔬菜)或製成品，都不應放置在攝氏四度以上的環境超過兩小時。

(二) 自助式沙律櫃枱

1. 以適當的方式及在攝氏四度或以下展示沙律材料。
2. 供應足夠的長柄夾子或杓子給顧客拿取沙律材料。應在適當時候更換夾子和杓子(例如每四小時更換一次)及立刻將不潔的夾子或杓子(例如已掉在地上的夾子)移走。
3. 應每次展示少量的沙律材料，並避免把新配製的材料混和在已展示過的材料中。
4. 棄掉已展示過的剩餘材料。
5. 委派已接受適當訓練的員工監督櫃枱範圍，以確保食物不會被顧客污染。

(C) 衛生守則

1. 食物業從業員應注意個人、食物及環境衛生。
2. 防止交叉污染。

(A) Handling of raw materials

1. Purchase raw materials from reputable and reliable suppliers.
2. Wash all vegetables and fruits thoroughly.
3. Cook eggs, poultry, meat and seafood thoroughly.
4. Use pasteurised eggs or egg products to prepare salad dressings.
5. Store salad dressings at 4°C or below once their packages are opened.
6. Avoid holding chilled ingredients (e.g. meat, seafood, cut fruits and vegetables) and finished products at above 4°C for more than two hours.

(B) Self-serve salad bars

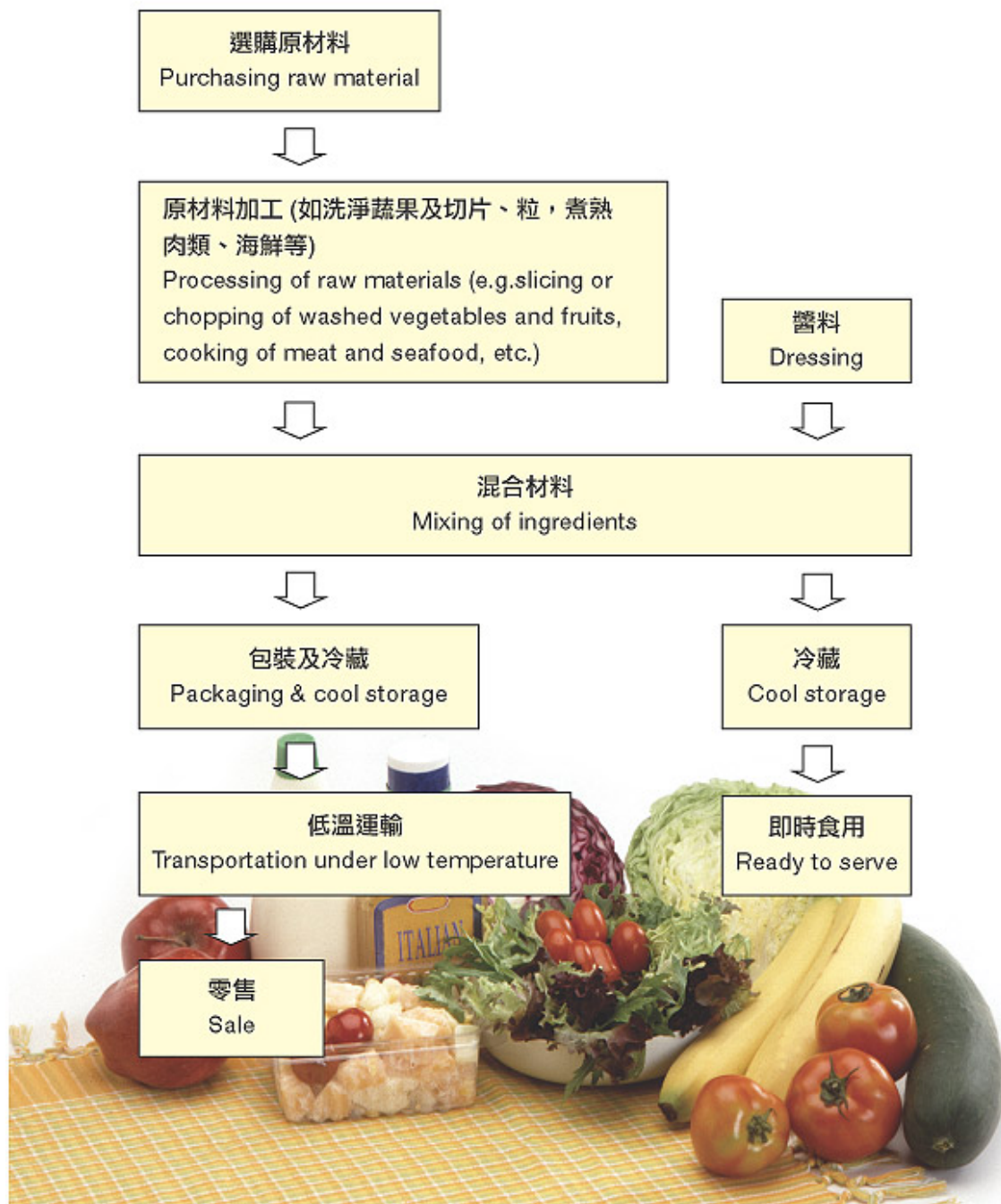
1. Display salad ingredients in a proper manner and at 4°C or below.
2. Provide sufficient numbers of tongs or ladles with long handles and replace them with clean ones when appropriate (e.g. at four-hour interval). Remove contaminated tongs and ladles (e.g. those dropped onto the floor) from the salad bar area immediately.
3. Display ingredients in small portions and avoid topping up with fresh ones.
4. Discard leftovers.
5. Supervise the salad bar area by appropriately trained staff to protect the food against contamination by customers.

