

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

# Food Business Fit Out Guide



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## Introduction

This Guide will provide you with information on fitting out a commercial food premises within the South Gippsland Shire Council area.

It is aimed at proprietors of commercial businesses, but may also be helpful for builders, architects and project managers who may be involved in the construction or renovation of a commercial food business.

All the information provided in this Guide is based on the requirements of the *Food Act 1984*, Chapter Three of the *Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code* and from the Department of Health in Victoria.

# Structural Guidelines

This section provides details about the structural fit out for all areas where food is stored, prepared and served. It does not include areas such as dining rooms, waiting areas, patron bathrooms, offices or other areas not directly related to the handling or storage of food.

If you have any questions about what is not covered in these guidelines, please contact our Environmental Health team on 5662 9200 or email [council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au).

## Surfaces

### Floors

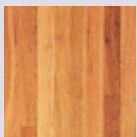







The floor in a food business must be:

- Appropriate for the area.
- Easy to clean and able to withstand cleaning chemicals and hot water.
- Unable to absorb grease, food particles or water.
- Laid so there is no ponding of water.
- Unable to provide places for pests to live and hide.

Exceptions to this are dining areas, drinking areas and other customer areas.

Product	Suitable?	Comments
 Ceramic Tiles with flush Epoxy Grouting.		Tiles can chip or crack over time and it can be difficult to replace on tile. Invest in a good grout cleaner and brush.
 Sealed Quarry Tiles.		See comments above.
 Polished Concrete.		Make sure good quality products are used because sometimes this type of flooring can bubble and flake. It can wear easily in high traffic areas.
 Epoxy Resins.		Can wear easily in high traffic areas or where heavy equipment is used.
 Carpet.		Carpet may be laid in customer areas, but consider how it will be cleaned.

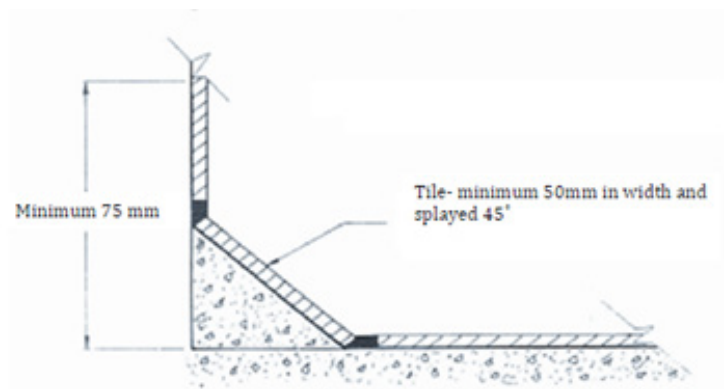
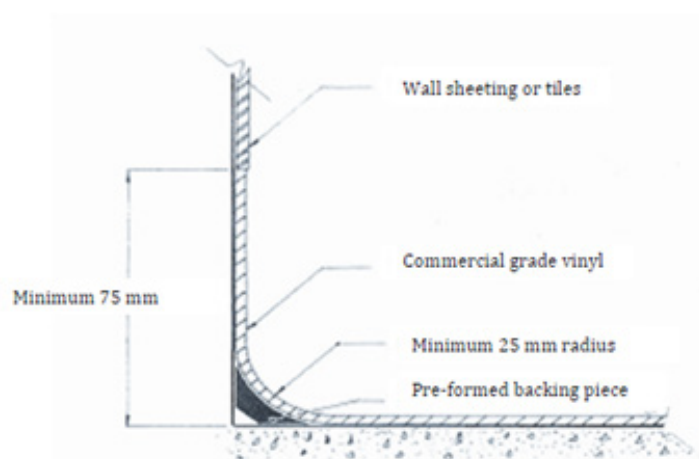


Product	Suitable?	Comments
		Floorboards can only be used in customer areas.
		When choosing a poly vinyl floor, it is important to install a commercial product suited for food businesses.  Must be laid on level ground to be effective.
		A durable plastic that is lightweight and moisture resistant.
		Sometimes used in walk-in cool rooms and freezers.  This can be hard to clean.

## Coving

It is recommended that food business install coving in food handling areas. It assists with cleaning as it can help prevent grease, dirt and food from building up in corners.

Below are two examples of coving.



**Note:** Feather edge-style skirting is not permitted in a food business as it is not suitable or effective.

## Floor Drains

Some businesses choose to install floor drains. This allows staff to hose down floors to assist with cleaning. If you install one, it is important the floor is graded properly (at least 1:100).

