

# Food Handlers' Storage Guide

General guidelines for the shelf life of common foods. Read the label and check 'best before' dates if applicable. Most foods are safe to eat if stored longer, but flavour and nutritional value will deteriorate. Discard if there is evidence of spoilage.

## Cupboard

(room temperature)

Unless otherwise specified, times apply to unopened packages.

### Cereal Grains

(once opened, store in airtight containers, away from light and heat)	
Bread crumbs (dry)	3 mo.
Cereals (ready-to-eat)	8 mo.
Cornmeal	6-8 mo.
Crackers	6 mo.
Pasta	several yr.
Rice	several yr.
Rolled oats	6-10 mo.
White flour	1 yr.
Whole wheat flour	3 mo.

### Canned Foods

(once opened, store covered in airtight container in refrigerator)	
Evaporated milk	9-12 mo.
Other canned foods	1 yr.

### Dry Foods

(once opened, store in airtight containers, away from light and heat)	
Baking powder, baking soda	1 yr.
Beans, peas, lentils	1 yr.
Chocolate (baking)	7 mo.
Cocoa	10-12 mo.
Coffee (ground)	1 mo.
Coffee (instant)	1 yr.
Coffee whitener	6 mo.
Fruit (dried)	1 yr.
Gelatin	1 yr.
Jelly powder	2 yr.
Mixes (cake, pancake, and biscuit)	1 yr.
Mixes (pie filling and pudding)	18 mo.
Mixes (main dish accompaniments)	9-12 mo.
Potatoes (flakes)	1 yr.

### Skim milk powder

- unopened	1 yr.
- opened	1 mo.
Sugar (all types)	several yr.
Tea bags	1 yr.

### Miscellaneous Foods

Honey	18 mo.
Jam, jellies (once opened, covered in fridge)	1 yr.
Mayonnaise, salad dressings	
- unopened	6 mo.
- opened (covered in fridge)	1-2 mo.
Molasses	2 yr.
Nuts	1 mo.
Peanut butter	
- unopened	6 mo.
- opened	2 mo.

Pectin - liquid	1 yr.
- opened (covered in fridge)	1 mo.
- powdered	2 yr.
Sandwich spread	
(once opened, covered in fridge)	8 mo.
Syrups - corn, maple, table	1 yr.
Vegetable oils	
(once opened, covered in fridge)	1 yr.
Vinegar	several yr.
Yeast (dry)	1 yr.

### Vegetables

Potatoes, rutabaga, squash	1 wk.
Tomatoes	1 wk.
Cool room (7-10°C, 45-50°F)	
Onions (dry, yellow skin)	6 wk.
Potatoes (mature)	6 mo.
Rutabaga (waxed)	several mo.
Squash (winter)	several mo.

## Refrigerator

(4°C, 40°F)

Unless otherwise specified, cover all foods.

### Dairy Products & Eggs

(check 'best before' dates)	
Butter	
- unopened	8 wk.
- opened	3 wk.
Cheese	
- cottage (opened)	3 days
- firm	several mo.
- processed (unopened)	several mo.
- processed (opened)	3-4 wk.
Eggs	3 wk.
Margarine	
- unopened	8 mo.
- opened	1 mo.
Milk, cream, yogurt (opened)	3 days

### Fish & Shellfish

Clams, crab, lobster and mussels (live)	12-24 hr.
Fish (cleaned)	
- raw	3-4 days
- cooked	1-2 days

Oysters (live)	24 hr.
Scallops, shrimp (raw)	1-2 days
Shellfish (cooked)	1-2 days

### Fresh Fruit (Ripe)

Apples	2 mo.
- purchased February to July	2 wk.
Apricots (store uncovered)	1 wk.
Blueberries (store uncovered)	1 wk.
Cherries	3 days
Cranberries (store uncovered)	1 wk.
Grapes	5 days
Peaches (store uncovered)	1 wk.
Pears (store uncovered)	1 wk.
Plums	5 days
Raspberries (store uncovered)	2 days
Rhubarb	1 wk.
Strawberries (store uncovered)	2 days

### Fresh Vegetables

Asparagus	5 days
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Beans (green, wax)	5 days
Beets	3-4 wk.
Broccoli	3 days
Brussels sprouts	1 wk.
Cabbage	2 wk.
Carrots	several wk.
Cauliflower	10 days
Celery	2 wk.
Corn	use same day
Cucumbers	1 wk.
Lettuce	1 wk.
Mushrooms	5 days
Onions (green)	1 wk.
Parsnips	several wks.
Peas	use same day
Peppers (green, red, etc.)	1 wk.
Potatoes (new)	1 wk.
Spinach	2 days
Sprouts	2 days
Squash (summer)	1 wk.

### Meat & Poultry

<i>Uncooked</i>	
Chops, steaks	2-3 days
Cured or smoked meat	6-7 days
Ground meat	1-2 days
Poultry	2-3 days
Roasts	3-4 days
Variety meats, giblets	1-2 days
<i>Cooked</i>	
All meats and poultry	3-4 days
Casseroles, meat pies meat sauces	2-3 days
Soups	2-3 days

### Miscellaneous Foods

Coffee (ground)	2 mo.
Nuts	4 mo.
Shortening	12 mo.
Whole wheat flour	3 mo.

## Freezer

(-18°C, 0°F)

Use freezer wrapping or airtight containers. Freeze fresh food at its peak condition.

### Dairy Products & Fats

Butter	
- salted	1 yr.
- unsalted	3 mo.
Cheese - firm, processed	3 mo.
Cream - table, whipping (separates when thawed)	1 mo.
Ice cream	1 mo.
Margarine	6 mo.
Milk	6 wk.

### Fish & Shellfish

Fish (fat species: lake trout, mackerel, salmon)	2 mo.
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Fish (lean species: cod, haddock, pike, smelt)	6 mo.
Shellfish	2-4 mo.

### Fruits & Vegetables

	1 yr.
<b>Meat, Poultry &amp; Eggs</b>	
<i>Uncooked</i>	
Beef (roasts, steaks)	10-12 mo.
Chicken, turkey	
- cut up	6 mo.
- whole	1 yr.
Cured or smoked meat	1-2 mo.

Duck, goose	3 mo.
Eggs (whites, yolks)	4 mo.
Ground meat	2-3 mo.
Lamb (chops, roasts)	8-12 mo.
Pork (chops, roasts)	8-12 mo.
Sausages, wieners	2-3 mo.
Variety meats, giblets	3-4 mo.
Veal (chops, roasts)	8-12 mo.
<i>Cooked</i>	
All meat	2-3 mo.
All poultry	1-3 mo.
Casseroles, meat pies	3 mo.

### Miscellaneous Foods

Bean, lentil, pea, casseroles	3-6 mo.
Breads (baked or unbaked, yeast)	1 mo.
Cakes, cookies (baked)	4 mo.
Herbs	1 yr.
Pastries, quick bread (baked)	1 mo.
Pastry crust (unbaked)	2 mo.
Pie (fruit, unbaked)	6 mo.
Sandwiches	6 wk.
Soups (stocks, cream)	4 mo.