



# ACT MOBILE FOOD BUSINESS FIT-OUT GUIDE

A GUIDE TO THE DESIGN AND  
CONSTRUCTION OF MOBILE FOOD  
BUSINESSES IN THE ACT

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## DISCLAIMER

The *ACT Mobile Food Business Fit-out Guide* is intended to provide guidance (e.g. to builders and designers) on the construction and design of mobile food businesses.

Mobile food businesses must comply with all relevant requirements of ACT law. This guide does not cover all requirements of the *Food Act 2001*, the *Food Regulation 2002* or the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

Users must make their own judgement, as the information provided is not legal advice. Any legal advice should be obtained from a qualified solicitor.

The ACT Government accepts no responsibility for any action taken based on the information in this guide. The ACT Government is not liable for any damages resulting from the use of this guide. The ACT Government does not assure the accuracy of the information on websites referenced in this guide, nor any information on websites that the ACT Government does not manage.

This guide is subject to updates based on emerging issues, such as legislative changes and industry innovation. Users should check they have the most recent version. Visit <https://www.health.act.gov.au/businesses/food-safety-regulation> for the most recent version of the guide and other food business resources.

# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The ACT Mobile Food Premises Fit-out Guide has been developed to provide guidance to food businesses, builders and designers on the construction and design of **mobile food premises**. The guide outlines minimum construction requirements and best practice recommendations to ensure the fit-out of a mobile food premises complies with the *Food Act 2001* and supports the production of safe food.

This guide is based on:

- the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code - [Standard 3.2.3 \(Food Premises and Equipment\)](#), and
- Australian Standard 4674-2004 (Construction and fit-out of food premises).

The Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code prescribes nationally consistent food safety standards that enable a risk-based, preventative approach to providing safe and suitable food. Standard 3.2.3 sets out the requirements for food premises and **equipment** used by a food business.

Please note that Standard 3.2.3 and Australian Standard 4674-2004 address the requirements for all food businesses and are not specific to mobile food businesses.

NB: Words defined in the [Glossary](#) are shown in **green** at their first mention in the text.

## WHAT ARE MOBILE FOOD PREMISES?

A mobile food premises includes any vehicle (mobile or stationary) that is used for preparing and handling food for sale. Examples include vans used for making and selling hamburgers, hot dogs, hot chips, coffee, popcorn, ice-cream, etc.

## WHY THIS GUIDE IS IMPORTANT?

Thorough planning and design will assist you to build a mobile food premises that will facilitate the production of safe food. This guide aims to ensure that all mobile food premises:

- are able to be easily cleaned and maintained,
- have sufficient space, **facilities** and equipment to produce safe food,
- are provided with services such as **potable water**, effective **sewage** disposal, and sufficient light and ventilation for safe food handling,
- provide facilities for handwashing, and
- prevent the entry and **harbourage** of pests.

This guide only provides information relating to mobile food premises fit-outs. For general information on appropriate food handling practices, see [Food Safety is Your Business - A Guide For Food Businesses](#). For information on the setup and operation of market stalls, see the [Food stall guidelines – Food safety requirements for temporary food stalls](#). For information about fixed food premises, see the [ACT Food Business Fit-out Guide](#).

For information on other licensing and regulatory matters, including mobile food businesses that wish to trade on public unleased land (formerly known as a Hawker's Licence), refer to the [Access Canberra](#) website or call 13 22 81.

## THE FIT-OUT PROCESS

Applicants are obliged to contact the Health Protection Service at the earliest stages of planning, design or purchasing to discuss their fit-out requirements. A fit-out assessment describes the process where food businesses can have their design approved by Public Health Officers.

Fit-out assessments are required as part of the process for registering a mobile food business, as well as the process for making changes to a registered mobile food business. To undertake the fit-out process, applicants must complete the relevant online application form outlined in the table below.