(C) Hygienic practices

1. Observe good personal, food and environmental hygiene.
2. Prevent cross-contamination.



沙律的製造 *Production of Salads*



Food Safety Focus

"Food Safety Focus" provides a new channel of communication between the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) and the general public. Its main objectives are to arouse the awareness of the community on current food safety issues, both local and overseas, as well as the actions undertaken by the CFS in relation to these issues; to provide professional and easy-to-understand information on various food hazards and their public health risks and to promote food safety through enhancing communication with the food trade and public.

	PDF	HTML
Food Safety Focus (30th Issue, January 2009)^{NEW}		
• Dioxins in Irish Pork	PDF	HTML
• Nutrient and Health - Carbohydrates: Starch and Dietary Fibre		HTML
• Benzoyl Peroxide in Flour		HTML
Food Safety Focus (29th Issue, December 2008)		
• Bacteria on Eggs - Should Eggs be Washed?	PDF	HTML
• Nutrient and Health : Energy and Protein		HTML
• Strange Smell in Water Packaged in Plastic Bottles		HTML
• <i>Vibrio parahaemolyticus</i> and Bivalve Shellfish		HTML
Food Safety Focus (28th Issue, November 2008)		
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• Melamine Contamination in Eggs		HTML
Food Safety Focus (27th Issue, October 2008)		
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Food Safety Focus (26th Issue, September 2008)		
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• Coliform and Soft Ice-cream		HTML
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• Nitrate in Food	PDF	HTML
• Biological Hazard in Food - Pathogenic Bacteria (Part II)		HTML
• Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning Toxins and American Lobster Tomalley		HTML
• <i>Salmonella</i> and Hot Peppers		HTML
Food Safety Focus (24th Issue, July 2008)		
• Coliforms in Milk - Presence of Bad Bugs?	PDF	HTML
• Biological Hazards in Food - Pathogenic Bacteria (Part I)		HTML
• <i>Salmonella</i> and Tomato		HTML
Food Safety Focus (23rd Issue, June 2008)		

