

Food Alert

A guide to HACCP



Introduction – What is HACCP?

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) is a Food Safety Management System that food operators use to ensure the food they sell to their customers is safe to eat.

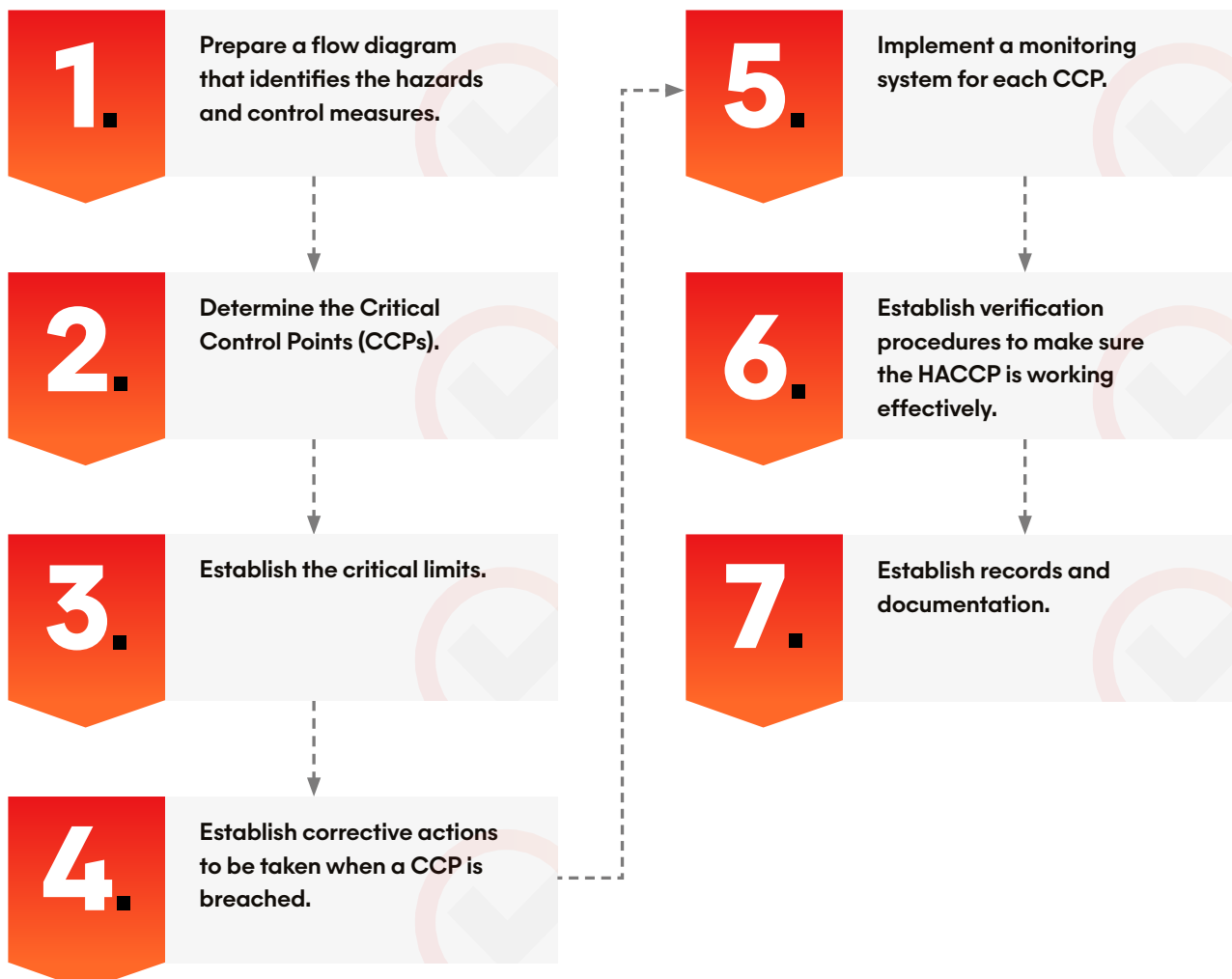
It identifies what (and where) things can go wrong (the hazards) and where it is critical that we control them for food safety, i.e. preventing contamination and food poisoning.