New Food Business	Changes To An Existing Food Business
To undertake a fit-out and register a new food business, complete a <a href="#"><u>Food Business New Registration Application</u></a> form.	To undertake a fit-out to change an existing registered food business (including food handling or storage areas), complete a <a href="#"><u>Food Business Variation or Transfer Form</u></a> .

### Documents required for fit-out assessment

The proprietor must submit mobile food premises plans as part of the online fit-out process. Plans should be to a scale of no less than 1:100 (i.e. 1m = 1cm) and should contain the following information:

- floor plan,
- sectional elevation drawings showing all **fixtures, fittings and equipment**, and designated areas,
- mechanical exhaust ventilation drawings, including plans and schematic diagrams, and
- reflected ceiling plans.

The proprietor must ensure the following information is included on the premises plans:

- finishes of floors, walls, and ceilings,
- layout of all equipment, benches, fittings and fixtures,
- schedule of equipment specifications, including maximum power/gas outputs,
- hydraulic specifications, including fresh and waste water storage and disposal,
- door and window openings,
- mechanical exhaust ventilation,
- clearly labelled food storage areas,
- chemical storage areas,
- personal storage areas, and
- menu/list of foods sold at the premises.

For more information, contact the Health Protection Service on 02 5124 9700 or [hps@act.gov.au](mailto:hps@act.gov.au) .

# DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

## FLOOR PLAN SUMMARY

Correct design and layout of a premises can streamline work practices, reduce **cleaning** and maintenance, and prevent cross-contamination. Premises must be designed so food preparation activities are separated from the cleaning and sanitising of equipment. Ingredients must be stored separately from cooked produce; personal items or chemicals must not be stored with food. See Diagram 1 on the next page for an example floor plan.

## FLOORS

Floor surfaces must be smooth, **impervious** and easy-to-clean. Floors must include **coving** and may be finished with the following materials:

- laminated thermosetting plastic sheeting,
- epoxy resin,
- vinyl sheeting, or
- floor tiles grouted with epoxy grout and finished flush with the surface of the tiles.

Proprietors should consider which finish will be the most suitable for their premises.

## WALLS AND CEILINGS

Walls should be finished with a durable, high gloss, washable and easy-to-clean surface.

Walls in mobile food premises are to be finished with an approved material such as:

- glazed tiles,
- stainless steel or aluminium sheeting, .
- acrylic or laminated plastic sheeting,
- polyvinyl sheeting with welded seams, or
- pre-formed panels.

