Cross-Contamination Prevention Checklist

🚫 Handling Raw & Cooked Foods ☐

- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat, seafood, poultry, and vegetables.
- Never place cooked food on a plate or surface that held raw ingredients.
- Use different utensils for raw and cooked foods (tongs, spatulas, knives).
- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds after handling raw food.

🧽 Cleaning & Sanitizing ☐

- Clean surfaces with hot, soapy water after each task.
- Sanitize countertops, cutting boards, and utensils after contact with raw meat.
- Replace or sanitize sponges and dishcloths regularly (every few days for cloths, weekly for sponges).
- Use paper towels or freshly cleaned cloths to wipe surfaces.

🧊 Safe Food Storage ☐
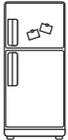
- Store raw meat, poultry, and seafood on the bottom shelf of the fridge.
- Keep ready-to-eat foods on upper shelves.
- Use sealed containers or leak-proof bags for raw proteins.
- Check that your fridge is set to 40°F (4°C) or below.
- Label leftovers with dates and follow the FIFO (First In, First Out) method.

✋ Personal Hygiene ☐

- Wash hands before and after handling any food.
- Tie back long hair and avoid touching your face while cooking.
- Keep nails trimmed and clean—bacteria can hide under nails!
- Use gloves when needed, but change them after handling raw food.

⚠️ Bonus Safety Reminders ☐

- Never reuse marinades used on raw meat unless boiled first.
- Use a meat thermometer to ensure safe cooking temperatures.
- Wash reusable grocery bags frequently, especially after carrying raw items.
- Don't thaw food on the counter—use the fridge, cold water, or microwave.