

HOW TO START A FOOD BUSINESS IN 2026

7-Part YouTube Series — Part 4

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**PART 4: KICHEN
EQUIPMENTS SET UP AND
COST BREAK DOWN**

VIDEO 4 OF 7

HOW TO START A FOOD BUSINESS IN 2026

Part 4: Kitchen Equipment — What You Actually Need

🎧 Topic: Commercial Kitchen Setup & Equipment Buying Guide

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I've seen food businesses spend £80,000 on brand new shiny equipment and go bust in 6 months. And I've seen businesses do £10,000 a week with second-hand kit bought off eBay. The equipment doesn't make the food — the cook does. In this video I'm going to break down exactly what equipment you need, what you can skip, and how to save 30–40% on your setup without cutting corners on quality.

🔑 SECTION 1: The Core Equipment List

Let's start with what every food business actually needs. I'm going to go through each piece of equipment, what it costs new, and what to look for.

EQUIPMENT	NEW COST	WHAT TO LOOK FOR
Commercial oven	£3,000–£8,000	Convection fan, easy-clean interior
Cooktop / range	£2,000–£5,000	6-burner minimum for busy service
Fridges & freezers	£1,500–£5,000	NSF-certified, separate fridge/freezer
Prep tables (stainless)	£2,000–£4,000	18-gauge steel, under-shelf storage
Commercial dishwasher	£1,500–£4,000	Under-counter for small kitchens
POS system	£1,500–£3,000	Tablet-based, integrates with delivery apps
Small wares	£2,000–£3,000	Pans, knives, containers, utensils

TOTAL NEW EQUIPMENT: £13,500 – £32,000

TOTAL SECOND-HAND (30–40% saving): £8,100 – £19,200

🔑 SECTION 2: The Money-Saving Hack — Used Equipment

Here is the single biggest cost-saving tip in this entire series. Buy certified used or refurbished equipment. And I'm not talking about random stuff off Facebook Marketplace — I mean from proper commercial suppliers.

WHERE TO BUY USED COMMERCIAL EQUIPMENT:

- Nisbets.co.uk — UK's biggest catering equipment supplier, has refurbished section
- Bunzl Catering Supplies — excellent used stock
- eBay — search 'commercial catering equipment' — filter to business sellers only
- Restaurant closure sales — when restaurants close, equipment goes cheap. Search locally.

A commercial oven that costs £6,000 new can be bought for £2,500 to £3,500 used. Same oven. Same performance. Different price. The only thing you need to check is: does it come with a warranty or PAT certificate? For electrical equipment especially, always ask for the test certificate. And if you're buying from a private seller, get it professionally serviced before you open — a few hundred pounds for peace of mind.

Also check with your local council — some areas have food business startup grants that can be used toward equipment. Worth a 10-minute phone call.

SECTION 3: Your POS System — Don't Overlook This

Your POS — your point of sale system — is the brain of your operation. It's not just a till. A good POS will track your sales, manage your inventory, connect to your delivery platforms, and give you reports at the end of every day so you actually know what's working.

WHAT YOUR POS SHOULD DO:

- Take orders — walk-in, collection, delivery
- Sync with Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats — all orders in one screen
- Track your bestselling items automatically
- Process contactless payments — card, Apple Pay, Google Pay
- Print kitchen tickets so your chef knows what to make

POPULAR POS SYSTEMS FOR UK FOOD BUSINESSES:

- Square for Restaurants — good free entry tier, grows with you
- Lightspeed — more advanced, better reporting
- Slerp — specifically built for food delivery
- OrderPad — UK-based, integrates with Just Eat directly

Budget £1,500 to £3,000 for your POS hardware and setup. Some providers offer rental models — pay monthly rather than upfront. Good if you're watching cash flow.

🔗 SECTION 4: Health & Safety Equipment Requirements

Before you open, you will be inspected by Environmental Health. And if your kitchen isn't set up correctly, they can stop you from opening. Let me give you the checklist.

- Temperature probes — you must record food temperatures. Mandatory.
- Hand wash basins — separate from food prep sinks. Non-negotiable.
- Colour-coded chopping boards — raw meat, cooked food, veg — all separate
- Fire suppression system under extraction hood — required in most kitchens
- First aid kit — always stocked and accessible
- Food hygiene certificates — at least one Level 2 in the kitchen at all times
- HACCP records — Hazard Analysis. You must document it. Use the free NHS template.

None of this is optional. Budget around £500–£1,000 for this compliance kit. And please get your food hygiene rating done early — a 5-star rating goes on your window and on the Just Eat listing. Customers check this. A low score will hurt your sales.

Summary

Right — to wrap up. Buy second-hand where you can, invest in a solid POS system, and do not cut corners on the health and safety basics. Equipment can be upgraded. A failed Environmental Health inspection the week before you open? That's a disaster. Next video: staff management and payroll — the UK rules for 2026 and how to avoid HMRC penalties. It's not the most exciting subject but it will save you thousands. Subscribe, like, and I'll see you in the next one.