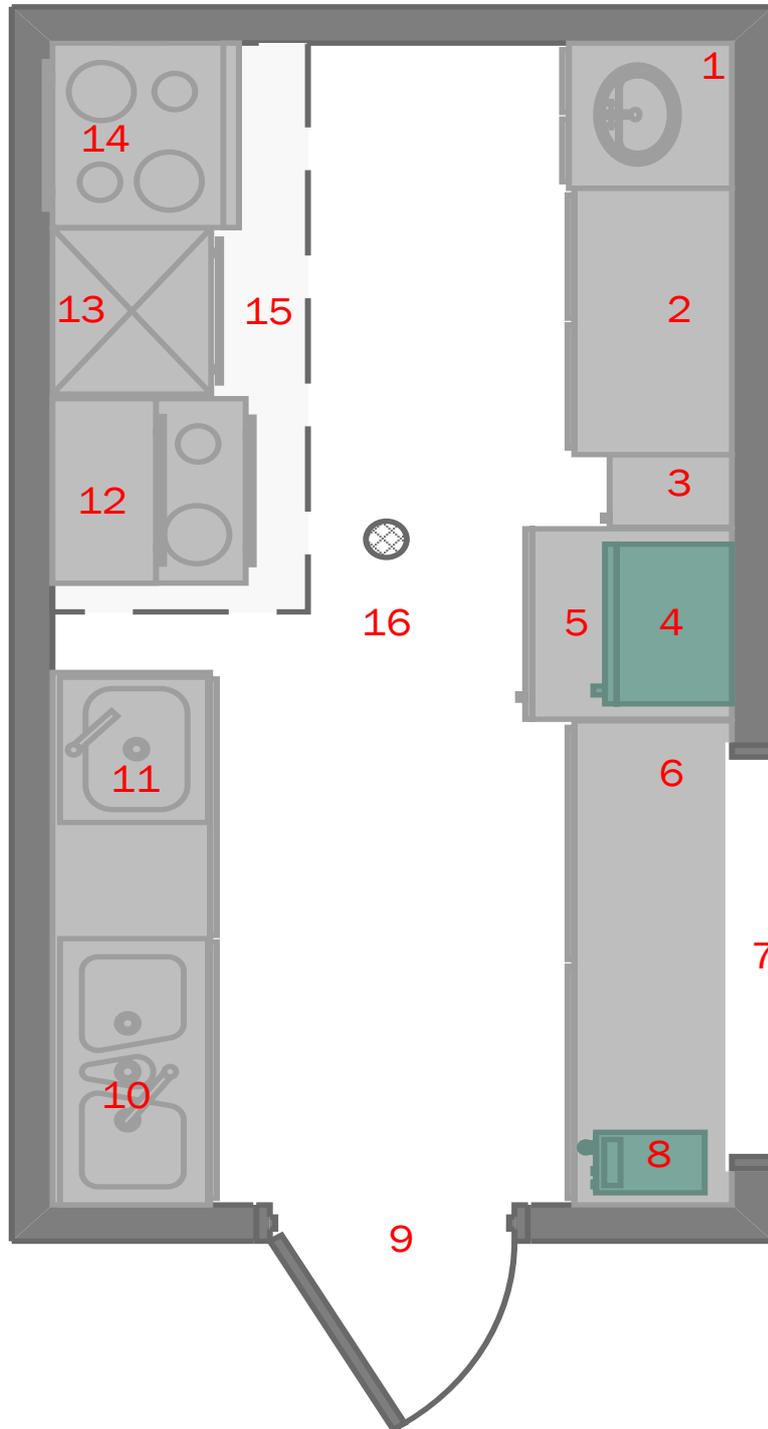
Walls at the rear of cooking equipment must be covered with a hardwearing material (such as stainless steel) that can withstand heat.

Ceilings must have a smooth, impervious and easily cleaned surface, free from joins or crevices and appropriately sealed to prevent the entry of dirt and pests.

## LIGHTING

Light fittings should be installed flush with the ceiling or have a protective cover to prevent the accumulation of dust or harbourage of pests. Lights within mobile food premises must either have a cover that encloses the glass bulb (in case the bulb shatters), or have a shatterproof light fitting (LED or other plastic options are recommended).

Diagram 1 – Example floor plan for a mobile food business



### Diagram Key

1. Hand wash basin with warm water from one spout
2. Food preparation bench with under bench refrigerator
3. Rubbish bin with lid
4. Microwave
5. Drinks refrigerator
6. Serving counter with under bench food storage
7. Pass-through window
8. Coffee Machine
9. Door with self-closing mechanism
10. Double bowl wash-up sink (hot and cold running water)
11. Food preparation sink (hot and cold running water)
12. Hot plate
13. Deep fryer
14. Four-burner gas stove
15. Mechanical ventilation hood
16. Floor waste

**Note:** This is only an example of a mobile food premises; it does not reflect all of the many and various types of mobile food premises. Additional considerations not shown in the example diagram include floors, walls, ceilings, benches, lighting, waste/potable water storage tanks, and separate storage areas for personal items, chemicals, etc. Please see the checklist at Appendix 1 for a list of fit-out requirements.

## SINKS AND HANDWASH BASINS

To effectively clean and sanitise premises and equipment, mobile food businesses must have either a double bowl sink, or a single bowl sink and a dishwasher. In addition to wash-up sinks, a food preparation sink may be required if foods (e.g. salad/ vegetables) are immersed in water to be cleaned prior to use or otherwise prepared in a sink.

