Cookie Policy

How Hello Chef uses cookies, including your choices for first-party analytics, Google Analytics and Meta.

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About this policy
This policy explains cookies and similar technologies on hello-chef.co.uk. For questions about cookies or privacy, contact contact@hello-chef.co.uk.

1. Scope and operator

Hello Chef is a trading name of HELLO CHEF LTD, a private limited company registered in England and Wales with company number 17560331. Registered office: 59 Dominion Road, Bristol, England, BS16 3ES. Email: contact@hello-chef.co.uk.

This policy covers hello-chef.co.uk and its application pages. Cookies are small browser records; local storage, IndexedDB and service workers can also store information on a device. A network request does not necessarily set a cookie.

2. Necessary site cookies

sessionid: the first-party session-reference cookie used for sign-in and continuity of a guest request. Its configured lifetime is seven days, subject to logout or earlier expiry. It is HttpOnly, SameSite=Lax and sent securely over HTTPS.

csrftoken: the first-party form-security cookie used to help prevent forged submissions. Its configured lifetime is 364 days and it may be renewed when a form is used. It is a security token, not an advertising identifier.

messages: a first-party fallback cookie that may carry short notices, such as a successful save. It is used when needed, normally cleared after the notice is displayed, and otherwise has a browser-session lifetime.

hc_optional_consent: a signed first-party cookie that remembers your analytics and marketing choices, their version and the time they were saved. It lasts 180 days from your choice, unless removed earlier. It is HttpOnly, SameSite=Lax and secure over HTTPS. It is necessary to honour a refusal as well as an acceptance.

These cookies support requested functionality or security. Blocking them can prevent sign-in, saving forms or continuing a request. They are not used by Hello Chef to track you for advertising.

3. Analytics and advertising

Google Analytics and Meta Pixel are available only with your consent. The cookie popup appears on the homepage and the Join as a chef page when you have not saved a choice. Choose Accept all, Reject all or Manage preferences. The popup disappears after you save your choice; you can reopen it using Cookie preferences in the homepage footer. Analytics and marketing are separate, initially unselected choices. Neither optional provider is contacted before consent. Necessary site features remain available after refusal. Google Ads is not enabled.

Google Analytics: the first-party _ga and _ga_* cookies distinguish browsers and sessions to measure visits to selected public pages. We configure a lifetime of 180 days, without extending expiry on each page view; browsers may shorten it. Data sent to Google includes a browser identifier, the public page, event timing and browser or device information. Google receives the network request, including the IP address. Google Signals, advertising personalisation and automatic enhanced measurement are disabled. See https://policies.google.com/technologies/cookies.

Meta Pixel: the first-party _fbp cookie identifies a browser for marketing measurement and advertising audiences. Its normal lifetime is 90 days and Meta may refresh it on a later consented visit. Meta receives public-page events and browser or device information and may connect them with a Facebook or Instagram account. Automatic advanced matching and automatic events are disabled. Meta may also read or set cookies on its own domain where your browser permits; these depend on your Meta account and settings. See https://www.facebook.com/privacy/policies/cookies/.

Browser tags exclude URLs with query parameters. With marketing consent, the server may read only the Facebook advertising-click identifier (fbclid) from an incoming homepage or chef signup link. It keeps that identifier in the consented marketing journey to attribute later signup milestones; other query values and referrers are not sent. Existing _fbp and _fbc identifiers may also be used after marketing consent. Rejecting marketing clears accessible first-party Meta cookies and the journey cookie.

Browser tags are limited to selected public information pages for visitors who are not signed in. Third-party tracking scripts do not load on registration forms, accounts, requests, bookings, payments or document pages. Separately, with marketing consent, the server sends fixed chef registration milestones to the Meta Conversions API after successful actions. These events contain no form answers, contact details, files, verification tokens, meal plans or allergy information. Browser identifiers are nevertheless personal data, as explained in the Privacy Policy.