Make sure joins around the drains are sealed well to prevent water leaking under the floor.

For more information on floors, please read Division Three clauses nine and 10 of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

## Walls

Walls should be:

- Appropriate for the area.
- Easy to clean.
- Unable to provide places for pests to live and hide.

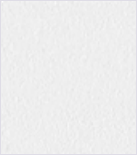





In food preparation areas, walls should also be:

- Sealed.
- Unable to absorb grease, food particles and water.

## Things to Consider

- What are the food handling activities of the area i.e. will the wall be subjected to heat from cooking equipment?
- What is the likelihood of food splatter occurring?
- How will the walls be cleaned?
- Will the walls be able to withstand damage from equipment such as large baking trays or trolleys.
- Maintenance.

Product	Suitable?	Comments
 Ceramic Tiles.		Invest in a good grout cleaner and brush. If tiles begin to chip and crack, it can be difficult to replace one.
 Vinyl Sheeting.		Vinyl walls are commonly seen where vinyl has been used on the flooring and is continued up the wall to create a seamless surface.
 Stainless Steel.		Durable and easy to clean.

Product	Suitable?	Comments
 Painted Plasterboard.		<p>Should be painted with a high gloss or semi-gloss paint to assist with cleaning.</p> <p>Very prone to wear-and-tear and is only suitable in areas where no damage is likely to occur such as storerooms, walls above 1.8 metres or other similar areas.</p>
  Brick.		<p>Exposed brick absorbs grease and water, and cannot be easily cleaned.</p> <p>If the brick is smooth, the mortar between the bricks is flush with the face of the bricks, and is painted with a semi- or high-gloss paint, then it may be suitable for storerooms, walls above 1.8 metres or other similar areas.</p>
Other.		<p>If the product meets the AS 4674-2004 Standards and are sealed and unable to absorb grease, food and water, then it is suitable for a food business.</p>

## Splash Backs

Splash backs can be an effective way to make sure walls in high-use areas are protected. Instead of tiling to the roof, a food business may choose to use a splash back instead.

Splash backs should be at least 1,800 millimetres from the ground or 450 millimetres from the top of a bench.

## Ceilings

Ceilings should be:

- Appropriate for the area.
- Easy to clean.
- Sealed.
- Unable to provide places for pests to live and hide.

Product	Suitable?	Comments
 Painted Plasterboard.		This is the most common ceiling surface found in food businesses.
 Ceiling Tiles.		Tiles are not sealed, are not easy to clean and move out of place creating entry points for pests.
 Warehouse Ceilings.		<p>If you're constructing a food business from a warehouse, you will need to install a suspended ceiling.</p> <p>The ceilings in warehouses are not sealed, are not easy to clean and carry a lot of dirt and dust.</p>
 Other.		If the product meets the AS 4674-2004 Standards and are sealed and easy to clean, then it is suitable for a food business. For example, coated steel in cool rooms and factories.








For more information on walls and ceilings, read Division Three clause 11 of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

## Lighting

Light fittings must:

- Be bright enough for staff to carry out food handling activities and cleaning.
- Not cause a contamination risk (see note below).
- Be able to be easily cleaned.

**Note:** Glass globes can shatter easily and cause a contamination risk. Therefore, light fittings should contain shatter-proof globes, protective plastic sleeves, or have appropriate light covers.

Product	Suitable?	Comments
 Shatter-Proof Fluorescent Globes.		The internal glass may shatter, but it is contained within the globe.
 Fluorescent Light Fitting / Cover.		<p>These are commonly seen in food businesses.</p> <p>Over time, these covers can fall off or break and can be difficult to replace.</p> <p>They can also fill up with dead insects and need to be removed for regular cleaning.</p>
 Downlight.		<p>Downlights sit flush with the ceiling, which assists with cleaning.</p> <p>Most downlights are made with a plastic cover, however some older styles still contain glass which may not be suitable in a food business.</p>
 Decorative Light Fittings.		<p>Decorative light fittings usually contain glass, which poses the risk of breaking.</p> <p>They also have a tendency to harbour dirt and grease, and are not always easy to clean.</p> <p>They can be used in customer areas, but shouldn't be used in food preparation areas including front of house.</p>
 Glass Light Globe.		Glass globes without light covers have the potential to break and can cause a contamination and safety issue.

