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The Ultimate Kitchen Guide

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Getting your kitchen layout right cannot be underestimated when setting up or moving into a bricks and mortar premises. Our partners Nisbets have helpfully provided their expert insight on essential regulations when it comes to your kitchen, and how you can set yourself up for success.

We offer exclusive discounts and cashback for all NCASS members with Nisbets – you can get up to 6% cashback on any purchases you make with them, plus an upfront order discount – meaning you can save a lot on top quality equipment. Visit the Member Savings & Rewards on our website to find out more and access the deal.

A well designed kitchen equates to efficiency. And an efficient kitchen has the potential to produce better results and earn you more profit. Factors that should be central to the design and layout of your kitchen include:

Goods delivery

A clear entry space is essential for deliveries causing minimal disruption to the flow of your kitchen.

Goods Storage

Ideally you want storage areas conveniently close to your delivery space to promote efficiency – don't compromise on storage space.

Food Prep

This should be between your storage and cooking area. Be mindful of having clear spaces and adequate work surfaces for different types of food prep, such as designating areas for preparing raw meats and vegetables and specific allergen free food orders.

Cooking

This space should easily flow between prep and the pass, with a focus on streamlining staff traffic. There should be sufficient space for staff to work safely to reduce the risk of them making contact with hot surfaces, knocking into each other and spilling hot liquids etc. Like the preparation area the cooking area should be organised to minimise cross contamination.

Food Service

If food is not served straight from the kitchen then you will need a service counter or bar area with suitable appliances to keep foods hot (e.g. Bain Marie) or refrigerated (e.g. cold display) unit. If foods and drinks are served by staff from the counter then there will need to be readily accessible hand washing facilities.

Washing Up and Cleaning Facilities

Washing up should not disrupt the flow of service, and should ideally be out of the customer's view and away from areas where open food is prepared. Aim to



have separate sinks for washing up and food preparation with a reliable supply of hot and cold potable running water and adequate drainage. Washing up areas must be designed so that they are easy to keep clean and in good repair. Ensure they are fitted with adequate draining boards and work surfaces to safely stack crockery, utensils etc.

Plan a designated space for storing cleaning chemicals in an area away from food products, to prevent chemical contamination. This could be a designated cupboard, store room or on a low level shelf, below the washing up sink and away from food prep surfaces.

Ventilation

Depending on the processes and appliances in use you will need a suitable means of natural and/or mechanical extract ventilation to remove combustion products, heat and grease. Without adequate ventilation the kitchen environment could quickly become harmful to health or will require additional regular cleaning and maintenance. Filters, ducting and other parts of the ventilation system, must be designed so that they can be easily cleaned, replaced and repaired. If using gas appliances then an extract ventilation canopy that covers all appliances and is interlocked with the gas supply will need to be designed into the layout.

There are lots of aspects to consider when considering the layout of your kitchen, such as:

Waste Management

As a business you have a legal responsibility to ensure your waste is stored and disposed of correctly.

The law states that:

- Food waste and rubbish must not accumulate in areas where food is prepared or stored, so ensure bins are emptied regularly and at the end of service (closing checks).
- Where ever possible, food waste must go into lidded bins to prevent access to pests and flying insects and minimise the risk of food contamination.
- Waste bins must be of a suitable construction and kept clean at all times – they also must be pest proofed e.g. lidded, free of holes/access points, with minimal surrounding vegetation.
- All waste must be disposed of correctly – catering trade waste must be disposed of by a commercial trade waste contractor who is registered with the Environment Agency. This could be the local authority or private waste contractor. Trade waste must NOT be disposed of via domestic waste collection services e.g. the wheely bin at home.
- You are advised to check the credentials of your waste contractor and have the contract details readily available to support with routine food safety inspections as you will be asked to demonstrate how your waste is managed.
- Make sure the frequency of your waste collections is sufficient – if the bin starts to overflow and waste starts to accumulate around the bin area then you could be subject to enforcement action by the local authority for failing to adequately manage your waste and because this will attract pests.

Correct disposal of fats, oils and grease.

Failure to comply with the law can result in a fine or imprisonment.