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• Persistent Organic Pollutants in Food – Food Safety Implication		HTML
• <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> and Food Safety		HTML
• <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> and Pesto Sauce		HTML
Food Safety Focus (22nd Issue, May 2008)		
• Mercury in Fish and Food Safety	PDF	HTML
• Persistent Organic Pollutants in Food - An Overview		HTML
• Cantaloupes and <i>Salmonella</i>		HTML
• Watercress and Parasitic Infection		HTML
Food Safety Focus (21th Issue, April 2008)		
• The Troublemaker in Gravies: <i>Clostridium perfringens</i> and food poisoning	PDF	HTML
• Pesticide Residues in Food (Part III)		HTML
• Arsenic in Pear Juice		HTML
• Aflatoxins in Peanut Products		HTML
Food Safety Focus (20th Issue, March 2008)		
• Review of Food Incidents in 2007	PDF	HTML
• Pesticide Residues in Food (Part II)		HTML
• Petroleum Products in Salmon		HTML
• Disposable Food Containers and Their Safety		HTML
Food Safety Focus (19th Issue, February 2008)		
• Cyanide Poisoning and Cassava	PDF	HTML
• Pesticide Residues in Food (Part I)		HTML
• Methamidophos and Dumplings		HTML
• Scombroid Fish Poisoning		HTML
Food Safety Focus (18th Issue, January 2008)		
• Heavy Metals in Dried Oysters	PDF	HTML
• Mercury and Food Safety		HTML
• Bromate in Food		HTML
• Nitrofurans, Malachite Green and Canned Pork Products		HTML
Food Safety Focus (17th Issue, December 2007)		
• Sulphur Dioxide in Meat	PDF	HTML
• Arsenic and Food Safety		HTML
• <i>Salmonella</i> in Seed Products		HTML
• <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> and Mussels		HTML
Food Safety Focus (16th Issue, November 2007)		
• Trans Fats in Foods	PDF	HTML
• Cadmium and Food Safety		HTML
• Metal Pieces Found in Yoghurt		HTML
• Scorpion Stings and Langsat		HTML
Food Safety Focus (15th Issue, October 2007)		
• Preservatives in Dried Fruits and Pickled Vegetables	PDF	HTML
• Lead Exposure in Our Everyday Life		HTML
• Avian Influenza Viruses and Food Safety		HTML
• <i>Enterobacter sakazakii</i> in Powdered Infant Formula		HTML
Food Safety Focus (14th Issue, September 2007)		

• Leanness-enhancing Agents in Pork	PDF	HTML
• Overview of Metallic Contaminants in Food		HTML
• Organic Contaminants in Local Mussels		HTML
• <i>Shigella</i> in Baby Carrots		HTML
Food Safety Focus (13th Issue, August 2007)		
• Foodborne Botulism	PDF	HTML
• Natural Toxins in Food Plants		HTML
• <i>Salmonella</i> in Snacks		HTML
• Formaldehyde in Creamy Candies		HTML
Food Safety Focus (12th Issue, July 2007)		
• <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> and its Control	PDF	HTML
• Natural Toxic Substances in Seafood		HTML
• Sudan Dye in Rice Dumplings		HTML
• Copper Sulphate and Wrapping Leaves for Rice Dumplings		HTML
Food Safety Focus (11th Issue, June 2007)		
• Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning	PDF	HTML
• An Overview of Natural Toxins in Food		HTML
• Food Poisoning Caused by Wild Mushrooms		HTML
• Contamination of Animal Feed with Melamine and Food Safety		HTML
Food Safety Focus (10th Issue, May 2007)		
• Arsenic in Food	PDF	HTML
• Food Additives: Safety and Hazards		HTML
• Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning Toxins in Scallops		HTML
• <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 in Meat Products		HTML
Food Safety Focus (9th Issue, April 2007)		
• Tetrodotoxin Poisoning	PDF	HTML
• Allergens in Food		HTML
• Patients Suffering from Kidney Diseases Should Refrain from Eating Star Fruit		HTML
• Poisoning Caused by Grass Carp Gall Bladder		HTML
Food Safety Focus (8th Issue, March 2007)		
• <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in Food	PDF	HTML
• Sweeteners in Food		HTML
• Cadmium in Oysters		HTML
• Safety of Basil Seeds		HTML
Food Safety Focus (7th Issue, February 2007)		
• Oilfish Consumption and Oily Diarrhoea	PDF	HTML
• Colouring Matter in Food		HTML
• DDT Residues and Food Safety		HTML
• <i>Listeria</i> and Individuals at Risk		HTML
Food Safety Focus (6th Issue, January 2007)		
• Formaldehyde in Food	PDF	HTML
• Preservatives in Food		HTML
• Vitamin K: A Brief Encounter		HTML
• Stevioside Used as Sweetener in Food		HTML
Food Safety Focus (5th Issue, December 2006)		

