

Fruit & Vegetable Storage Tips

Produce	Where to Store It	How to Store It
	Apples 	Separate from other produce. 
	Avocados Ripen on counter, then store in fridge.  	Once cut, leave pit in, brush with lemon or lime juice and refrigerate. 
	Bananas 	Separate from other produce. 
	Beans 	
	Berries 	Leave container lid slightly cracked. Wash only when ready to eat.  
	Broccoli 	
	Celery 	
	Cherries 	Wash only when ready to eat. 
	Citrus Fruits 	
	Cucumbers 	Once cut, wrap cut end in damp towel and store in a plastic bag or sealed container. 
	Garlic 	
	Grapes 	
	Herbs (leafy) examples: cilantro, parsley Exception: basil on counter 	Remove bands and ties. Store up-right in a glass of water with a plastic bag over the top. 
	Herbs (woody) examples: rosemary, sage 	 
	Leafy Greens 	 
	Melons Ripen on counter, then store in fridge.  	
	Mushrooms 	Store in a paper bag. 
	Onions 	Store loose or in a mesh bag separate from potatoes. 
	Peppers 	
	Potatoes 	Store loose or in a paper bag separate from onions. 
	Root Vegetables 	Store edible greens separately.  
	Stone Fruits Ripen first on counter. 	
	Tomatoes Ripen first on counter. 	Store out of direct sunlight. 
	Zucchini 	

Fruits and vegetables are the most commonly-wasted foods. By using these food storage tricks, you can make your produce last longer and ensure it gets eaten.

Where to Store



How to Store



Asparagus ~ Fridge
Remove bands and ties. Store upright in a glass of water with a plastic bag over the top.



Seattle
Public
Utilities

Freezer Storage Tips

Food Item

Got leftovers or food that you can't finish?

Freezing for later use is a great way to save money and prevent waste. Food lasts indefinitely in the freezer (as long as temperature is **0°F or lower**), although quality may deteriorate. Below is a list of common items with general times for freezer storage. General refrigeration times may also aid in deciding when to use or else freeze an item.

Freezer Storage Time (< 0°F)

These are general guidelines, and items may last for shorter or longer periods.

Use your nose!

Fridge Storage Time (35-40°F)

Foods last indefinitely in the freezer! These suggestions are for quality only.

Meat and Seafood

	Bacon — Uncooked	1 month	1 week
	Poultry — Uncooked	9-12 months	1-2 days
	Steaks, Chops and Roasts — Uncooked	4-12 months	3-5 days
	Ground Meat (examples: hamburger) — Uncooked	3-4 months	1-2 days
	Hot Dogs (after opening) — Uncooked	1-2 months	1 week
	Lunch Meat (after opening or deli-sliced)	1-2 months	3-5 days
	Sausage — Uncooked	1-2 months	1-2 days
	Meat and Poultry — Cooked	2-6 months	3-4 days
	Fish — Uncooked	2-10 months	4-6 days
	Fish — Cooked	1-2 months	3-4 days

Dairy and Eggs

	Butter	6-9 months	1-2 months
	Cheese (hard and semi-hard)	6 months	3-4 weeks
	Eggs	12 months (beat first)	3-5 weeks (raw in shell)

Other Proteins

	Beans — Cooked	3-6 months	3-5 days
	Nuts and Seeds (after opening)	3-6 months	4-6 months
	Tofu	5 months	1 week

Produce

	Citrus	3 months	Varies
	Other Fruits	9-12 months	Varies
	Vegetables	8-12 months	Varies

Use in Smoothies!

Prepared Food

	Leftovers	2-3 months	3-4 days
	Soups and Stew	2-3 months	3-4 days

Breads, Grains and Desserts

	Bread, Rolls and Buns (baked)	Toast a slice or thaw on the counter!	2-3 months	Refrigeration not advised
	Tortillas (after opening)		6 months	3 months
	Cooked Rice	6 months	4-6 days	
	Cooked Oatmeal	6 months	3-5 days	
	Cooked Pasta	1-2 months	3-5 days	
	Cookies (baked)	6-8 months	Refrigeration not advised	
	Fruit Pies	6-8 months if baked, 2-4 months if not cut.	1 week if refrigerated after opening.	

Storage Tips



- Divide into meal-sized portions.
- Place in airtight containers or freezer bags (or wrap well in foil or plastic wrap).
- Remove as much air as possible.

3 Ways to Thaw*



1. Defrost in the fridge (24 hours for every 5 lbs. of food). This is the preferred method.
2. Place food in a leak-proof bag and immerse in cold water; check water frequently to make sure it stays cold and change every 30 minutes. After thawing, cook immediately.
3. Thaw in the microwave on "defrost" setting; cook immediately.

*Applies to most items. Source: USDA, "Freezing and Food Safety." foodsafety.gov

What NOT to Freeze



Freezing the following items is not recommended:

- Fruits and vegetables with a high moisture content (examples: lettuce, tomatoes, watermelon), unless you plan to cook or use in a smoothie
- Oil-based condiments, like mayonnaise and salad dressing
- Soft cheeses and custards
- Eggs in shells
- Canned food (okay to freeze if removed from can).



Seattle
Public
Utilities

For more tips visit
seattle.gov/util/reducereuse

Printed on recycled paper.