

The Restaurant Manager's Guide to a clean, hygienic and legal operation



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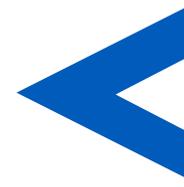
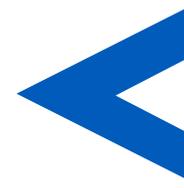


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INTRODUCTION

The Restaurant Manager's Guide to a Clean, Hygienic and Legal Operation

The job of the restaurant manager is one fraught with stress. Juggling long hours, demanding patrons and the management of staff can take its toll. In addition, operations must comply with various industry standards and laws regarding cleanliness and hygiene.

The best way of adhering to the stringent requirements that are applied to commercial kitchens is to construct a set of checklists that apply to the various areas of your restaurant. Be aware of the importance of a rigorous food policy, as well as the ramifications of failing to adhere to one. In addition, hygiene has to be a priority in your kitchen – ensure that you're abiding by the laws that apply to this aspect of your restaurant.

We've outlined the best way to go about task this by drawing up a few convenient checklists, as well as discussing the other factors that need to be addressed. All you need to do is tailor them according to your restaurant's needs.



1 Restaurant Cleaning

There's monetary value in a clean and hygienic restaurant

In the restaurant business, having strict food safety policies in place assists with revenue generation in the long term. This is because food that's produced in safe and hygienic conditions is automatically of a higher standard.

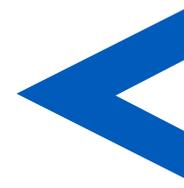
It's the duty of the restaurant manager to ensure the health and wellbeing of the customer. Without a proper hygiene and cleanliness policy in place, a restaurant runs the risk of failing health and safety inspections and contravening compliance laws. Food that's produced in unhygienic conditions will result in decreased demand for the product. What's more, failure to meet the standards demanded during inspections can result in hefty fines.

What does a clean and hygienic restaurant entail?

Food safety and hygiene policies and laws dictate that all areas of a restaurant or commercial kitchen meet their requirements. In order to do this, a comprehensive list of health considerations needs to be compiled. In addition, members of staff need to be made aware of the importance of adhering to it.

We've outlined specific checklists that pertain to each section of your restaurant - starting with the all-important kitchen. Obey them to the letter, and add in any items that pertain to your restaurant specifically. From deep cleaning to simple sweeping, it is of the utmost importance that you keep your food preparation area clean.

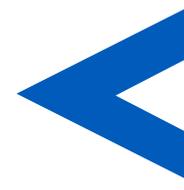




Kitchen Cleaning

Daily tasks checklist (some items to be implemented throughout the day)

- Ensure that the restaurant is completely cleared of used cutlery, crockery, glassware and serviettes after each service. All surfaces must be cleaned - including stove tops
- Scrub the oven and grill when alternating between cooking red meat, poultry and fish
- Wipe down all preparation areas thoroughly throughout service
- Wash and sanitise all cutting boards
- Sweep and mop the kitchen floor and the floor in the walk-in refrigerator
- Use separate cutting boards for poultry, red meat, seafood and vegetables. Clean throughout the day
- Knives that are used to cut cheeses and meats must be cleaned regularly and separately
- Wash can openers, utensils and other frequently-used items in the
- Clean out espresso or coffee machine as needed
- Keep kitchen chefs' whites clean at all times
- Cleaning cloths and chefs' whites are to be put in separate laundry baskets
- Clean exhaust coolers, fans and filters
- Use multipurpose cleaners on all kitchen and restaurant tables
- Wash mats in kitchen prep area
- Mop and wax floors
- Correct display of certifications for hygiene compliance to be visible at all times
- Correct display of liquor licenses
- Conduct a daily stock control of perishable goods
- Constant quality control of all fresh produce – check expiration dates of all ingredients daily



Weekly tasks checklist

- Sanitise bins and waste disposal areas (this includes outside bins)
- Throw out old stock and food that has passed its best-before date
- Thoroughly scrub and clean the interiors of ovens
- Apply drain cleaners to sinks and floor drains
- Clean and repack fridges

Monthly tasks checklist

Some of these monthly checklist items or tasks should be outsourced to a professional cleaning company. In addition, some of these items might need to be implemented frequently depending on your restaurant's demand and circumstances.