Cookie expiry and provider data retention are different. Our Google Analytics user-level and event-level retention is two months, without a reset on new activity; aggregate reports are separate. Meta processing and retention are described in https://www.facebook.com/privacy/policy/. Browser restrictions or clearing storage may remove cookies sooner.

hc_marketing_journey: a signed, HttpOnly first-party cookie, lasting up to 30 days, created only with marketing consent when server-side chef measurement is enabled. It connects registration milestones to a random browser journey and, when available, the Meta advertising-click identifier. The event payload contains the milestone, time, canonical signup URL, pseudonymous browser ID and browser user-agent information; it does not contain your application answers. Server event payloads are cleared after delivery or final failure, or after two days if unsent; journey records expire within 30 days. Refusal cancels queued events for this browser. No extra consent is inferred from submitting an application.

With Analytics consent, Hello Chef also measures traffic and journey milestones in its own database. We use a random browser identifier to count visits, recognise available sources from external referrer hostnames or utm_source, utm_medium and utm_campaign labels, and link chef signup, account creation, onboarding, application submission and approval. For customers we distinguish the booking-page visit, form start, request sent to a chef, booking confirmation and verified successful payment. The source linked to an application or request is its first consented attribution and is available to authorised administrators. We retain only safe page categories or public editorial slugs, event names and times, source labels and an approximate device category. No raw referrer URL, IP address, raw user-agent, form answers, allergy data, documents, conversation contents, payment amounts or payment credentials enter these analytics records. This first-party reporting does not send these records to Google or Meta. The lawful basis is consent.

hc_analytics is a signed, HttpOnly first-party analytics cookie created only after Analytics consent. It lasts 30 days without extending its expiry on each visit and uses Secure and SameSite=Lax. A visit restarts after 30 minutes of inactivity. Attribution remains valid for delayed milestones for up to 30 days and while this consent version remains valid. Analytics records and their links to applications or requests are deleted after 90 days. Withdrawing Analytics consent deletes this browser's first-party analytics records and attribution and stops linked future measurement. Business records required to operate the service are separate. Clearing cookies, using another device, refusing consent or a missing referrer can make attribution unavailable. Unknown sources are not guessed; unique browsers do not equal unique people.

4. App and notification storage

hello-chef-push-off: first-party local storage that remembers when notifications have been disabled. It remains until changed or browser storage is cleared; there is no fixed automatic expiry.

hello-chef-push-ids: first-party IndexedDB records of previously seen notification identifiers and timestamps, used to prevent duplicates. Entries older than seven days are cleaned during a later push event; inactivity can leave entries until the next cleanup or manual clearing.

The chef app uses a service worker for requested app and notification features. Notification delivery requires browser or device permission and a subscription. Private bookings and uploaded documents are not made available as an offline document library. You can change notification permissions through your account and browser or device settings.

5. Payment, sign-in and map providers

Stripe hosts payment-method setup and payout facilities and may provide embedded wallet features when you choose them. Stripe may use its own security, fraud-prevention and authentication cookies or storage. These can vary between hosted and embedded flows. Its notice explains provider storage: https://stripe.com/cookie-settings.

Optional Google customer sign-in redirects you to Google. Sign-in state is kept in the Hello Chef server session; Google may use its own cookies on its sign-in pages. This is separate from website analytics. Google explains its cookies at https://policies.google.com/technologies/cookies.

Apple Pay and Google Pay availability depends on your device, browser, payment flow and wallet. Their providers have separate notices and settings. A wallet appearing during a selected payment action does not activate Google Analytics or Meta advertising.

The service-area map uses locally hosted Leaflet software and OpenStreetMap tiles. Tile requests can disclose your IP address and the requested area to the provider. Postcode lookup uses api.postcodes.io. Hello Chef does not add an advertising cookie for these map or lookup features.

6. Changing choices and contacting us

Open Cookie preferences in the homepage footer to change or withdraw consent. Reject all stops both optional services; Manage preferences lets you choose them separately. Save preferences applies your selection. The popup appears again on the homepage or Join as a chef page when your 180-day choice expires, is removed or the consent version changes.

Use browser settings to inspect, remove or block site cookies and other storage. Removing necessary storage can sign you out or interrupt a request. Notification permission can also be changed in browser or device settings.

Withdrawing consent stops future optional tracking on subsequent pages and clears accessible first-party tracking cookies. It does not undo processing already carried out with consent. Hello Chef cannot directly remove every cookie stored on another provider's domain; use that provider's controls or your browser settings. Choices are specific to this browser and must be set separately on another device.

For questions about current storage or privacy, email contact@hello-chef.co.uk. This policy will be updated when the technologies or their purposes change.