

Line cook job description

Updated October 17, 2026. Written and reviewed by the HRTally Research Team. Replace everything in [brackets].

Details

- Department: [Department]
- Reports to: [Manager title]
- Location: [City, State, or remote]
- Employment type: [Full-time, part-time, or seasonal]
- FLSA status: Nonexempt
- Pay range: [\$X to \$Y per hour]

About [Company]

[Two or three sentences about what your company does, who it serves, and why people like working here.]

Job summary

We're hiring a line cook to prepare dishes to our standards on the [station], keep the line clean and organized, and help our kitchen deliver great food every service.

What you'll do

- Prepare ingredients and set up the station before service.
- Cook menu items to recipe, portion, and plating standards.
- Follow tickets and communicate clearly with the expo and other stations.
- Store, label, and rotate food correctly to prevent waste and contamination.
- Follow food safety, sanitation, and allergen procedures.
- Clean and sanitize the station, equipment, and tools.
- Help with deliveries, inventory, and prep for upcoming shifts.
- Support other stations when the kitchen is busy.

What you'll need

- Previous kitchen experience or culinary training.
- Food handler card as required by [State or county].
- Ability to stand for long periods, lift up to 50 pounds, and work in a hot kitchen.
- Availability for nights, weekends, and holidays.

Nice to have

- Experience on [grill, sauté, fry, or other station].
- Culinary school or apprenticeship.
- Experience in a high-volume kitchen.

Skills

Knife skills, Speed and consistency, Food safety, Communication on the line, Organization, Composure under pressure.

Physical demands and work environment

Commercial kitchen. Requires standing for the full shift, working near open flames and hot equipment, lifting up to 50 pounds, and exposure to cleaning chemicals.

Pay and benefits

[\$X to \$Y per hour], based on experience and location. [List benefits, such as health insurance, retirement plan match, paid time off, and training.]

Equal opportunity

[Company] is an equal opportunity employer. We consider all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other status protected by law. If you need a reasonable accommodation to apply or interview, contact [name] at [email or phone].

Hiring notes for HR and the hiring manager

Pay data

- Median hourly wage: \$17.98 (BLS OEWS, May 2025, SOC 35-2014, Cooks, restaurant).
- Median annual equivalent: \$37,400 (hourly median x 2,080 hours).
- Mean annual wage: \$38,730.
- Check state and metro data at bls.gov/oes before setting your range, and include the range in postings where the law requires it.

Exempt status and legal notes

FLSA status: Nonexempt (overtime eligible). Duties and pay decide overtime eligibility, not the job title.

Several states and counties, including California, Texas, Illinois, and Washington, require food employees to get a food handler card within a set time after hire. Under the FDA Food Code, which most states have adopted, employees must report certain illnesses to the person in charge. Line cooks are nonexempt. Cooks under 18 face limits on operating some kitchen equipment, such as power-driven meat slicers, under federal child labor rules.

How to customize it

- Name the station and the volume, such as covers per night.
- Say whether there's a staff meal and how shifts are scheduled.
- Mention growth paths, such as sous chef.
- Describe the kitchen culture honestly.

Interview questions

1. What station are you strongest on, and why?
2. Walk me through how you set up for a Saturday night.
3. What do you do when you get buried on tickets?
4. How do you prevent cross-contact for an allergy order?

Before you post

- Separate required from preferred. Required means you won't hire without it. Everything else is preferred. Long required lists screen out qualified people.
- Describe physical demands and environment. Lifting, standing, shifts, travel, noise, temperature. This sets honest expectations and supports an ADA essential functions record.

- State the pay range. Required in a growing list of states and cities, and expected by candidates everywhere else.
- Say exempt or nonexempt. Decide based on duties and salary before you post, and keep the classification consistent with how you pay.
- Name required licenses and checks. Licenses, certifications, background checks, drug tests, and driving record reviews, with the timing of each.
- Add the accommodation and EEO statement. Tell candidates how to request a reasonable accommodation, and include your equal opportunity statement.

Find 50 free job descriptions at hrtally.com/job-descriptions

Compare HR software, read independent reviews, and get free quotes at www.hrtally.com

Related: Restaurant manager, Restaurant server, Bartender