

# Sample Safety and Ergonomics Checklist for Kitchens

The following is a sample checklist for identifying safety and ergonomics related hazards in Kitchens.

No one sample of a self-inspection form or format is suitable or *all inclusive* for all health care facilities or all hazards. Employers should customize the checklist forms to the specific areas in their operations and specific federal and state regulatory standards as applicable.

Before filling out the checklist, familiarize yourself with the tasks performed in the area or department that you are evaluating.

<b>Ergonomics –</b>			
<b>'Yes' responses indicate potential problem areas that should be investigated further</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>ACTION TAKEN/ COMMENTS/POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS</b>	<b>DEADLINE or COMPLETED</b>
<b>1. Chopping and cutting</b>			
a) Do workers use forceful exertion to grip knives while cutting?			
b) Are knives dull or not sharp enough?			
c) Do workers experience marks or depressions on their palms or fingers as a result of contact stress?			
d) Do workers use awkward wrist postures while chopping or cutting?			
e) Do workers bend excessively at the neck to look down while chopping or cutting?			
f) Do workers bend excessively at the waist while chopping or cutting?			
g) Are chopping countertops too high (above elbow height) or too low (below waist height)?			
<b>2. Puréeing meals</b>			
a) Are the purée bowls heavy?			
b) Do workers hold the bowls in the air (in other words, unsupported) to pour puréed food?			
c) Do workers hold or carry purée bowls with only one hand?			
<b>3. Using mixers and mixing bowls</b>			
a) Do workers have to reach below knee height or bend excessively at the waist to insert or remove mixing bowls when using the mixer?			
b) Do workers have to lift or carry heavy mixing bowls?			
<b>4. Using ovens and steamers</b>			
a) Do workers reach excessively to access ovens or steamers?			

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b) Do workers reach above shoulder height to access ovens or steamers?			
c) Do workers reach below knee height or bend excessively at the waist to access ovens or steamers?			
d) Do workers use forceful exertion to lift hot items in or out of ovens or steamers?			
e) Do the ovens or steamers have bottom-hinged doors (doors that open downward, as opposed to sideways)?			
<b>5. Preparing soup</b>			
a) Do workers bend excessively at the waist or reach while stirring or pouring soup?			
b) Do workers use only one hand to stir with long-handled whisks?			
c) Do workers lift heavy soup pots?			
<b>6. Portioning food</b>			
a) Are the serving spoons or ladles sharp or difficult to grip?			
b) Do workers reach excessively to access food?			
c) Do workers use awkward wrist postures to portion food?			
d) Do workers use forceful exertion to scoop food?			
<b>7. Dispensing beverages</b>			
a) Do workers use awkward shoulder postures to dispense beverages?			
b) Are work surfaces above elbow height or below knee height?			
<b>8. Manual tray lines</b>			
a) Do workers reach excessively for trays or food?			
b) Do workers twist their upper bodies excessively to remove items from carts?			
c) Do workers bend excessively at the waist to remove items from carts?			
d) Are the serving spoons or ladles sharp or difficult to grip?			
e) Are the menu cards difficult to read?			
<b>9. Automated tray lines</b>			
a) Is the tray line too fast?			
b) Do workers reach excessively for trays or food?			

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c) Do workers twist their upper bodies excessively to remove items from carts?			
d) Do workers bend excessively at the waist to remove items from carts?			
e) Are the serving spoons or ladles sharp or difficult to grip?			
f) Are the menu cards difficult to read?			
<b>10. Using meal carts and steam carts</b>			
a) Are the carts difficult to push or control?			
b) Are the carts missing handles?			
c) Are the steam trays heavy to lift?			
d) Do workers use pinch grips or awkward postures to remove metal food inserts from steam carts?			
e) Do workers twist their upper bodies excessively to remove items from carts?			
f) Do workers bend excessively at the waist to remove items from carts?			
<b>11. Dish line preparation (scraping, soaking, and pre-rinsing)</b>			
a) Do workers lift heavy dish bins or buckets from below knee height?			
b) Do workers lift more than one dish rack at a time?			
c) Do workers fill dish or cutlery buckets more than half full?			
d) Do workers bend excessively at the waist to remove items from soak sinks?			
e) Do workers lift full dish racks from soak sinks?			
f) Do workers lift and carry items that have any amount of water in them from soak sinks?			
<b>12. Sorting and loading dishes</b>			
a) Do workers reach excessively to sort dishes?			
b) Do workers lift and carry full dish racks to the dish line?			
c) Do workers carry partially full or full dish racks by holding onto the front?			
d) Are full dish racks difficult to push along the dish line?			
e) Do workers use awkward shoulder postures to sort dishes?			
f) Do workers bend excessively at the waist to sort dishes?			

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g) Is the area around the dish line congested with carts or other items?			
<b>13. Washing pots</b>			
a) Do workers bend excessively at the waist to wash pots?			
b) Do workers use forceful exertion to scrub pots?			
c) Do workers lift and carry pots that have any amount of water in them?			
d) Do workers twist their upper bodies or bend excessively at the waist to lift and carry pots from carts to pot sinks?			
e) Do workers hold their arms out in front of them to lift pots (in other words, do they not hold pots close to their bodies)?			
f) Do workers lean against sinks or ledges while washing pots (causing contact stress on the stomach or hip areas)?			
<b>14. Storing dishes and pots</b>			
a) Do workers lift and carry full dish racks?			
b) Do workers lift and carry more than one rack at a time?			
c) Do workers carry partially full or full dish racks by holding onto the front edge of the rack rather than the middle?			
d) Do workers reach excessively to remove dishes from the clean end of the dish line?			
e) Do workers reach excessively to put away dishes or pots?			
f) Do workers lift or lower full dish racks below knee height or above shoulder height?			
g) Do workers twist their upper bodies or bend excessively at the waist to store items or remove them from the clean end of the dish line?			
<b>15. Busing</b>			
a) Do workers lift full dish bins?			
b) Do workers carry partially full or full dish racks by holding onto the front edge of the rack rather than the middle?			
c) Do workers lift or lower heavy dish bins below knee height or above shoulder height?			