- Clean and repack freezers and deep-freezers (always monitor stock and how long they have been frozen. Refer to infographic at the end of this guide)
- Empty and sanitize your ice machine
- Recalibrate ovens, thermometers and other heating devices
- Consult professionals to scrub the walls and ceilings
- Clean the dry storage area, making sure to remove any old or perished stocks
- Restock and reevaluate your first aid kits
- Do an inventory check on chemicals kept in the kitchen
- Restock gas bottles
- Consult professionals to conduct a deep cleaning of your kitchen
- Clean fat traps
- Clean extractor fans
- Clean grease traps

Annual tasks checklist

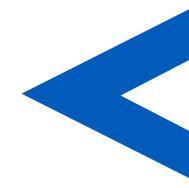
- Check fire extinguishers to see that they are in working order
- Clean pilot lights on gas kitchen equipment
- Consult professional cleaning services to clean your hoods

Pantry and the exterior

- Storage (cold and dry) of foodstuffs and perishables must be subjected to the same policies that apply to freshly prepared foods
- Pantries and enclosed areas must be treated with care regarding the liberation of bacteria.
- When it comes to bins and waste disposal facilities, make sure that you have a handle on the odours that might originate
- Consult professional cleaning services for any of these demanding jobs

Front of house cleaning

It is not only important that you keep your front of house clean, but that it's impeccable and presentable at all times too. Remember that this is the area where first impressions are created. You'll impress your customers, or scare them off completely.



Restaurant Cleaning

Daily checklist

- Wipe down tables and service areas
- Ensure that front of house staff are professionally dressed
- Use clean cutlery and crockery for service
- Keep exterior windows spotless
- Sweep the entrance to the restaurant before each service

Weekly Checklist

- Clean windows thoroughly
- Scrub skirting boards
- Clean any scuff marks on walls or tables

Monthly Checklist

- Deep clean carpeted areas
- Clean ceilings
- Scrub skirting boards



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Food Management



High risk foods



Eggs, Poultry and Beef

It's crucial that the storage of eggs and poultry products (and to a lesser extent, beef) be strictly monitored as they can cause Salmonella poisoning if they are mishandled. Eggs usually have a high turnover rate in restaurants, but always be aware that they should not be kept refrigerated for longer than three weeks after purchase.

Shellfish

Shellfish should be paid special attention, as this foodstuff is notorious for causing illness if not stored and prepared correctly. Always be aware of how long it has been in your fridge.

Best-before dates

All foods can pose a high risk if you're not vigilant about how long they've been in your refrigerator. Adhere to the dates on packaged goods and regularly procure fresh produce from wholesalers.

First In, First Out

If in any doubt, apply the First In, First Out (FIFO) policy to your refrigerated goods. This will enable you to compile accurate inventory lists and adequately control your stock.

Be aware of what is in your cold storage area and deep-freeze facilities

Don't apply a blanket food safety policy

You cannot apply a blanket food safety policy to all of the perishables in your fridge, as they all have different 'best-before' dates. Always be vigilant of what ingredients you have in your commercial fridge and how long these foodstuffs have been there.

Mark your meat

Failing best before dates, use markers on meat stored in the deepfreeze. Livestock is usually only marked once so be sure to mark the parts you are using.

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Restaurant Pest control

Pest infestations are an unfortunate reality in the restaurant business. An infestation has far-reaching implications for hygiene, cleanliness and compliance laws. This is a pressing concern as it affects so many aspects of the business. Having a comprehensive policy to your pest control is a must - being slapped with fines by inspectors for failing to comply with health and safety regulations is one thing, a rat scurrying through your restaurant and past one of your customers is quite another. Consult a professional pest control company to conduct an inspection – this will help you understand how to deal with your pest control issues.



Pest Control Checklist

- Report sightings of pests immediately to a professional pest management company – this includes flies and pigeons
- Do not store pesticides in the kitchen or food preparation areas
- Wipe down counters and food preparation surfaces
- Seal all containers
- Fix leaking taps and pipes
- Dirty dishes must not be left out
- Clean up any spills immediately (this includes water)
- Report any spills you cannot adequately clean up to a professional cleaning service
- Close possible pest entry points

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Restaurant Hygiene



Staff hygiene and cleaning

- Good hygiene is a vital element of any professional kitchen. The hygiene standards of the establishment should be reflected by all staff members. This includes personal hygiene.
- All staff working with food should wear a hairnet to avoid stray hairs landing in food. Likewise, beards should be covered.
- Fingernails should be kept short and hands are to be kept clean at all times.
- Train scullery staff in correct washing up practices. Not everything fits in the dishwasher.

