

# THE CORRECT USE OF CUTTING AND SERVING BOARDS

Wooden and plastic cutting boards along with serving boards are all safe to use in the kitchen. However, as with any surface that comes into contact with food items, their cleanliness and maintenance are key to preventing microbial cross-contamination.

## Avoid cross-contamination

Always avoid cutting ready-to-eat food, such as bread or salad, on a board that has been used to trim raw meat, poultry and seafood without washing and sanitising the board first.

To wash and sanitise a board properly, attention should be given to the grooves, scratches, gauges and cuts that may form on the board.

Food should not be prepared or served on boards with deep gouges and cuts because of the risk of cross-contamination from bacteria and viruses hidden in these marks. These lacerations can cause bacteria to become trapped and cross-contaminate food.

If cutting or serving boards cannot be effectively cleaned and sanitised because of damage to the surface, they should be replaced with new boards.

## Cleaning and protecting boards

Boards used for the preparation of food must be washed with hot soapy water and rinsed with clean water before being air dried, or patted dry with clean paper towels.

Following the cleaning process, both wooden and plastic boards can then be sanitised using chlorine bleach. Further advice regarding sanitising can be found on the fact sheet [Cleaning and Sanitising in Food Businesses](#) which can be found on

our website at

[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/ Documents/industry/cleaning\\_sanitising\\_food\\_businesses.pdf](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry/cleaning_sanitising_food_businesses.pdf)

Ideally, wooden cutting boards should have a smooth, hard surface and rounded corners that will not chip or crack. They should be dense enough to resist slice marks that harbour bacteria and be easy to clean. It may be worthwhile to use an oil or wax treatment for the wooden board to prevent absorption of water, mould growth, germs and to repel food particles being lodged on the surface.

## Replacement boards

All cutting boards should be replaced periodically due to inevitable surface wear or, as soon as they become too worn or develop hard-to-clean grooves. If ever in doubt about the condition of the board, it's best to throw it out.



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About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).



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