

Storing Foods at Home

Keep your food safe by storing it properly. Follow the guidelines below for storing food in the cupboard, refrigerator and freezer, and buy and prepare quantities you can use before food spoils.

The guidelines for freezer storage are for quality only—frozen foods stored continuously at 0 °F or below can be kept indefinitely.

Cupboard Storage Chart

Food	Recommended storage time at 70 degrees F	Handling hints
Biscuit, brownie, cake, muffin mix	9 months	Keep cool and dry.
Canned fruit juice	9 months	Keep cool.
Casserole mix, complete or add-your-own-meat	9 to 12 months	Keep cool and dry. After preparation, store refrigerated or frozen.
Cereals, ready-to-eat unopened opened	6 to 12 months 2 to 3 months	Refold package liner tightly after opening.
Crackers	3 months	Keep box tightly closed.
Flour (white) whole-wheat	6 to 8 months 6 to 8 months	Store in airtight container. Keep refrigerated and store in airtight container.
Ketchup, chili sauce unopened opened	12 months 1 month	Refrigerate for longer storage.
Mayonnaise, unopened	3 to 4 months	Refrigerate after opening.
Milk condensed or evaporated, unopened nonfat dry, unopened nonfat dry, opened	12 months 6 months 3 months	Turn cans upside down every 2 months. Store in airtight container.
Pancake mix	6 to 9 months	Store in airtight container.
Peanut butter unopened opened	6 to 9 months 2 to 3 months	Refrigeration is not needed, but it keeps longer if refrigerated. Serve at room temperature.
Peas, beans (dried)	12 months	Store in an airtight container in a cool place.
Microwavable popcorn	1 year	Store in an airtight container.
Rice, brown white	1 year 1 to 2 years	Keep the bag tightly closed.
Spices and herbs whole ground, herbs, blends	2 years 6 months	Store in airtight containers in dry places away from sunlight and heat. If aroma fades, replace products.
Sugar brown granulated	4 months 2 years	Put in airtight container. Cover tightly.

Refrigerator/Freezer Chart

Refrigerator (≤40 degrees F)

Meat, poultry, fish, eggs

Chicken, turkey pieces	1 to 2 days
Cooked meat and casseroles	3 to 4 days
Eggs, in shell	3 to 5 weeks
Raw egg yolk, white	2 to 4 days
Hard-cooked egg	1 week
Liquid pasteurized, egg substitutes	
opened	3 days
unopened	10 days
Fish	
Lean fish	1 to 2 days
Fatty fish	1 to 2 days
Cooked fish	3 to 4 days
Ground meat	1 to 2 days
Steak—beef, pork	3 to 5 days
Ham, canned and labeled “Keep refrigerated”	
opened	3 to 5 days
unopened	6 to 12 weeks
Ham	
fully cooked	
whole	7 days
half	3 to 5 days
slices	3 to 4 days
Hot dogs	
opened	1 week
unopened	2 weeks
Luncheon meats,	
opened	3 to 5 days
unopened	2 weeks

Dairy

Cheese, hard	
opened	2 to 3 weeks
unopened	2 to 3 months
Milk	5 days

Other

Butter	1 to 2 weeks
Egg, chicken, ham, tuna, macaroni salads	3 to 5 days

Freezer (0 degrees F)

Meat, poultry, fish, eggs

Chicken, turkey pieces	9 months
Cooked meat and casseroles	2 to 3 months
Eggs, in shell	Don't freeze
Fish	
Lean fish	6 months
Fatty fish	6 to 8 months (when purchased commercially frozen)
Ground meat	3 to 4 months
Steak—beef, pork	6 to 12 months
chops	3 to 4 months
roasts	6 to 12 months
Ham, cooked	2 months
Ham, fully cooked whole, half, slices	1 to 2 months
Hot dogs	1 to 2 months
Luncheon meats	
unopened and opened	1 to 2 months

Dairy

Cheese, hard	6 months
Milk	1 to 3 months

Other

Butter	12 months
Egg, chicken, ham, tuna or macaroni salads	Doesn't freeze well
Margarine	12 months
Mayonnaise	Don't freeze

Note: These short but safe time limits will help keep refrigerated foods from spoiling or becoming dangerous to eat.

Sources: www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3131.pdf
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