Thermometer Calibration

Benton-Franklin Health District Food Safety Fact Sheets

A thermometer should be checked for accuracy often (at least once a month) or if it has been dropped.

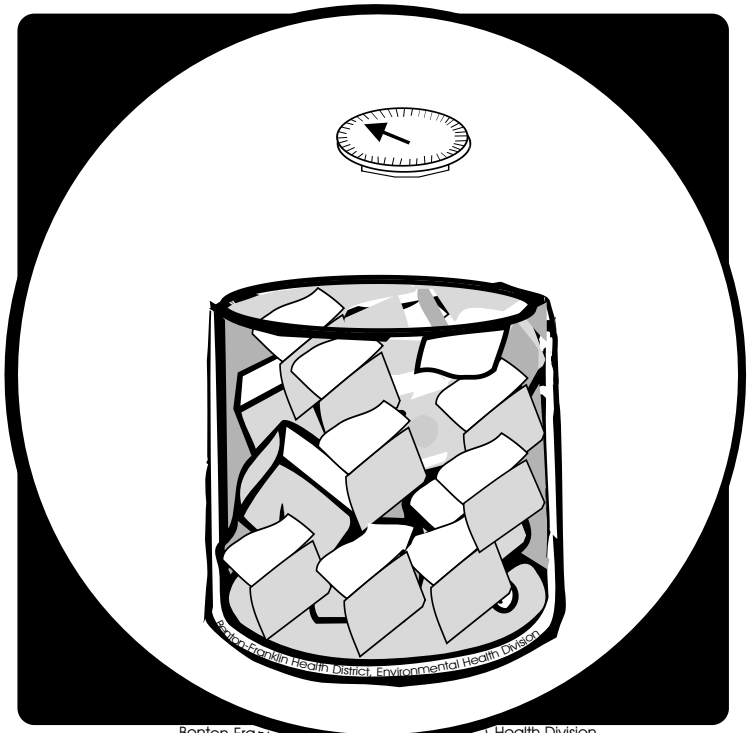
To check a thermometer, measure the temperature of ice water and boiling water:

- Ice water should be 32°F
- Boiling water should be 212°F

If the thermometer is correct, you do not need to calibrate it.

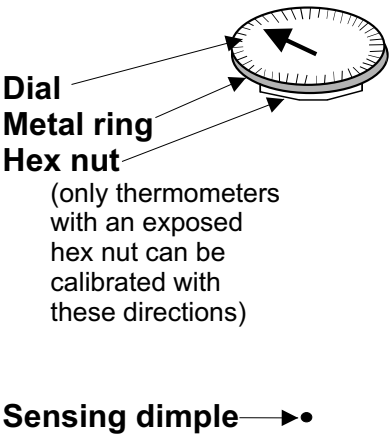
If the thermometer is "off" by the same number of degrees for ice and boiling water, the thermometer can be calibrated.

If the thermometer is "off" but not by the same number of degrees, the thermometer should be replaced.



Benton-Franklin Health District, Environmental Health Division

Calibrating with Ice:



- Pack a large cup full of crushed ice. Add cold water to fill in the air spaces.
- Put the thermometer into the ice, making sure the sensing dimple is surrounded by ice.
- Keeping the thermometer in the ice, firmly hold the hex nut with a wrench to keep the nut from moving. Turn the metal ring on top of the thermometer.
- Turn the metal ring until the needle points to 32°F.
- Check the thermometer in boiling water to make sure it is properly calibrated and reads 212°F.