The implementation of a Food Safety Management System based on these principles is a **legal requirement**.

It is important to note that we must document our HACCP and keep records to demonstrate that it is working effectively.



The seven HACCP principles



Terminology

Flow diagram	A diagram showing the sequence of steps or operations used in the production of the food.
Step	A stage in the food operation from purchase of ingredients through to serving the customer. For example, 'chilled storage'.
Hazard	Something with the potential to cause harm to the consumer – microbiological (e.g. bacteria, viruses), physical (e.g. glass), chemical (e.g. cleaning agent) or allergens (e.g. nuts).
Critical Control Point (CCP)	A step where control must be applied in order to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level as it will not be removed at a later stage. For example, the chilled storage of high-risk food
Control measure	Any action and activity that can be used to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level. For example, keeping high-risk foods chilled effectively during storage.
Critical limit	The safety level outside of which is unacceptable and a corrective action must be taken. For example, the maximum legal temperature of high-risk food in a fridge is 8°C. For the purposes of this document, we have set a target temperature of 5°C and a critical limit of 8°C.
Corrective action	A process to be taken when the results of monitoring at the CCP indicate failure of control (i.e. the critical limit has been breached) eliminating the risk of reoccurrence. For example, discarding contaminated food.
Monitoring	The checks we make to assess whether a CCP is under control. For example, daily fridge monitoring checks with a probe thermometer.
Verification	Obtaining evidence that our HACCP is working properly by carrying out audits, reviewing of critical limits, calibration of instruments used for monitoring, servicing of equipment, environmental swabbing and monitoring customer complaints.
Prerequisite controls	Examples of good hygiene practice such as personal hygiene or maintenance that apply throughout the operation of food to ensure the numbers of CCPs are kept to a manageable amount.

Prerequisites, what are they?

Before a HACCP plan can be implemented there should be some controls that operate across all production. HACCP is specific to a business. However, prerequisites are generic and apply to most food businesses. They refer to hazards that are present across the business (such as pest control) or that are likely to occur at any stage of production.

They are termed prerequisites because they are required before HACCP. If they are implemented and monitored correctly, prerequisite programmes can underpin a HACCP plan and help ensure its success.

What do you need to have prerequisite controls in place for?

Although there are some generic prerequisites, before implementing HACCP each business should compile their own list. Generic prerequisites are:

CHECKLIST

- ✓ Time Separation method
- ✓ Waste management
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Food hygiene training
- ✓ Cleaning and disinfection
- ✓ Personal hygiene
- ✓ Food Allergens
- ✓ Stock rotation and date-labelling of foods
- ✓ Supplier approval
- ✓ Traceability
- ✓ Genetically modified foods
- ✓ Effective management and supervision
- ✓ Maintenance
- ✓ Customer complaints
- ✓ Document control and recording
- ✓ Temperature control of the cold chain
- ✓ Maintaining performance of refrigerators and freezers
- ✓ Foreign body control
- ✓ Pest Control
- ✓ Glass
- ✓ Eggs
- ✓ Washing and disinfection of ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables
- ✓ E. coli O157 - Control of cross contamination
- ✓ Kitchen layout and design
- ✓ Disinfection
- ✓ Separation
- ✓ Packaging
- ✓ Chemical Control
- ✓ Personal Hygiene

When should I review my HACCP?

REVIEWS SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN WHEN:

- There are significant changes to the menu.
- It's been 12 months or longer since your last review.
- New equipment or processes are introduced.

Verifying your HACCP

HACCP verification is required to establish the validity of the HACCP plan and ensure that the HACCP system is operating according to the plan.

VERIFICATION IS DONE TO DETERMINE:

1. That the HACCP plan is being implemented properly;
2. That practices used are consistent with the HACCP plan;
3. That the HACCP system is working to control significant hazards; and
4. Whether modifications of the HACCP plan are required to reduce the risk of recurrence of deviations.

How can Food Alert help?

If you need help developing your HACCP and would like the backing of our expert team, simply give us a call on **020 7244 1900** and our team will be happy to discuss your compliance needs. Or get in touch with us **online** and we'll call you back at a time that suits you.