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sudan Dyes in Food	PDF	HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chemicals in Food: Overview of Food Additives		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nitrofurans Residues Found in Marine Fish		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Malachite Green Found in Freshwater Fish		HTML
Food Safety Focus (4th Issue, November 2006)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CFS Investigated Food Poisoning Cases Related to Raw Oysters from the Same Supplier	PDF	HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview of Chemical Hazards		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Botulism and Pasteurized Carrot Juice		HTML
Food Safety Focus (3rd Issue, October 2006)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 Outbreak Associated with Bagged Fresh Spinach in the US	PDF	HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview of Biological Hazards		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arsenic in Fish		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mercury in Seafood		HTML
Food Safety Focus (2nd Issue, September 2006)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Endosulfan Detected in Eels Exported to Japan from Mainland China	PDF	HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hazard and Risk in Food Safety (Part II)		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Danger of Eating Raw or Undercooked Freshwater Animals		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What Constitutes an Incident/Food Safety Case?		HTML
Food Safety Focus (1st Issue, August 2006)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recall of Salmonella Contaminated Chocolate Products in the United Kingdom	PDF	HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hazard and Risk in Food Safety (Part I)		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food Poisoning Cases Traced to Raw Sea Urchins from the Same Supplier		HTML
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) advised the public not to consume uncooked oysters imported from Korea		HTML

4 The Role of Technology in the Hospitality Industry

4.1 The Development of Technology in the Hospitality Industry

4.1.1 The Importance of Employing Up-to-date Information Technology

Front Office

The front office is always regarded as the "heart" of a hotel. Whether it is a small hotel or a large international one, property management systems (PMS) are needed for day-to-day operations. From reservations to revenue management, they help the hotel to yield its room sales and revenues. The computer systems provide the most up-to-date information to both front office staff and guests. When a potential guest calls the hotel to make a reservation, the hotel reservations clerk can accept or reject a booking immediately by searching through the computer. In addition, the staff can put the caller on the waiting list if a room is not available on certain dates.

During a guest's stay in a hotel, any transaction can be input directly into the computer system. Once the guest has checked out, the room status can be updated at once and the reservations clerk can take new bookings.

In addition, the front office can generate useful reports, such as arrival and departure lists, to relevant departments. Those reports can help departments plan and organise resources in advance.



Front Office

Housekeeping

The PMS can provide the housekeeping department with the most up-to-date information in order to help the department arranging the cleaning of guestrooms.

The executive housekeeper can input the cleaning schedules of guestrooms in order to maintain the high standard of a hotel. Besides, the housekeeping department can make use of the system to block any room for general cleaning and maintenance.

For example, the consumption of cleaning chemicals can be stored in the computer. It thus provides valuable information for the executive housekeeper to prepare the budget. In addition, the room inspection list can be retrieved from the computer whenever needed, especially in reviewing the performance of staff.

The housekeeping coordinator in the housekeeping office can update the room status of guestrooms so that the front office can offer the room to new guests, provided it has been inspected by the floor supervisor. The PMS system can speed up the process and cut down on communication breakdowns between departments.

