

Refrigerator and Freezer Storage Charts

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For food safety reasons, it's important to store food at the correct temperature, and to follow recommended storage times. This is especially important for potentially hazardous foods, such as raw meat, poultry and seafood, as well as dairy items.

While frozen food can keep indefinitely, its quality will begin to degrade beyond the recommended times below. To prevent foods from absorbing off-odors or developing freezer burn, remove as much air as possible (using a vacuum sealer, if you have one) and store it in freezer bags or other appropriate containers.

Here are some recommended storage times for refrigerated and frozen foods. Remember, food can spoil even when stored properly, so be sure to check it before using. When in doubt, throw it out!

Raw Meat, Poultry and Seafood	Refrigerator (40°F / 4°C)	Freezer (0°F / -18°C)
Raw meat (chops, steaks and roasts)	3 to 4 days	6 to 12 months
Raw poultry (whole)	1 to 2 days	12 months
Raw poultry (pieces)	1 to 2 days	6 months
Raw meat and poultry (ground)	1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months
Raw bacon	1 week	1 month
Raw sausage (pork, beef, turkey)	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months
Raw fish	1 to 2 days	2 to 6 months
Raw shellfish	1 day	2 to 4 months
Whole eggs, in shell	3 to 4 weeks	Do not freeze
Raw egg whites	2 to 4 days	2 months
Raw egg yolks	2 to 4 days	2 months

Dairy Products	Refrigerator (40°F / 4°C)	Freezer (0°F / -18°C)
Milk	Check best before date	6 months
Milk, opened	3 to 5 days	6 months
Cottage cheese	Check best before date	Does not freeze well
Cottage cheese, opened	3 days	Does not freeze well
Yogurt	Check best before dates	1 to 2 months
Yogurt, opened	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Cheese, soft	1 week	Does not freeze well
Cheese, semi-soft	2 to 3 weeks	2 months
Cheese, hard	5 weeks	3 months
Butter, salted	8 weeks	12 months
Butter, unsalted	3 weeks	3 months
Butter, opened	3 weeks	Do not freeze



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Ready-to-Eat Items	Refrigerator (40°F / 4°C)	Freezer (0°F / -18°C)
Deli meats, opened	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Deli meats, unopened	2 weeks	1 to 2 months

Leftovers	Refrigerator (40°F / 4°C)	Freezer (0°F / -18°C)
Egg, chicken, ham, tuna and macaroni salads	3 to 4 days	Does not freeze well
Cooked meat, egg or vegetable dishes	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Soups and stews	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Cooked meat, poultry and seafood	3 to 4 days	2 to 6 months
Gravy and meat broths	1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months



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