For more information on lighting, read Division Two clause eight of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).




## Food Preparation Surfaces

Food preparation surfaces must be:

- Easy to clean.
- Unable to absorb grease, food particles or water.
- Unable to provide places for pests to live and hide.

### Things to Consider

- Amount of preparation space required.
- Size of benches.
- Incorporated storage such as an under-bench fridge or sandwich bar.

Product	Suitable?	Comments
 Stainless Steel.		Durable and easy to clean.
 Wood.		Wooden bench tops, even when sealed, are not suitable in a food business as they are not durable.
 Laminate.		Laminate bench tops are suitable, but can show signs of wear-and-tear over time. It is common for the edge strips to peel or chip, exposing the chipboard underneath.

## Sinks

A food business can never have too many sinks. It is important that each sink has a designated use, this is to reduce the chances of cross-contamination. All sinks should be connected to sewer or a septic tank system, and must be connected to hot and cold water.

### Hand Wash Basin

Washing your hand properly can help prevent the spread of germs (bacteria and viruses), therefore it is critical for a food business to have hand wash basins.

Where there is unpackaged food being handled, there should be an easily accessible hand wash basin nearby. As a rule of thumb, a hand wash basin should be within 5 metres of a food handling area. Hand wash basins that **are not** easily accessible include behind doors, in another room, below a bench, blocked by equipment, or in a hard-to-reach spot. If your food business has multiple food handling areas, then you may be required to install multiple hand wash basins.

Hand wash basins must be connected to warm, potable water between 20 and 40 degrees Celsius, and be large enough so staff can effectively wash their hands.

Not only must you have an appropriate number of hand wash basins, you must have suitable taps. These could be:

- Single-lever mixer taps;
- Knee operated levers;
- Foot operated taps; and
- Electronic sensor taps.

Turn taps are not suitable.

**Note:** A separate hand wash basin is required for toilet / bathroom areas.

### Double Bowl Sink

A double bowl sink is required for effectively cleaning and sanitising equipment. If you plan to install a commercial dishwasher, then you will only need one sink instead of a double bowl (see dishwasher requirements below).

A double bowl sink must be connected to hot and cold water and be large enough to wash your largest piece of equipment.

## **Dishwasher**

If you are installing a dishwasher, you should contact the manufacturer to make sure the dishwasher's temperature cycles reach a temperature hot enough to sanitise equipment. As an example, a dishwasher that washes at 60 degrees Celsius and rinses at 82 degrees Celsius.

If you have a dishwasher, then you can install a single sink for cleaning as opposed to a double bowl sink. There may be exemptions to this, where a double bowl sink should still be installed.

Domestic dishwashers are not suitable for commercial food business and may only be approved for small-scale home-based businesses.

## **Food Preparation Sink**

If your food business prepares a lot of fresh fruits and vegetables such as salads, stir fries and sandwich bars, then you will need an additional sink for cleaning and rinsing these foods. Fresh fruits and vegetables can carry dirt and bacteria, so it is important that they are washed thoroughly in a separate sink.

## **Mop Sink**

Otherwise known as cleaner's sink, is a sink where you can wash your mops and easily fill up and empty mop buckets. Dirty mop water requires a separate sink as it is full of dirt and bacteria that could create a major cross-contamination issue. A mop sink should have hot and cold water.

## **Jug Rinse / Sink**

If your food business has a coffee or bar area, then it may be a good idea to install a jug rinse or small sink for rinsing milk jugs and spoons.

## Storage

A food premises must have enough space to store all items in the food business, not just the food. All items should be stored in a way that is unlikely to cause cross-contamination. As an example, a cleaning chemical shouldn't be stored next to or above food items as any leaks may contaminate the food. Make sure there is enough space for cleaning under the shelving.

Items that may require additional storage areas:

- Allergen-free food items/equipment.
- Clothing and personal belongings.
- Chemicals and cleaning equipment.
- Tablecloths, tea towels and napkins.
- Excess equipment.
- Other items such as office and maintenance equipment.

**Note:** If you are in a premises with limited storage such as a shopping centre, you should speak to centre management to see if a storage cage is available.

For more information on storage read Division Five clause 15 of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

### Cold or Frozen Storage

Cool rooms, fridges and freezers should be large enough to safely store all potentially hazardous food on site below 5 degrees Celsius or -15 degrees Celsius for freezers.