- Consider installing a grease trap or enzyme dosing system (e.g. Greasepak) at your sinks to stop grease from clogging pipes or blocking drains and sewers. It could save you a lot of money and hassle in the long term.
- Waste oil from fryers etc. must be collected into suitable containers and collected by a trade waste contractor who is registered with the Environmental Agency.
- You are advised to keep waste transfer notes for two years to demonstrate your due diligence.
- Aim to minimise the amount of food waste and grease that enters the drainage system - always scrape and remove food waste from plates and saucepans into a bin before washing them in the sink.

What type of bins should I use?

The types of waste you produce, the venue size and the amount of covers you are expecting will determine what kind of waste disposal your restaurant requires.

Kitchen Bins

Lidded easy to clean bins that fit into the space available. For hygiene reasons it is best to select a bin with a foot operated lid.

External Bins

You will need a suitably sized external wheely bin or skip to store your food waste outside. Waste contractors can supply a range of wheely bins from 240 to 1100

litres in capacity, make sure these bins are fitted with lids (that can be locked) and any large drainage holes inside the bins are fitted with bungs to prevent access to pests.

Recycling Bins

Keep kitchen recycling simple with colour coded lids and labels for bins. They are available in a range of sizes from 60 to 121 litres, and with Slim Jim designs to fit kitchens with limited space. Then ensure you have the appropriate recycling wheelie bin outside to transfer the recycling waste into.

Waste Compactors

To save space and time spent taking rubbish bags to outdoor bins, waste compactors can be highly beneficial for busy venues, with an average compaction ratio of 85%.

Bin Stores

Keep your bins looking smart, in an area that will keep pests out with bin stores. They can be built in timber, stainless steel or plastic with roofs or controlled access. Purpose built bin stores can help to separate and secure bin storage areas from public view.

Appliances that will rapidly and safely cool food

Hot food which is to be cooled before storage or service must be cooled as quickly as possible so it can be refrigerated, wrapped, or covered. The NCASS Risk Assessment stipulates that food should be cooled within the target time of 90-120 minutes. It can be a challenge to meet the required food safety procedure for cooling foods. Cooling food at room temperature takes a long time and provides the ideal conditions for food poisoning bacteria to grow (the danger zone) as well as

increasing the risk of uncovered food being contaminated.

One of the most effective and safest ways of cooling foods is using a blast chiller. This appliance blasts cold clean air over the food enabling large quantities of cooked food to be cooled quickly and within the target time.

Blast chilling is perfect for setting delicate desserts, and even fondant mash can be brought back from frozen to the same texture as when it was first cooked. Some blast chillers can also cook food, meaning that the whole process, from cooking to chilling, can be done in one unit, saving space and time.

If batch cooking or preparing food in advance of service, a blast chiller can be invaluable, providing quick and convenient food preparation.

Appliances that will keep food hot for safe service

Food which is being cooked or reheated and is intended to be sold hot, must be held at or above 63°C.

For large-scale events or canteens, Banqueting Trolleys can be used to keep food in Gastronorm pans ready to serve. With castor wheels these are easy to transport for convenience.

Hot Cupboards are a static option for storing plates to keep them warm or storing plated meals. These can double up as a work bench for prep work and make good use of space. Heated Trolleys are similar but have the added bonus of being transportable.

Once your food is ready to be served and plated up, heat lamps can be sited over service canopies, to help keep dishes piping

hot until front of house can get them to the table.

