

MORE MEALS



LESS WASTE

Product Shelf Life

Save money and prevent food waste by learning about the shelf life of the food that you buy. It can stop you from throwing hundreds of dollars' worth of food in the trash!

A food's "shelf life" is how long you can store a food before it goes bad. Knowing a food's shelf life will help make sure you use the food you buy BEFORE it goes to waste. It's a really helpful planning tool. Use it when grocery shopping to make sure you only buy items that you will use before they go bad.

Check it again when opening an item — so you know how long it will last before spoiling.

The handy charts on these pages show you how long many popular food items can be stored — before and after they've been opened.

CONDIMENTS & SAUCES

	PANTRY STORED	REFRIGERATION AFTER OPENING
Barbecue sauce (bottled)	1 year	4 months
Jams, jellies and preserves	6-18 months	6-12 months
Ketchup, cocktail or chili sauce	1 year	6 months
Mayonnaise, commercial	3-6 months	2 months
Mustard	1-2 years	1 year
Olives, black and green	12-18 months	2 weeks
Pickles	1 year	1-3 months
Salad dressing, commercial	10-12 months	1-3 months
Salsa, picante and taco sauces	1 year	1 month
Spaghetti sauce, in jars	18 months	4 days
Vinegar	2 years	
Worcestershire sauce	1 year	

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BABY FOOD

	PANTRY STORED	REFRIGERATION AFTER OPENING
Cereal, dry mixes	1 month, if pantry stored	Should be discarded after use-by date
Formula, prepared	1 hour, if pantry stored; 1 day, if refrigerated	Should be discarded after use-by date
Jars or pouches	2-3 days, if refrigerated	Should be discarded after use-by date
Liquid concentrate or ready-to-feed formula	2 days, if refrigerated	Should be discarded after use-by date

CANNED FOODS

	PANTRY STORED	REFRIGERATION AFTER OPENING
Beans	2-5 years	3-4 days
Fish: salmon, tuna, sardines, mackerel	2-5 years	3-4 days
Fruit	12-18 months	5-7 days
Juices	12-18 months	5-7 days
Meat: beef, chicken, pork, turkey	10-12 months	3-4 days
Soups	2-5 years	3-4 days
Tomato soup	12-18 months	5-7 days
Vegetables	2-5 years	3-4 days

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BAKING & COOKING

	PANTRY STORED	REFRIGERATION AFTER OPENING
Biscuit or Pancake mix	12 months	
Baking mixes (brownie, cake)	12-18 months	3-6 months pantry
Baking powder	6-18 months	6 months pantry
Baking soda	2-3 years	2 years pantry, 1 year refrigerated
Cornmeal, regular	6-22 months	2-4 months refrigerated
Cornmeal, stone ground or blue	1 month	6-8 months pantry, 1 year refrigerated
Flour, white	6-12 months	6-8 months refrigerated
Flour, whole wheat	3-6 months	2-3 weeks refrigerated
Frosting or icing	10-12 months	3-5 months pantry, 4 months refrigerated
Oils, olive or vegetable	6-12 months	3-4 months pantry
Pudding mixes (shelf stable)	12 months	6-12 months pantry
Shortening, solid	12-18 months	2-3 years pantry
Spices, ground	6-18 months	Indefinitely pantry
Sugar substitutes	2-3 years	18-24 months pantry
Sugar (brown, confectioners, granulates)	6-22 months	

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BAKERY

	PANTRY STORED	REFRIGERATION AFTER OPENING	FROZEN STORED
Commercial bread products (pan bread, flat bread, rolls and buns)	12 months	2-3 weeks	3-5 months
Commercial cakes and muffins	3-7 days	7-10 days	6 months
Cookies, crispy	4-6 months		8-12 months
Cookies, soft	2-3 months		8-12 months
Corn tortillas	7-10 days	6-8 weeks	6-8 months
Flour tortillas	1 week	3-4 weeks	6-8 months
Pita bread	2-4 days	4-7 days	4 months
Pastries, Danish	5-10 days	14 months	Do not freeze
Tortillas	3 months	3 months	6 months
Whole wheat tortillas	1 week	3-4 weeks	6-8 months