#### Things to Consider

- How much cold or frozen storage will you need?
- Shelving options and ease of cleaning and maintenance.
- Is the location easy for delivery drivers to access?
- Location of external plant equipment – motors can create noise issues.

If the cool room is being used to store beverage gas cylinders, then a gas monitoring and alarm system should be installed. Visit the [WorkSafe website](#) for more information.

**Note:** A building permit is required for the installation of a walk-in cool room and freezer. Talk to us or visit our website for more information about Building Permits.

## Shelving Options

Product	Comments	
	Plastic Shelf.	Easy to clean.
	Metal Fridge Rack.	Tricky to clean. Racks can get rusty over time, but can be treated with rust products if you are proactive at maintaining them.
	Powder-Coated Metal Rack.	Tricky to clean. The powder-coat can wear down and peel back after time.

## Dry Store

A dry storage area should be:

- Easy to clean.
- Unable to provide places for pests to live and hide.

## Things to Consider

- Number of shelves and storage space required.
- Storage for allergen-free foods, for example gluten free flour.
- Is it easy for delivery drivers to access?

**Note:** Any containers used to store food must be food grade containers.



## Bins / Recycling

Storage facilities for rubbish and recycling must be:

- Large enough to store all rubbish / recycling.
- Unable to provide a breeding ground for pests.
- Easy to clean.

### Things to Consider

- Having lids that can be securely closed and locked will prevent pests from entering and will prevent others from using your bins.
- Bins should be screened from the public to help prevent appearance and odour issues.
- The area should have a drain that leads to sewer.
- If you are planning to wash the bins with a hose, consider installing a tap nearby.

**Note:** If your external bin area is some distance from your premises, such as a communal bin in a shopping centre, it is important that you consider where the rubbish and recycling will be stored prior to being taken out.

For more information on storage of waste, read Division Two clause six of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

## Ventilation

Food business must have enough ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapour from the food premises.

### Things to Consider

- What activities in your food business create fumes, smoke and steam?
- Amount of cooking the business will be doing.
- Power capacity of the ventilation system.
- Natural ventilation versus mechanical ventilation.

### Mechanical Ventilation Systems

Mechanical systems including mechanical exhaust canopies, must comply with the relevant Australian Standards and building code requirements.

**Note:** Installing a mechanical exhaust canopy requires a Building Permit.

For more information on ventilation, read Division Two clause seven of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

## Water and Sewage

### Water

A food premises must have a suitable supply of drinkable (potable) water. A suitable supply of water is one that can provide good pressure, temperature and volume for all food handling activities carried out. This includes hand washing, food preparation, cleaning and sanitising.

Hot and cold water must be available to all sinks.

For more information on water supply, read Division Two clause four of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

### Sewage

A food business must be connected to sewer, or in unsewered areas, a septic tank system.

## Grease Traps

Often the waste going into the sewer from a food business contains chemicals, grease, oils, solids and other substances. Because of this, most food businesses require a grease trap. Grease traps are managed by the local water authority through a Trade Waste Agreement.

If your grease trap location is on Council-owned land, then you will need to speak to Council and apply for a *Working Within a Road Reserve Permit*. More information can be found [here](#).

For more information on sewage, read Division Two clause five of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

## Toilets

A food business must provide toilets for their staff. Staff toilets must be:

- Easily accessible always.
- Clean and operate properly.
- Provided with a handwash basin, warm water, soap and paper towel.
- Well-lit and have good ventilation.
- Designed to minimise air borne contamination (see note).

**Note:** To help minimise air borne contamination, a food business should install an air lock, provide self-closing doors, and locate the toilet outside of the kitchen where possible.

## Customer Toilets

The number of toilets a food business must have is outlined in the Building Code. For more information you can contact our Building Department.

For more information on toilets, read Division Five clause 16 of [Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment](#).

## Pest Control

If you have followed this Guide, then your food business should be off to a good start in making sure your kitchen surfaces are free of cracks and crevices which will prevent pest harbourage.

Other structural considerations to have a pest-free premises include:

- Installing air curtains at entrances.
- Avoiding bi-fold doors and windows.
- Installing PVC door strips or fly screens on doors.
- Making sure all doors and windows are properly sealed.
- Installing weather strips below doors.
- Installing self-closing mechanisms to external doors.

**Tip:** Rodents can fit through gaps smaller than a five cent coin, so make sure all gaps are sealed up properly.



PVC Door Strips



Weather Strip below a door

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