Mobile food premises also require an easily accessible designated hand wash basin.

The table below shows a summary of the different equipment needed when undertaking food preparation, cleaning and sanitising activities.

Business Operation	Minimum Facilities
<i>All mobile food premises</i>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hand Washing</b></p> <p>Designated hand wash basin that is large enough for food handlers to easily move their hands and arms about under the running water.</p>
<i>All mobile food premises that handle and prepare unpackaged food</i>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wash-up Sinks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Double bowl sink (capable of immersing the largest equipment), <b>or</b></li> <li>▪ Dishwasher and single bowl sink (where all food contact equipment will fit in the dishwasher), <b>or</b></li> <li>▪ Double bowl sink and a dishwasher (where some equipment has to be washed/sanitised in the sink).</li> </ul>
<i>Mobile food premises where food preparation directly uses a sink (e.g. food prepared by immersion/rinsing in water or draining into a sink)</i>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Food Preparation Sink</b></p> <p>In addition to hand wash basin and wash-up sinks, premises must have a separate, designated food preparation sink.</p>

### Water Supply

Mobile food premises must have an adequate supply of potable water. This may be achieved through connecting to mains water or with water storage tanks (typically 90 litres capacity).

Wash up sinks must be connected to an adequate supply of hot and cold potable water. Food preparation sinks must be connected to an adequate supply of potable water.

Hand washing basins must be supplied with warm, running potable water (i.e. hot and cold water provided through a single outlet).

## Waste Water Disposal

Mobile food premises must have adequate storage for waste water, including a waste water storage tank of adequate size (larger than the potable water storage). Applicants are strongly advised to contact the Health Protection Service and speak to a Public Health Officer who can advise on suitable tank size based on the proposed operation of the business. All plumbing and drainage must comply with *Australian Standard 3500.2:2018 (Plumbing and drainage – Sanitary plumbing and drainage)*.

All food businesses discharging liquid waste (also known as trade waste) into the ACT sewerage network must submit a **Non-Domestic Discharge to Sewer Application Form** to Icon Water's Liquid Waste Management Section for approval. Please note that Icon Water can take up to 10 business days to assess an application once it has been submitted in full.

Visit [www.iconwater.com.au/tradewaste](http://www.iconwater.com.au/tradewaste) for details and forms.

Any food business that will not be discharging into the ACT sewerage network must send an email to [trade.waste@iconwater.com.au](mailto:trade.waste@iconwater.com.au) confirming that the liquid waste will not be discharged to the ACT sewerage network at any time. A reply email will then be sent to the applicant. Alternative methods used for discharging waste water must not cause an insanitary condition under the *Public Health Act 1997*.

The Health Protection Service may request evidence of a businesses' approval to discharge liquid trade waste as part of their Food Business Registration.

## Rubbish Disposal

Mobile food premises must have facilities for rubbish storage that are adequate to contain the volume and type of rubbish generated.

## Food preparation surfaces

Food preparation surfaces, such as food preparation benches must be constructed so they can be easily cleaned and sanitised. Suitable materials include:

- melamine laminate,
- plastic, or
- stainless steel with sealed joints.

## Cooking equipment

Stoves and cooking appliances adjacent to walls must be moveable to enable access for cleaning or built into walls and completely **pest proofed**.

Appliances must be either:

- placed apart to allow access to clean in between appliances, or
- placed close together with all gaps between the appliances sealed to prevent food waste, dirt and other matter accumulating.

## Hot and cold displays

Equipment designed to display hot or cold food must be capable of keeping food under **temperature control**.

## Shelving

Shelving must be smooth, impervious and free from joins. There must be adequate space below the lowest shelf to allow effective cleaning.

## **Adequate storage facilities**

Premises must have adequate storage facilities for items that could be a source of contamination, including chemicals, clothing and personal belongings. Storage facilities must prevent stored items from contaminating food.

## **VENTILATION**

A food premises must have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours from the food premises.

