

CHAPTER 27

SHORT-ORDER MEALS, SANDWICHES, AND BOX LUNCHES

GENERAL

Short-order meals, sandwiches, and box lunches play an integral role in feeding soldiers worldwide. The short-order meal has gained in popularity throughout the Army. Sandwiches may be a component of the short-order meal and of box lunches. Box lunches are primarily used to feed soldiers who must be away from the dining facility during the scheduled meal period. All are discussed in this chapter.

SHORT-ORDER MEALS

A short-order meal consists of any combination of soup, sandwiches, potato chips or french-fried potatoes, salads and dressings, desserts, and beverages. Many diners prefer a short-order meal rather than a complete one. Short-order meals are served with the regular lunch or dinner meal to give the soldier a choice of either a fast food or a full meal.

Short-Order Menu

The standard short-order menu is included in the master menu. You are not limited to items listed on the short-order menu for the given day. You may use your initiative and the supplies available in the kitchen to vary the menu. You may add leftover food items such as beef, pork, ham, turkey, and chicken to the short-order menu. To help the diner select menu items, post the short-order menu at the entrance to the dining facility or serving line where it can be seen.

Preparation and Service

Prepare grilled items, such as hamburgers or frankfurters, to order and not in advance. Grilled (and cold) sandwich items should be prepared at a rate that is about the same as the customer flow. Make

sure lettuce, tomatoes, onions, pickles, and condiments are available. Emphasize self-service for the short-order meal. Make ready-to-serve items available on the serving line. Since preparing and serving short-order items require speed and dexterity, food service personnel may need training. Never speed up service by making up plates of food and placing them on the serving line in advance.

SANDWICHES

You may serve sandwiches in the dining facility as part of the short-order menu, to troops in the field, or to small detachments of personnel on special assignments away from regular dining facilities (usually in box lunches). Make sandwiches that are appetizing as well as nutritious. TM 10-412 contains recipes for sandwich fillings made from cheese, eggs, fish, meat, and poultry. Sandwiches fall into three groups: open-face sandwiches, hot sandwiches, and cold sandwiches. You can serve open-face sandwiches and hot sandwiches only where cooking facilities are available. Use cold sandwiches in box lunches.

Open-Faced Sandwiches

Place cooked, sliced, or ground meat on bread or a bun. When required, ladle a hot gravy or sauce over the meat and bread.

Hot Sandwiches

Sandwiches intended to be eaten hot must be prepared either from hot ingredients (140° F (60° C) or above) and held at that temperature, or from chilled ingredients that are then heated rapidly to 140° F (60° C) prior to serving. Place sliced cheese, meat, or other filling between slices of bread or on

buns. Butter the bread on the outside, and then toast it on a griddle.

Cold Sandwiches

Sandwiches intended to be eaten cold must be prepared using chilled ingredients. (Exceptions are allowed for certain fillings and dressings which may be raised to a product temperature of 50°F to 60°F (10° C to 15° C) to allow spreading. Sandwiches with these fillings and dressings must then be rapidly chilled to 45° F (9° C) or below until served. Place sliced cheese, poultry, meat, or some type of filling between slices of bread or on buns.

Sandwich Classifications

Sandwiches are considered potentially hazardous foods because of the nature of their fillings and the potential for contamination during preparation. Sandwiches may be divided into two broad classifications: made-to-order and preprepared. Made-to-order sandwiches are those prepared for an individual customer for immediate consumption. All sandwiches not made to order are considered preprepared sandwiches. Remember the following:

- Made-to-order sandwiches cannot be held as leftovers and must be discarded as food waste within three hours of preparation.

- Preprepared sandwiches must be individually wrapped.
- All preprepared sandwiches should be individually labeled with the production date and time using a 24-hour system.
- Leftovers shall not be used in preparation of preprepared sandwiches.
- Condiments should not be in direct contact with the sandwich ingredients.
- Sandwiches must not be reworked, rewrapped, remarked, relabeled, or otherwise treated to extend their shelf life.
- Additional guidance on preprepared sandwiches is in TB MED 530, paragraph 2-21.

BOX LUNCHES

SB 10-540 contains information on preparing box lunches. When you are preparing 10 or more sandwiches, use an assembly-line technique to reduce preparation time and produce uniform quality in the finished product. Sliced bread dries out quickly. Therefore, do not make more than 10 sandwiches at a time. Do not make sandwich fillings for box lunches from foods mixed or spread with salad dressing, ground meat, chopped or sliced eggs, seafood, or any item that is potentially hazardous. Filling for sandwiches in box lunches is limited to sliced, cooked, or preserved meats and poultry; cheeses; jams or jellies; and peanut butter.