Food and Beverage

The most valuable commodity for any business is reliable and up-to-date information. Computers have given the food & beverage department the ability to provide information more effectively and efficiently to the management and general staff. Computerised systems can help monitor work as it is being carried out, thereby warning of possible errors before they happen.

Data about storage of equipment and materials, distribution of these products throughout the food & beverage department and new products now available can be accessed.

Once data has been input, a food & beverage management system can become an asset to the business. For instance, this type of system can store all the recipes used in the organisation's outlets. Using this information, kitchen staff can order goods from the stores using these recipes and the order will be automatically scaled to the correct quantities required and cost of the menu items, thereby giving staff the correct selling price to achieve the correct profit margin.

Most catering businesses, hotels and restaurants use generic systems that provide the kitchen manager (head chef) and restaurant manager (maître d') with financial modelling and forecasting.

4.1.2 The Ways Technological Changes Improve the Operational Efficiency of the Hospitality Industry for Customers, Tourists and Staff

Electronic Point-of-Sale Systems (POS) take the place of traditional cash registers. They take the form of a single cash register with a processor, memory and printer, all incorporated into one unit. They have a greater capacity than traditional cash registers. Typical functions include the ability to store multiple totals which enables overall sales for a shift to be analysed as required. A touch screen with programmed prices of menu items makes the process faster and more efficient. Once the information has been input, a copy will be sent to the responsible outlet, e.g. kitchen, bar, room service. All orders will show the time it is processed which in turn eliminates the errors of hand-written chits.

Management reports are very comprehensive, giving details such as the sales of each item on the menu.

Information of this type can further assist the management to ensure that the business is operating at its maximum efficiency and profitability.



Electronic POS system



Electronic POS system in a Hong Kong restaurant

Stock Control Systems

Using it at its simplest, this system will allow stock to be entered when received and issued to different food & beverage units in an establishment. The system will ultimately calculate the value and quantity of the remaining stock.

There are more sophisticated systems that, apart from providing the basic features, include a range of others such as suppliers, new products on the market and alerts when stocks fall below pre-determined levels, thus automatically making new orders.

These stock-control systems are relatively easy to use for bar stock but become more complex when dealing with food items. This is because quantities and weights are not always standard.

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Can you think of any other departments within a hotel that may use technology to improve efficiency, reduce waiting time of guests and maintain a competitive advantage?

4.1.3 The Property Management System (PMS) in Hotels

PMS is an integrated computer system that includes the computerisation of the front desk processes and, at most, the control of virtually all operations in the hotel, including telephones, in-room movies, the use of electricity and other mechanical devices.

It can also control food and beverage operations and information, remote point-of-sale equipment, management information systems, and systems that link the hotel to worldwide information networks.

Benefits of implementing PMS:

- The operation of a hotel can be improved by reducing repetitive tasks.
- The information needed by the management to make decisions is current and easily accessible.
- The service provided to guests can be improved with regard to the timing and accuracy of pertinent information.
- The internal operations of a hotel can be standardised in a way that is easy to control and will be almost impossible to duplicate in a manual system.

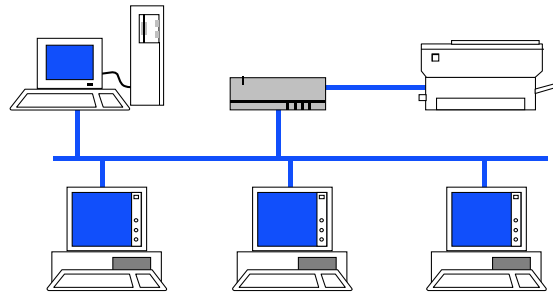


Figure 21 *Hotel property management system*

Certain functions of PMS

Reservations

- Individual reservations
- Group reservations
- Room blocking
- Mails and messages
- VIP guests
- Deposits and refunds
- Availability
- Travel agents
- Groups and plans
- Reservation module reports
- Arrivals and departures
- Group reports
- Departure list
- Master list