## **PEST ENTRY AND HARBOURAGE**

Pests such as rats, mice, flies and cockroaches can carry bacteria and viruses that may contaminate food and food contact surfaces. All food premises must be constructed to prevent the harbourage of pests. Prevention measures include:

- ensuring internal structures are designed and finished to prevent pest harbourage,
- fitting windows within food preparation areas with pest-proof mesh screens,
- sealing holes and spaces around pipes and cables in walls or ceilings to prevent entry of pests, and
- ensuring spaces between equipment and walls are either sealed to prevent pest harbourage, or are accessible for cleaning.

Where practical, it is recommended that mobile food premises be fitted with:

- self-closing doors and mesh screens to ensure that doors into the mobile food business remain closed,
- weather strips to prevent pests from entering the mobile food premises under doors, and
- air curtains or plastic curtains to minimise pest entry.

## **OFF-SITE STORAGE**

If you are using any other premises for the storage or preparation of food in conjunction with the mobile food premises, approval is needed for the second location. This includes storing ingredients in a residential property.

Details, plans or photographs should be included with your application.

# APPENDIX 1 – FIT-OUT CHECKLIST FOR MOBILE FOOD PREMISES

<b>Construction and Operation</b> This checklist summarises the key issues for mobile food premises fit-outs. If unsure about any item, contact the Health Protection Service for advice.	<b>Check box when complete</b>
<b>Do you have the required documents for the fit-out assessment process, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Floor plans?</li> <li>▪ Sectional elevation drawings showing all fixtures, fittings and equipment, and designated areas?</li> <li>▪ Mechanical exhaust ventilation drawings, including plans and schematic diagrams?</li> <li>▪ Reflected ceiling plans?</li> </ul> (See <a href="#">Documents required for fit-out assessment</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the design and layout appropriate for the intended use?</b> E.g. separate designated areas for food preparation and cleaning? Does food flow in one direction to avoid contamination? Is there adequate room for intended activities? (see <a href="#">Design and Construction</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do you have separate, designated areas for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Food preparation?</li> <li>▪ Cleaning?</li> <li>▪ Chemical storage?</li> <li>▪ Storage of personal items?</li> </ul> (See <a href="#">Design and Construction</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are floors smooth, impervious, and easy to clean, coved, and made of a suitable approved material?</b> E.g. laminated thermosetting plastic sheeting, epoxy resin, vinyl sheeting, floor tiles grouted with epoxy grout and finished flush tile surfaces (see <a href="#">Floors</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are wall and ceiling surfaces suitably constructed, and finished with approved materials?</b> E.g. glazed tiles, stainless steel/aluminium sheeting, acrylic or laminated plastic sheeting, polyvinyl sheeting with welded seams, pre-formed panels. Ceilings should be light-coloured to assist cleaning, have a continuous construction, be free from joins/crevices, and sealed to prevent entry of dirt/pests. For more information (see <a href="#">Walls and ceilings</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are cupboards and bench surfaces sealed without gaps, durable and easy to clean?</b> (see <a href="#">Food preparation surfaces</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are cupboards and benches easy to clean underneath and behind?</b> (see <a href="#">Shelving</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are all openings protected to minimise entry of dust, pests and other contaminants?</b> E.g. self-closing doors, air curtains, fly screens, etc. (see <a href="#">Pest Entry and Harbourage</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the driving compartment separated from the food preparation and storage areas?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are there adequate sinks for cleaning and sanitising? That is:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A double bowl sink (capable of immersing the largest equipment), or</li> <li>▪ A dishwasher and single bowl sink (where all food contact equipment will fit in the dishwasher), or</li> <li>▪ A double bowl sink and a dishwasher (where some equipment has to be washed/sanitised in the sink).</li> </ul> (see <a href="#">Sinks and Handwash basins</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is a food preparation sink required?</b> Where food preparation directly uses a sink (e.g. food prepared by immersion/rinsing in water or draining into a sink) (see <a href="#">Sinks and Handwash basins</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is there an adequate supply of potable water available in the vehicle?</b> If supply is from a water storage tank, typically 90L, though more may be needed dependent on business activities. The tank must have an attached pressure supply system reticulated to sinks and basins (see <a href="#">Waste Water Disposal</a> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p><b>Are designated hand washing facilities easily accessible?</b> (see <a href="#">Sinks and Handwash basins</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Do hand wash basin(s) have liquid soap, single-use towels and warm, running potable water available from a single spout?</b> (see <a href="#">Sinks and Handwash basins</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Is ventilation sufficient to remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours?</b> (see <a href="#">Mechanical ventilation</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Is there adequate, easy-to-clean lighting? Is all lighting shatterproof, or in a shatterproof covering? Are light fittings recessed into ceilings/equipment where possible?</b> (see <a href="#">Lighting</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Is there an appropriately sized bin in a dedicated waste area?</b> (see <a href="#">Rubbish Disposal</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Is there a designated storage area for personal items?</b> (see <a href="#">Adequate storage facilities</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Has trade waste approval been granted by Icon Water?</b> Evidence must be given to the HPS - a Food Business Registration will not be issued without it (see <a href="#">Waste Water Disposal</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Is the business using off-site storage?</b> You must provide information about where you will be storing food (see <a href="#">Off-site Storage</a>).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Have you sought other necessary business approvals?</b> E.g. to trade on public unleased land, for vehicle registration, etc. contact <a href="#">Access Canberra</a> for details.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# APPENDIX 2 – GLOSSARY