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DAIRY PRODUCTS & EGGS

	REFRIGERATOR	FROZEN
Butter	1-2 months	6-9 months
Buttermilk	1-2 weeks	3 months
Cheese, hard (cheddar, Swiss, block Parmesan)	6 months, 3-4 weeks, if refrigerated after opening	6 months
Cheese, processed slices	3-4 weeks	
Cheese, shredded (cheddar, mozzarella, etc.)	1 month	3-4 months
Cheese, soft (Brie, Bel Paese)	1-2 weeks	6 months
Coffee creamer, liquid refrigerated	3 weeks	
Cottage cheese, ricotta	2 weeks, 1 week, if refrigerated after opening	
Cream cheese	2 weeks	
Cream, half-and-half	3-4 days	4 months
Cream, heavy	10 days	3-4 months
Cream, light	1 week	3-4 months
Egg substitutes, liquid	7 days	
Eggs, in shell	3 days, if refrigerated after opening	
Margarine	3-5 weeks	12 months
Milk, plain or flavored	6 months	3 months
Pudding	1 week	
Sour cream	Package use-by date	
Whipped cream, aerosol can	3-4 weeks	
Whipped topping, aerosol can	3 months	
Whipped topping, tub	2 weeks	14 months
Yogurt	1-2 weeks	1-2 months

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DELI & PREPARED FOODS

	REFRIGERATOR	FROZEN
Cooked pasta	3-5 days	1-2 months
Cooked rice	4-6 days	6 months
Fruit, cut	Package use-by date 4 days, if refrigerated after opening	
Guacamole	3-4 days	3-4 months
Hummus, commercial	3 months 7 days if refrigerated after opening	
Hummus, traditional	7 days	
Pizza	3-4 days	1-2 months
Leftovers (without meat, fish, poultry or egg; i.e., cooked vegetables, rice or potatoes)	3-4 days	1-2 months
Leftovers (with meat, fish, poultry or egg)	3-4 days	2-3 months
Luncheon meat or poultry, pre-packaged	2 weeks 3-5 days, if refrigerated after opening	1-2 months
Luncheon meat or poultry, store-sliced	3-5 days	1-2 months
Main dishes or meals, hot or refrigerated	3-4 days	2-3 months
Meats, covered with gravy or broth	3-4 days	6 months
Salads (containing meat, fish, poultry or eggs)	3-4 days	
Salads (vegetable)	3-5 days	
Soups, stews	3-4 days	2-3 months

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FOOD PURCHASED FROZEN

	FROZEN
Bread, bagels	3 months
Chicken, nuggets/patties	2 months
Desserts, frozen baked goods	3-4 months
Desserts, frozen cream pies	1-2 months
Desserts, frozen fruit pies	6-8 months
Dough, commercial (bread or cookie)	6 months
Egg substitutes	7 days, if refrigerated after opening, 12 months frozen
Fish, breaded	18 months
Fish, raw but headed and gutted	6 months
Frozen potato products (fries, hash browns, tater tots)	6-12 months
Fruits	4-6 months
Ice cream	2-4 months
Ice pops	9 months
Juice concentrates	1-2 years
Pancakes, waffles	2 months
Sausages, precooked	1-2 months
Sausages, uncooked	1-2 months
Soy meat substitutes	12-18 months
TV dinners: pies, casseroles, shrimp, ham, pork or sausage	3-4 months
TV dinners: beef, turkey, chicken or fish	6 months
Vegetables	8 months

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GRAINS, BEANS & PASTA

	PANTRY STORED	PANTRY STORED AFTER OPENING
Beans, dried	1-2 years	1 year
Lentils, dried	1 year	1 year
Pasta, dry (without egg)	2 years	1 year
Pasta, dry (egg noodles)	2 years	1-2 months
Peas, dried split	1 year	1 year
Rice, brown		1 year
Rice, white or wild		6 months, if refrigerated after 1 year