Bathrooms for patrons

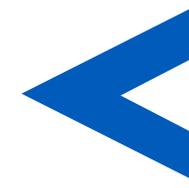
Bathrooms at all restaurants must be clean and hygienic at all times, since this is also part of the diner's experience. Consult the checklist below to see what you need to consider for your bathrooms:

- Clean and disinfect sinks, counter tops, toilets, urinals and mirrors on a daily basis
- Re-fill consumables, including paper products and soap
- Sanitise bathrooms on a regular basis
- Clean extractor fans on a weekly basis
- Check that all products that work on sensors or batteries are in working order

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Restaurant Legal Requirements





Liquor laws and best practice

- Liquor sales greatly contribute to revenue which means that adhering to liquor laws is crucial.

Strict adherence to liquor laws is a vital component of a properly-functioning restaurant. It is a great revenue-generating source, so make sure that you comply with all the necessary laws in order to avoid being fined or having your license revoked.

- Educate staff on liquor service

Have a policy in place whereby designated members of staff control the service of alcohol. Do not serve liquor to underage patrons in any circumstances as the repercussions are severe.

- Be sure to adhere to the liquors bylaws that govern your area or type of establishment

By-laws apply to the time limits in which you can serve and sell liquor. Stick to these restrictions to avoid hefty fines or having your license revoked.

- Display your liquor license

Always have designated areas that display your valid liquor license. This makes the inspection procedure seamless, and indicates to patrons that your establishment is a professional operation.

Smoking laws

Make sure that your restaurant doesn't contravene any existing smoking laws that apply to your area or your type of establishment. Considerations to bear in mind are:

- Does your restaurant facility have a designated smoking area?

Designated smoking areas are essential in restaurants. The ramifications of contravening this law are severe.

- If so, does this smoking area's size comply with the regulations and laws that apply to your province or city?

The size apportioned to a designated smoking area is usually a ratio of the total size of the establishment. Make sure that yours is in line with these regulations.

- Do you ensure that none of your staff smoke in the food preparation area?

Always have strict rules with your staff regarding smoking. No smoking should happen anywhere near the food preparation area. Failure to comply should result in severe punishment.

- Does your restaurant have smoke detectors in the kitchen and dining areas?

Smoke detectors should be clearly marked and in working order. Make sure that their positioning is in line with rules applicable to your type of establishment.

Fire laws, policy and procedure

It is crucial to have a policy regarding fire and fire hazards in your restaurant. The nature of the business makes this a real danger, which means that it's crucial that you adhere to the laws and standards that apply.

- Educate staff on the use of fire extinguishers

It is no use having fire extinguishers if none of your staff know how to use them properly. Make sure this is part of their training process.

- Assign emergency exit areas

Emergency exit areas from the kitchen or dining areas should be visibly marked and all staff should be aware of how to use them and where they are.

- Adhere to fire and safety regulations

Do all the fireplaces or gas-heaters in your restaurant dining area comply with standard fire and safety regulations? Contact the local authorities to see which of these rules apply to you.



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Summary

The importance of checklists in reinforcing hygiene, cleanliness and ethics

It is important that a restaurant manager is aware of all goings on in the restaurant - not only in the kitchen, but in the adjacent and auxiliary areas too. Consult these checklists at regular intervals until your approach to pests, hygiene, compliance laws and cleanliness become second nature. Conduct regular assessments in order to ensure that all staff and members of the kitchen are adhering to them. If everyone in your kitchen has the same approach to hygiene and cleanliness, it will bode well for your operation.

Adopting a regimented hygiene and cleanliness policy is a prerequisite for all involved in the hospitality or restaurant industry. The importance of food safety cannot be stressed enough. Failure to address it can result in illness, loss of revenue and substantial fines. Compliance with food laws and policies is a mutually beneficial approach.

