

Refrigerator & Freezer Storage Chart

Since product dates are not a guide for safe use of a product, consult this chart and follow these tips. The short but safe time limits will help keep refrigerated food 40 ° F from spoiling or becoming dangerous.

Storage Tips

- Place a refrigerator thermometer in the middle of your refrigerator and set it just below 40 ° F. Check it regularly.
- Keep your refrigerator clean. Immediately wipe up spills with hot, soapy water and rinse.
- Refrigerate or freeze meat and poultry as soon as you get home from the store.
- Make it a weekly habit to throw out expired foods that you should no longer eat.
- Keep the refrigerator door closed as much as possible, and do not store perishable foods like milk or eggs in the door. Store eggs in their carton on an inside shelf.
- When in doubt, throw it out!
- Before you leave your home on a trip, place an ice cube in a sandwich bag and place it in your freezer. This is a great way to tell if the power has gone out while you were away. If you come back to an ice blob instead of an ice cube, you can safely assume that all your perishables need to be thrown out.
- Purchase products before the 'sell-by' or expiration dates.
- Follow handling recommendations on the product/package.
- Keep meat and poultry in its package until just before using.
- If freezing meat and poultry in the original package longer than 2 months, overwrap these packages with airtight heavy-duty foil, plastic wrap, or freezer paper, or place the package inside a plastic bag.
- Because freezing 0 ° F keeps food safe indefinitely, the following storage times are for quality only.

Product	<u>Refrigerator</u>	<u>Freezer</u>
Eggs		
Fresh, in shell	4 to 5 weeks	Do not freeze
Raw yolks, whites	2 to 4 days	1 year

<u>Product</u>	<u>Refrigerator</u>	<u>Freezer</u>
Eggs		
Hard cooked	1 week	Do not freeze well
Liquid pasteurized eggs Or egg substitutes,		
Opened	3 days	Do not freeze
Unopened	10 days	1 year
Mayonnaise, commercial Refrigerate after opening	2 months	Do not freeze
TV Dinners, Frozen Casseroles		
Keep frozen until ready to heat		3 to 4 months
Deli & Vacuum-Packed Products		
Store-prepared (or homemade) egg, chicken, tuna, ham, macaroni salads	3 to 5 days	Do not freeze well
Pre-stuffed pork & lamb chops, chicken breasts Stuffed with dressing	1 day	Do not freeze well
Deli & Vacuum-Packed Products, continued		
Store-cooked convenience Meals	3 to 4 days	Do not freeze well
Commercial brand Vacuumed-packed dinners with USDA seal, unopened	2 weeks	Do not freeze well
Raw Hamburger, Ground & Stew Meat		
Hamburger & stew meats	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Ground turkey, veal, pork Lamb	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Corned Beef, Ham		
Corned Beef in pouch With pickling juices	5 to 7 days	Drained, 1 month

<u>Product</u>	<u>Refrigerator</u>	<u>Freezer</u>
Ham, canned, labeled “Keep Refrigerated,” unopened	6 to 9 months	Do not freeze
opened	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, whole	7 days	1 to 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, half	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, slices	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months
Hot Dogs & Lunch Meats		
Hot Dogs,		(in freezer wrap)
opened package	1 week	1 to 2 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
Lunch meats,		
opened package	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
Soups & Stews		
Vegetable or meat-added & mixtures of them	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Bacon & Sausage		
Bacon	7 days	1 month
Sausage, raw from pork, beef, chicken or turkey	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months
Smoked breakfast links, patties	7 days	1 to 2 months
Summer sausage, labeled “Keep Refrigerated,” unopened	3 months	1 to 2 months
opened	3 weeks	1 to 2 months
Fresh Meat (Beef, veal, Lamb, & Pork)		
Steaks	3 to 5 days	6 to 12 months
Chops	3 to 5 days	4 to 6 months
Roasts	3 to 5 days	4 to 12 months
Variety meats (tongue, kidneys, liver, heart, chitterlings)	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months

<u>Product</u>	<u>Refrigerator</u>	<u>Freezer</u>
Meat Leftovers		
Cooked meat & meat dishes	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Gravy & meat broth	1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months
Fresh Poultry		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1 to 2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey, parts	1 to 2 days	9 months
Giblets	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Cooked Poultry, Leftover		
Fried Chicken	3 to 4 days	4 months
Cooked poultry dishes	3 to 4 days	4 to 6 months
Pieces, plain	3 to 4 days	4 months
Pieces covered with broth		
Gravy	1 to 2 days	6 months
Chicken nuggets, patties	1 to 2 days	1 to 3 months
Fish and Shellfish		
Lean Fish	1 to 2 days	6 months
Fatty Fish	1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months
Cooked Fish	3 to 4 days	4 to 6 months
Smoked Fish	14 days	2 months
Fresh shrimp, scallops		
Crawfish, squid	1 to 2 days	3 to 6 months
Canned seafood	<i>after opening</i>	<i>out of can</i>
Pantry, 5 years	3 to 4 days	2 months
August 2009 PDA/OLTL		