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d) Do workers twist their upper bodies or bend excessively at the waist to remove items from tables or store them on carts?			
e) Do workers hold their arms out in front of them to lift dish bins (in other words, do they not hold bins close to their bodies)?			
<b>16. General cleanup</b>			
a) Do workers use awkward shoulder postures while cleaning?			
b) Do workers bend or twist their backs excessively while cleaning?			
c) Do workers kneel on hard surfaces while cleaning?			
d) Do workers use only one hand to lift and carry heavy items such as garbage bags?			
e) Are garbage bags heavy to lift and carry?			
f) Do garbage bags contain excess amounts of liquid waste?			
g) Do workers lift garbage bags above shoulder level to place them into garbage bins?			
<b>17. Storing food and dishes</b>			
a) Do workers store heavy items below knee height or above shoulder height?			
b) Are storage areas congested with carts and other items that limit access to storage shelves?			
c) Are footstools and carts available in storage areas so workers can reach higher shelves and transport heavy items?			
<b>18. Environmental hazards</b>			
a) Is the kitchen temperature too hot?			
b) Do workers experience signs or symptoms of heat stress while washing pots?			
a) Is the kitchen cluttered or overfilled with items such as carts and equipment?			
b) Is the floor slippery (especially when wet)?			
c) Do workers stand on hard surfaces for long periods?			

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## General Safety

**'No' responses indicate potential problem areas that should be investigated further**

Activity	Y/N	ACTION TAKEN/ COMMENTS/POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	DEADLINE or COMPLETED
1. Power strips, extension cords, or multi-plug adapters are plugged directly into a permanently installed electrical outlet (not each other).			
2. Extension cords are used only for temporary applications.			
3. Electrical cords are protected from damage and are in good repair (no loose plugs, broken insulation, etc.).			
4. Unused openings in electrical cabinets, boxes, and fittings are closed with appropriate covers, plugs, or plates and outlet face plates are present and in good condition.			
5. Equipment and/or outlets are enclosed to protect against shock or electrocution.			
6. Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) are installed on outlets/circuits in damp/wet locations (e.g., near sinks and in "wash down" locations).			
7. Electrical appliances are UL or FM approved and have not been altered in a manner that compromises the UL or FM approval.			
8. Three feet of clearance is maintained in front of electrical panels and breaker boxes; emergency shut-off controls to equipment are accessible.			
9. Flammable items are stored away from heat-producing equipment?			
10. LPG cylinders are stored appropriately and the amount stored does not exceed allowable limits.			
11. Kitchen is equipped with at least one type K (Kitchen) fire extinguisher, and it is fully charged and has been inspected in the past year.			
12. Grease producing appliances are located under a kitchen hood.			
13. Hoods, ducts, and grease filters are free of grease build up.			
14. Are stoves, grills and duct work kept clean of flammable residues and properly maintained?			
15. Fire suppression system is working, inspected per fire regulations and maintained			
16. Knife blades kept sharp, handles secured and stored with blades covered to prevent cuts			

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Activity	Y/N	ACTION TAKEN/ COMMENTS/POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	DEADLINE or COMPLETED
17. Are machines, such as dough mixers, meat slicers and continuous-feed dishwashers properly guarded and grounded			
18. Anti-fatigue slip-resistant mats are maintained; don't represent a trip hazard and are replaced when in disrepair			
19. Where wet processes are used drainage is maintained by using platforms, mats or other measures.			
20. Floors are clean and there are no spill hazards.			
21. Employees wear slip resistant footwear or booties			
22. Walk-in freezer doors equipped with inside release lock			
23. Walk-in refrigerator safety devices are fully operational, such as alarm systems or bypass devices.			
24. Screen mesh guard is in place over blower fans in walk in refrigerators.			
25. The light in the walk in refrigerator/freezer is working			
26. No unauthorized items are in the refrigerators/ freezers (medications, blood, specimens or body fluids).			
27. Explosion proof covers over light bulbs in walk in freezers			
28. Knives are sharp and in good condition			
29. Knives are in knife rack or specific storage area when not in use.			
30. Kevlar gloves are used with slicer and they are in good repair.			
31. Doors that swing in both directions and are located between rooms where there is frequent traffic are provided with viewing panels in each door and these viewing panels are clean and free of obstructions			
32. Food preparation surfaces and equipment are clean			

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Activity	Y/N	ACTION TAKEN/ COMMENTS/POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	DEADLINE or COMPLETED
33. Ceiling tiles and walls etc. show no evidence of water leakage and mold / fungus / mildew.			
34. Oven mitts or pot holders easily accessible			
35. Cleaning chemicals stored with their lids tightly closed and kept in separate and secure areas away from food or heat sources			
36. Dietary carts are in good repair and the wheels roll freely.			
37. Items are not placed/stored within 18" of a sprinkler head.			
38. Aisles, exits, and/or stairwells are maintained free of obstructions or tripping hazards.			
39. Furnishings are stable, designed for the intended load, or used/secured in a manner to			

Adapted from: Occupational Health and Safety Agency for Healthcare 2003, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, 2008, University of Nebraska, 2009 and OSHA, 2014