BEVERAGES

	PANTRY STORED	PANTRY STORED AFTER OPENING	STORED FROZEN
Coffee, ground (non-vacuum)	3-5 months	3-5 months	1-2 years
Coffee, instant	1 year	2-3 months	3-4 months
Coffee, whole beans	3-5 months	3-5 months	8-12 days
Fruit juice in cartons, punch juice, boxes	3 weeks	7-12 days	8-12 days
Soda (carbonated cola drinks, mixers, diet soda, bottles or cans)	Use-by date		2-3 days
Soy or rice beverages	18-36 months		
Tea, bags	2-3 years		
Tea, instant	2 years		
Tea, loose	Indefinitely		

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MEAT & FISH/SEAFOOD

	REFRIGERATOR	FROZEN
Beef: roasts, steaks	3-5 days	4-12 months
Pork: roasts, chops	3-5 days	4-12 months
Lamb: roasts, steaks/chops	3-5 days	4-12 months
Crab, canned	6 months unopened, 5-7 days opened	Do not freeze
Crab, legs	3-5 days	9-12 months
Fatty fish (bluefish, catfish, mackerel, mullet, salmon, tuna, etc.)	1-2 days	2-3 months
Ground meats (beef, pork, lamb, poultry)	1-2 days	3-4 months
Lean fish (cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, sole, etc.)	1-2 days	6-10 months
Lean fish (pollock, ocean perch, rockfish, sea trout)	1-2 days	4-8 months
Lobster tails, raw	4-5 days	6-9 months
Poultry: chicken or turkey, whole cuts	1-2 days	12 months
Shrimp, raw	2 days	9 months
Scallops, raw	1-2 days	3-6 months
Bacon	1 week	1 month
Chicken nuggets/patties		1-3 months
Chicken, fried or rotisserie	3-4 days	4 months
Ham	1 week	
Hot dogs	2 weeks, 1 week, if refrigerated after opening	1-2 months
Sausage, hard/dry/sliced (pepperoni)	2-3 weeks	1-2 months
Sausage, raw bulk type or patties	1-2 days	1-2 months
Sausage, fully cooked smoked links/kielbasa	1 week	1-2 months

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SHELF-STABLE FOODS

	PANTRY STORED	PANTRY STORED AFTER OPENING	REFRIGERATED AFTER OPENING
Almond milk, shelf-stable	1 month		
Applesauce, commercial	12-18 months	Not recommended	7-10 days
Bacon, fully cooked	6 months		5-14 days
Canned chicken	5 years		3-4 days
Cereal, cook before eating (oatmeal)	12 months	6-12 months	
Chocolate syrup	2 years	Not recommended	6 months
Coconut milk, shelf-stable	1 month		
Coffee creamer, liquid shelf-stable	9-12 months		
Crackers	8 months	1 month	3-4 months
Fruits, dried	6 months	1 month	6 months
Ham, shelf-stable cans	6-9 months		5-14 days
Juice, shelf-stable bottles	9 months		
Milk, canned evaporated or condensed	12 months		4-5 days
Milk, shelf-stable UHT	6 months		
Meat products, canned	5 years		3-4 days
Nuts, jars or cans	1 year	2-9 months	4-6 months
Nutritional aid supplements (Boost, etc.)	1 year		
Peanut butter, commercial	6-24 months	2-3 months	
Popcorn, commercially popped in bags	2-3 months	1-2 weeks	
Popcorn, dry kernels in jar	2 years	1 year	
Popcorn, microwave packets	6-12 months	1-2 days	
Potato chips	Use-by date, 2 months	1-2 weeks	
Potatoes, instant	10-15 months	6-12 months	
Powdered milk	2-10 years		
Pretzels	4-9 months	3 weeks	
Pudding mixes	1 year	3-4 months	
Soup mixes, dry bouillon	1 year	1 year	
Syrup	1 year		6 months
Toaster pastries	6-12 months	1-2 weeks	

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