## **Cleaning**

A process that removes visible contamination, such as food waste, dirt and grease from a surface, usually using hot water and detergent. Some microorganisms will be removed from the surface, however, the cleaning process is not designed to destroy micro-organisms.

## **Coving**

Coving is a smooth, seamless junction between the floor and wall that aids effective cleaning and prevents accumulation of waste. This can be achieved by continuing flooring material up the wall.

## **Equipment**

Means all equipment used in handling or storing food, as well as equipment used to clean food premises or equipment (e.g. refrigerators, cool rooms, bain-marie units, ovens, food processors, dishwashers, brooms, mops, buckets, etc).

## **Facilities**

Includes a machine, instrument, apparatus, utensil or appliance, other than a single-use item, used (or intended to be used) in or in connection with food handling. Includes any equipment used (or intended to be used) to clean food premises or equipment.

## **Fixtures, fitting and equipment**

Includes all items such as benches, shelves, sinks, handwashing basins, cupboards, light fittings, ventilation ducts, pipes, electrical wiring, as well as cooking and processing equipment (as defined above in 'equipment').

## **Hand washing facilities**

A facility that provides an adequate supply of warm, running, potable water, soap and single-use disposable towels to facilitate handwashing.

## **Harbourage**

A location where pests seek shelter, food and warmth to enable them to live and reproduce.

## **Impervious**

Impervious means a surface that cannot be penetrated or affected by the surrounding environment. This may refer to being waterproof or heatproof.

## **Mechanical ventilation**

A system that uses equipment (such as fans) to dilute pollutants in the air from an area by introducing fresh air.

## **Mobile Food Business**

A business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves handling or selling food from a mobile food premises.

## **Mobile Food Premises**

A mobile food premises includes any vehicle (mobile or stationary) that is used for preparing and handling food for sale. Examples include vans used for making and selling hamburgers, hot dogs, hot chips, coffee, popcorn, ice-cream, etc.

## **Pest proofed**

A building is considered pest proofed when there are no pest access points into the building, no harbourage, and suitable pest management plans are in place to prevent pests.

## **Potable water**

Potable water is safe drinking water that is fit for human consumption.

## **Sewage**

Waste from toilets, urinals, basins, showers, sinks and dishwashers.

## **Temperature control**

The use of temperature to minimise the growth of bacteria and protect the safety of food. Generally, this means keeping potentially hazardous food at 5°C or below, or at 60°C or above.



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