

Refrigerator & Freezer Storage Chart

Have you ever wondered how long you should keep things in the refrigerator or freezer? If so, then the chart below can help. Some additional tips to prevent foodborne illness are given below:

- Make sure your refrigerator is set at 40 degrees or cooler.
- Do not consume washed and cut bagged produce (including salads and mixed greens) after the sell-by date.
- Store raw meat and poultry in a pan on the lowest shelf in the refrigerator to prevent any juices from dripping on other foods.
- Follow handling and storage directions noted on food packages.

Freezing food at 0 degrees or colder keeps food safe indefinitely so the recommended freezer times are for quality purposes only. If you are freezing meat and poultry in its original package for longer than 2 months, overwrap the packages with heavy aluminum foil, plastic wrap, or freezer paper to preserve quality.

Product	Refrigerator	Freezer	Product	Refrigerator	Freezer
Eggs			Bacon & Sausage		
Fresh, in shell	4-5 weeks	Don't freeze	Bacon	7 days	1 month
Raw yolks, white	2-4 days	1 Year	Sausage, raw (pork, beef, chicken, or turkey)	1-2 days	1-2 months
Hard cooked (<i>in shell</i>)	1 week	Don't freeze well	Smoked breakfast links, patties	7 days	1-2 months
Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes			Summer sausage labeled "Keep Refrigerated"		
opened	3 days	Don't freeze	unopened	3 months	1-2 months
unopened	10 days	1 year	opened	3 weeks	1-2 months
Deli and Vacuum-Packed Products			Fresh Meat (Beef, Veal, Lamb, & Pork)		
Egg, chicken, tuna, ham, or macaroni salad	3-5 days	Don't freeze well	Steaks	3-5 days	6-12 months
Store cooked convenience meals	3-4 days	Don't freeze well	Chops	3-5 days	4-6 months
			Roasts	3-5 days	4-12 months
			Variety Meats (tongue, kidneys)	1-2 days	3-4 months
Raw Hamburger, Ground & Stew Meat			Meat Leftovers		
Hamburger & stew meats	1-2 days	3-4 months	Cooked meat & meat dishes	3-4 days	2-3 months
Ground meat and poultry	1-2 days	3-4 months	Gravy & meat broth	1-2 days	2-3 months
Ham, Corned Beef			Fresh Poultry		
Corned beef in pouch with pickling juices	5-7 days	Drained, 1 month	Chicken or turkey, whole	1-2 days	1 year
Ham, canned, labeled "Keep Refrigerated,"			Chicken or turkey, parts	1-2 days	9 months
unopened	6-9 months	Don't freeze			
opened	3-5 days	1-2 months	Cooked Poultry, Leftover		
Ham, fully cooked, whole	7 days	1-2 months	Fried Chicken	3-4 days	4 months
Ham, fully cooked, slices	3-4 days	1-2 months	Cooked poultry dishes	3-4 days	4-6 months
			Pieces covered with broth, gravy	1-2 days	6 months
Hot Dogs & Lunch Meats			Chicken nuggets, patties	1-2 days	1-3 months
Hot dogs,		(in freezer wrap)	Fish & Shellfish		
opened package	1 week	1-2 months	Lean Fish	1-2 days	6 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1-2 months	Fatty fish	1-2 days	2-3 months
Lunch meats,			Cooked fish	3-4 days	4-6 months
opened package	3-5 days	1-2 months	Smoked fish	2 weeks	2 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1-2 months	Fresh shrimp, scallops, crawfish, squid	1-2 days	3-6 months
Soups & Stews			Canned Seafood	<i>after opening</i>	<i>out of can</i>
Vegetable or meat-added & mixtures of them	3-4 days	2-3 months	Pantry, 5 years	3-4 days	2 months



Adapted from FDA refrigerator and freezer guidelines: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/ResourcesForYou/HealthEducators/UCM109315.pdf>

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