Closing the kitchen: the nightly checklist

Thistlewick Bistro · Kitchen SOP K-07 · For every cook and dishwasher on the closing shift · Thistlewick Bistro is a made-up restaurant

Every night the last shift leaves the kitchen ready for the morning crew: food stored safely, every surface clean, the equipment off and the log signed. Work through the sections in order. The closing lead signs the log only when every line is done.

1. The closing timeline

Time	What happens
9:30 pm	Last food orders. Tell the closing lead about anything still on the grill.
9:45 pm	Turn off the fryers and let the oil cool. Start storing food from the line.
10:00 pm	Stations broken down. Dishes from the floor go to the dish pit.
10:30 pm	Cleaning finished. Closing lead walks the kitchen and checks the log.
10:45 pm	Equipment off, back door locked, lights out.

2. Store the food

- **Label everything** that goes back in the walk-in: what it is, the date it was prepared, and your initials.
- **First in, first out:** put new containers behind the older ones, so the oldest food is used first.
- **Cover every container.** Nothing goes in the walk-in uncovered.
- **Raw meat on the bottom shelf**, below ready-to-eat food, so nothing can drip onto it.
- Anything past its use-by date goes in the bin and on the waste sheet.

3. Check and write down the temperatures

- Walk-in fridge and line fridges: **5 °C (41 °F) or below**.
- Freezer: **−18 °C (0 °F) or below**.
- Write each reading on the temperature log with the time and your initials.

> If a fridge reads above 5 °C, don't leave it for the morning. Tell the closing lead, move the food to another fridge, and write what you did on the log.

4. Clean, then sanitise

1. Scrape and wash every cutting board, then put it through the dishwasher.
2. Wash work surfaces with hot soapy water, then spray with sanitiser and leave it on for the time on the bottle (60 seconds for ours) before wiping.
3. Empty and wash the grease traps under the grill.
4. Sweep, then mop the floor from the back wall towards the drain. Put out the wet-floor sign.
5. Take out the rubbish and recycling. Wash your hands afterwards.

5. Stay safe while you close

- Never pour hot fryer oil. Wait until it has cooled before filtering it.
- Knives are washed by hand, one at a time, never left in the sink.
- Wear the cut-resistant glove to clean the slicer, with the slicer unplugged.

6. Sign off

The closing lead walks the kitchen with the log, checks every section, and signs it with the time. If anything isn't done, it is finished before anyone leaves. The log stays on the clipboard by the office door for the morning manager.