

# Here's how to... Wash Your Hands

The majority of foodborne illnesses are the result of germs spread from the hands of food workers to the food they are preparing. Proper hand washing can reduce the spread of disease-causing microorganisms and promote a healthy working environment for both your employees and your customers.

## When?

Information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. For more information go to [www.fda.gov/safe-food-handling](http://www.fda.gov/safe-food-handling)

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) advises that hands be washed before:

- Preparing food
- Putting on gloves to make food

Hands should also be washed after:

- Using the restroom
- Eating, drinking, smoking or chewing gum or tobacco
- Sneezing, coughing or using a tissue
- Touching the hair, face or body
- Touching clothing or aprons
- Handling raw meat, poultry and seafood
- Handling money
- Handling chemicals
- Taking out garbage
- Clearing tables or busing dirty dishes
- Leaving and returning to kitchen and prep areas
- Touching anything that could contaminate hands, such as dirty equipment, surfaces or cleaning rags

## Where?

Hand washing must be done in designated hand sinks—again, only in hand sinks. Do not wash hands in sinks meant for dishwashing, food prep or utility purposes.

## How?

For clear and easy procedures, download the **Hand Washing Procedure Card** from the Operations section of **KTEC Online** and keep it posted near your hand washing sinks to encourage proper hand washing in your store. Need KTEC Online login information? Please contact your AD/RDO.

## Wash, Wash and then Wash some More

Simply put, **proper and frequent hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent foodborne illness.** As a restaurant owner it is your responsibility to:

- Ensure proper hand washing techniques are being followed in your store.
- Observe your employees daily. Are they washing their hands as often as they should according to the list above? Are they washing up to their elbows and for a full 20 seconds? Note that you are not the only one observing your employees; *your customers are, too.* Much of the preparation, assembly and serving of food service is within the view of customers and they are watching.
- Revise food preparation activities to lower the number of hand washings needed. For example, during peak times do not schedule one person to ring up guests at the register *and* prepare the meal. One person should be touching food; one person should be touching money.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website (<http://www.cdc.gov>) has an abundance of resources for business owners. Take some time to read the CDC resources and review your store's policies and procedures to ensure you are supporting practices that reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

### How to Wash Your Hands

**NEVER** wash hands in the 3-compartment sink

Hand washing is the most important step in flu prevention.

**NOTES**

- Wash hands before starting work, after any cleaning, after using the restroom, after eating or drinking, after touching your hair or face, etc.
- Wash hands only in hand sinks. After using the restroom (and washing hands in the restroom), wash hands again in the hand sink on the backline.

**Pre-step** Dispense sanitized paper towel.

**1. Turn on hot water**  
Let the water run until it is 110°F, which is about as hot as most people can tolerate (without suffering pain or injury).

**2. Wet hands**  
It is important to wet hands and forearms, up to your elbows, prior to dispensing soap. This will help activate the soap.

**3. Apply soap**  
Dispense at least a quarter-sized dollop of soap into the palm of your hand.

**Nail Brush (optional)**  
Some states require the use of a nail brush after Step 3. Check with your local regulatory agency to ensure that you are in compliance with any and all health regulations.

**4. Rub hands together vigorously**  
Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds, making certain to scrub up to your elbows. The 20 seconds can be measured by singing "Happy Birthday" to yourself twice.

**5. Rinse thoroughly**  
Placing your hands under the running water, rinse off the remaining soap. Be certain to rinse your forearms, up to your elbows.

**6. Dry hands**  
Using a sanitized disposable paper towel, dry your hands completely.

**7. Turn off water**  
With the same paper towel used to dry your hands, turn off the water.

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