Front Desk and cashier systems

- Registrations and changes
- Selecting a room
- Transferring a guest
- Messages and mails
- 6pm hold reservations
- Billing of groups
- Locating a guest
- Posting charges
- Printing in the cashier area
- Night audit
- Room rate variance
- Credit limit report
- Daily report
- Room revenue report
- City ledger activities
- Interfacing
- Checklists
- Housekeeping functions
- Room status changes
- Discrepancies
- Telephone department

Housekeeping systems

- - Assigns room for cleaning at the beginning of the day
- - Daily housekeeping report
- - Daily reports on check-ins, check-outs, occupancies, vacancies and maintenance
- - Change status from "dirty" to "clean"
- - Change to "block" if room is undergoing maintenance
- - Inventory
- - General cleaning management

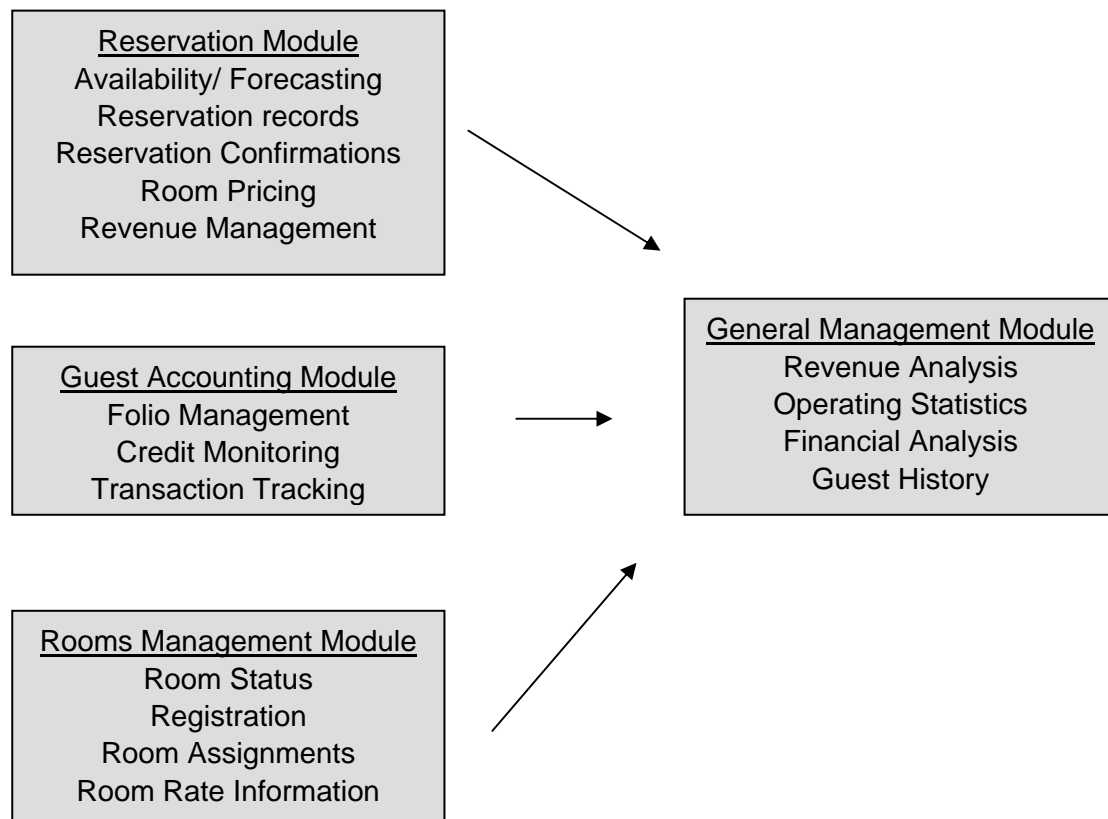


Figure 22 Rooms Division computer applications

ACTIVITY 62

Do you think PMS can totally replace staff in hotel operations?

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