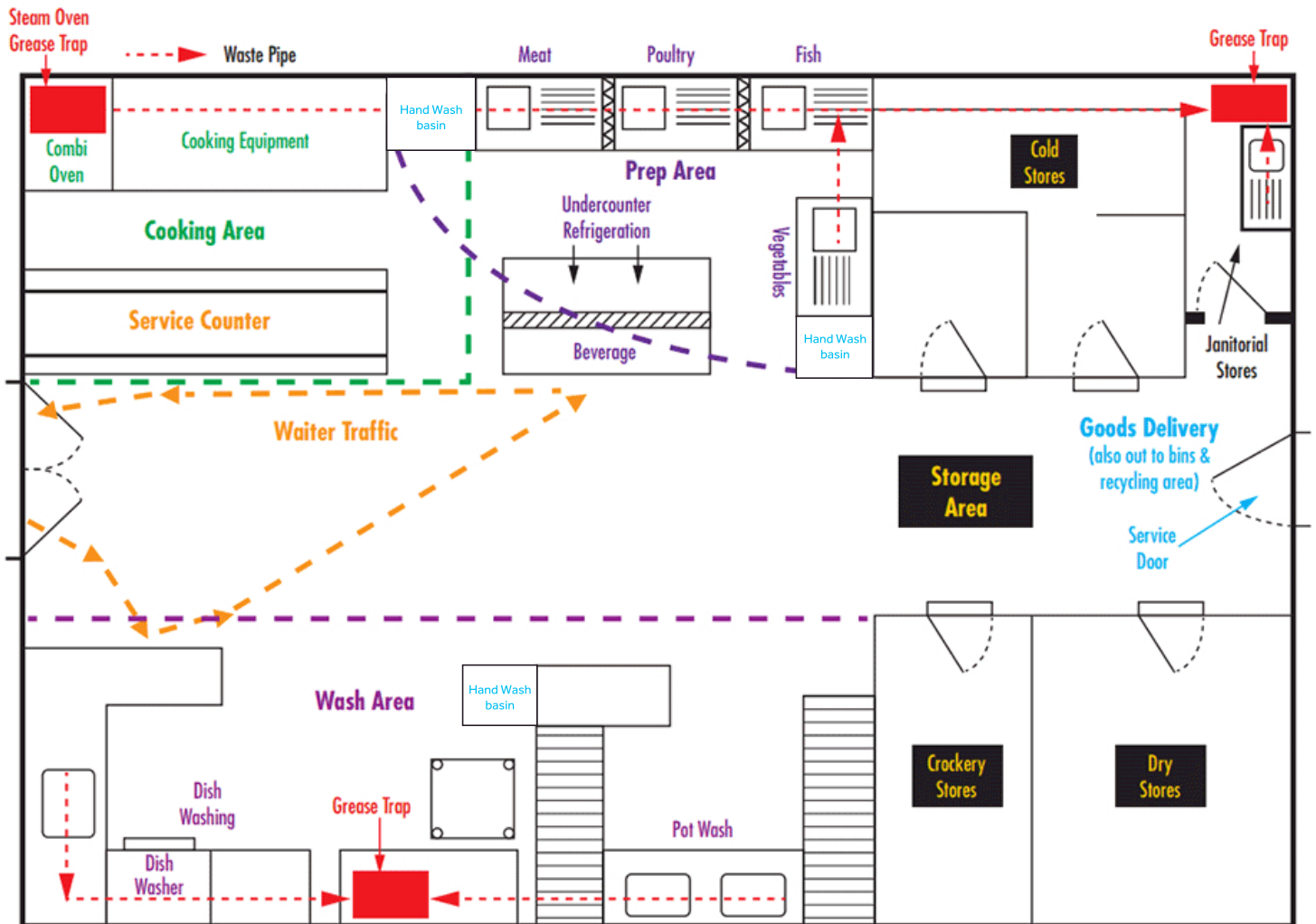
Gas safety

Any gas appliances in the kitchen must adhere to safety regulations during installation and use and be well maintained. Annual gas safety checks must be carried out and failure to comply with gas safety regulations can result in fines or imprisonment.

All gas appliances for commercial catering must have CE or UKCA/UKNI conformity marking to show that they have been safety certificated for use in the UK. Individuals who carry out installations or repairs on gas appliances must be Gas Safe registered. It is important that you check an engineer's Gas Safe registration details to ensure they have the correct competency to work on the type of appliances that you use (e.g., mains gas or LPG supplied appliances).

Gas Safe regulations state that all commercial kitchens are required by law to have an extraction ventilation system that is interlocked with the gas supply and emergency control points. This means that if ventilation systems fail, the interlock system will restrict the gas flow to appliances until the ventilation is back in working order. It will also allow for the gas supply to be isolated in an emergency situation. Regular checks should be carried out on the ventilation system to ensure that grease deposits are not compromising the extraction.

This diagram below, provided by Nisbets, shows the blueprint for an ideal kitchen layout, that you can use as a reference tool.



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