

What's Your BBQ IQ?

Food is often the highlight of celebrations with family and friends. Be sure to follow good food safety practices when grilling or smoking to reduce the risk of food poisoning. How much do you REALLY know about food safety? Check your "BBQ IQ" by taking the quiz below!



1. Do meat and poultry need to be thawed before grilling or smoking?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Is it safe to marinate meat and poultry on the kitchen counter?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. When preparing meat and vegetables for grilling, is it safe to use the same cutting board without washing for both items?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. Is it safe to serve a marinade at mealtime that has been used with raw meat?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. Where should a thermometer be placed when determining the doneness of meat?
 - a. in the middle
 - b. in the thickest part
 - c. a thermometer is not needed
 - d. sideways, so the thermometer can easily be read
6. Should pork be cooked to a higher temperature than other raw meats?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
7. Is it safe to cut watermelon and leave it on the picnic table all afternoon?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. Is smoking a safe way to prepare meat and poultry?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
9. Is it safe to eat beef and vegetable kabobs grilled on the same stick?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
10. Should gloves be worn when grilling to prevent cross-contamination?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
11. Is a cooler with fresh ice sufficient to keep food safe at a picnic on a very hot day?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Answers to BBQ IQ Quiz

1. **Do meat and poultry need to be thawed before grilling or smoking? YES and NO:** Frozen foods can be grilled safely as long as the food reaches a safe internal temperature. However, grilling frozen meat and poultry will take longer and the food may cook unevenly. It is not safe to smoke frozen foods. Because smokers cook food at lower temperatures, it would take too long to reach a safe internal temperature.
2. **Is it safe to marinate meat and poultry on the kitchen counter? NO:** Marinating should be done in the refrigerator.
3. **When preparing meat and vegetables for grilling, is it safe to use the same cutting board without washing for both items? NO:** Always use a clean cutting board. Wash cutting boards, dishes, and counter tops with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next item. If possible, use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
4. **Is it safe to serve a marinade at mealtime that has been used with raw meat? NO:** If you want to serve your meal with additional marinade, be sure to set some aside before using raw meat.
5. **Where should a thermometer be placed when determining the doneness of meat?** In the thickest part, usually in the center.
6. **Should pork be cooked to a higher temperature than other raw meats? NO:** Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, & roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F. All poultry should be cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F. Cook hamburgers & ground beef mixtures to 160°F.
7. **Is it safe to cut watermelon and leave it on the picnic table all afternoon? NO:** Refrigerate or chill fruits and vegetables within 2 hours after you cut, peel, or cook them (or 1 hour if exposed to temperatures above 90°F).
8. **Is smoking a safe way to prepare meat and poultry? YES:** Smoking is done more slowly than grilling, so less tender meats benefit from this method. A thermometer is needed to monitor the air temperature in the smoker to be sure the heat stays between 225°F and 300°F throughout the cooking process.
9. **Is it safe to eat beef and vegetable kabobs grilled on the same stick? YES:** This is safe as long as both the beef and vegetables are thoroughly cooked to the correct temperature before serving.
10. **Should gloves be worn when grilling to prevent cross-contamination? NO:** Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after handling raw meat or poultry. When taking food off the grill, use a clean platter and utensils.
11. **Is a cooler with fresh ice sufficient to keep food safe at a picnic on a very hot day? YES:** BUT when temperatures are hotter than 90°F outside, refilling the ice in your cooler may be needed. Put a thermometer in your cooler and make sure it reads 40°F or below.

Sources:

- Grilling and Food Safety, USDA: <https://go.unl.edu/usda-grilling>
- Star-Spangled Grilling and Smoking Practices Everyone Needs to Know, USDA: <https://go.unl.edu/usda-grilling-smoking>