

Food Preparation and Serving

Food Preparation Workers

Food Preparation Workers prepare, season, and cook a wide variety of foods. Food preparation workers work in restaurants, as well as other places where food is served, such as grocery stores, schools, and hospitals. Food preparation workers assist cooks by performing tasks such as peeling and cutting vegetables, trimming meat, preparing poultry, and keeping work areas clean and monitoring temperatures of ovens and stovetops.

Many restaurant and institutional kitchens have modern equipment, convenient work areas, and air conditioning, but kitchens in older and smaller eating places are often not as well designed. Kitchen staffs often work in small quarters, near hot stoves and ovens. They are under pressure to prepare meals quickly, while ensuring quality is maintained and safety and sanitation guidelines are observed. Because the pace can be hectic during peak dining times, workers must be able to communicate clearly so that food orders are completed correctly.

Work hours in restaurants may include early mornings, late evenings, holidays, and weekends. Work schedules of food preparation workers in factory and school cafeterias may be more regular. Long hours are spent on foot while preparing or cooking meals.

Education/Training

How to Obtain:

A high school diploma is usually not required for food preparation workers; however, to work in an upscale restaurant, one is recommended. In addition, high school and vocational schools may offer some kitchen and cleaning courses which are helpful for this career path. Most training is provided on-the-job.