

How to store fruits and vegetables

APPLES -- Shelf Life: 5-26 weeks

Coldest part of the fridge. Softens after some months, but fine for cooking after that.

APRICOTS -- Shelf Life: 5-7 days

Remove from all packaging. Usually needs more ripening on countertop, but then refrigerate immediately when ripe.

ASPARAGUS -- Shelf Life: Up to 10 days

Cold part of the fridge, with the cut end in an inch or two of water. Upright, in a plastic container.

BASIL, ALL TYPES -- Shelf Life: 2-5 days

Cut stems in vase with water on countertop is best, or in the warmest part of the refrigerator. Excessive cold blackens the leaves.

BEANS (DRIED) -- Shelf Life: Best to use within a year

Pantry in air tight container.

BEANS (LIMA) -- Shelf Life: Up to 10 days

Refrigerator. Shell as soon as pods slightly soften.

BEANS (SNAP) -- Shelf Life: Up to 7 days

Refrigerator; keep in the bag. Wash just before using. Must be dry before storing.

BEETS -- Shelf Life: Roots: 5 weeks; greens: 5 days

Best in fridge, but OK in basement. Separate greens - must be refrigerated. Wash greens just before cooking.

BLACKBERRIES -- Shelf Life: 3-5 days

Must be refrigerated: coldest part of fridge. If storing in a plastic container, pack loosely. It's also okay to store in an open container. Wash right before eating/using. Excess water leads to fungal growth.

BLUEBERRIES -- Shelf Life: 1 - 2 weeks

Must be refrigerated: coldest part of fridge. Wash only before eating/using. Excess water leads to fungal growth.

BROCCOLI -- Shelf Life: 1 - 2 weeks

Refrigerate in coldest part of fridge.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS -- Shelf Life: Keeps 3-4 weeks

Coldest part of the fridge.

CABBAGE -- Shelf Life: Refrigerated up to 4 months

Best anywhere in the fridge. Can be stored in a very cold basement if needed, but not ideal.

CABBAGE - Chinese -- Shelf Life: 5-21 days

Any part of fridge.

CARROTS -- Shelf Life: 3 months, properly stored

Coldest part of the fridge. Best to store dry (in a bag). If they are too wet they will start to sprout or rot. Out of the bag they begin to go flaccid. Cellar only with great care.

CAULIFLOWER -- Shelf Life: 1 - 2 weeks

Refrigerate in coldest part of fridge.

CELERIAC -- Shelf Life: Up to 3 months

Fridge is best, but pantry or cellar works okay too.

CELERY -- Shelf Life: 1 - 3 weeks

Coldest part of fridge. Leaves like to be dry in a bag. Stems like to be loose in a bag.

CHERRIES -- Shelf Life: 2-6 days

Immediate refrigeration is safest. Wash upon receipt. Drain well before storing in an open container.

CHIVES -- Shelf Life: 4 - 7 days

Dry, loose in a plastic bag in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Wash just before using.

CILANTRO -- Shelf Life: 3 - 14 days

Washed, drained and then refrigerated. In a sealed Tupperware, with a paper towel or cloth underneath to help regulate the moisture.

CORN (SWEET) -- Shelf Life: Best to eat immediately, but will retain sweetness up to 4 days Coldest part of the fridge. Typically loses sweetness during storage.

CUCUMBERS -- Shelf Life: 3-10 days

Refrigerate.

DILL -- Shelf Life: 3 - 14 days

Washed, drained and then refrigerated. In a sealed Tupperware, with a paper towel or cloth underneath to help regulate the moisture.

EDAMAME (SOY BEANS) -- Shelf Life: 7 days

Store refrigerated, unwashed.

EGGPLANT -- Shelf Life: 7-10 days upon refrigeration

On counter until ripe and soft (and a little wrinkly) -- this is sweetest and most tender. Then put in fridge.

FENNEL BULBS -- Shelf Life: 1 - 3 weeks

Coldest part of fridge. Leaves like to be dry in a bag. Stems like to be loose in a bag.

GARLIC -- Shelf Life: Best flavor when eaten within 6 weeks, but can keep up to 4 months. Pantry.

GRAPES -- Shelf Life: Typically 3 - 10 days

Coldest part of fridge, in an open container.

GREENS

All greens should be washed and drained before storing in the refrigerator. Longest shelf life is had by placing greens on top of a paper towel or clean cloth inside of a lidded Tupperware container. Whole heads store longer and better than cut leaves.

GREEN BEANS/STRING BEANS -- Shelf Life: 3- 10 days

Refrigerator - loose and dry.

HORSERADISH -- Shelf Life: Many months

Coldest part of fridge.

JERUSALEM ARTICHOKEs -- Shelf Life: Many months

Coldest part of fridge, loose and dry in paper or plastic bag.

KOHLRABI -- Shelf Life: 1 - 6 weeks

Coldest part of fridge, loose and dry in plastic bag.

LEEKs -- Shelf Life: 5 - 30 days

Coldest part of fridge, loose and dry in plastic bag.

MELONS (HONEYDEW, CANTALOUPE) -- Shelf Life: Up to 2 weeks (after ripe) in fridge

On counter until ripe. Refrigerating will slow or stop the ripening if necessary. Cantaloupe smells ripe from the stem end when perfect.

MINT -- Shelf Life: 2-5 days

Cut stems in vase with water on countertop is best, or in the warmest part of the refrigerator. Excessive cold blackens the leaves.

MUSHROOMS -- Shelf Life: 3 - 10 days

Loose in open container in fridge; never in closed plastic bag.

NECTARINES -- Shelf Life: Once ripened and refrigerated: 3 - 5 days

On countertop, loose and separated on platter, until just soft. Fruit should sit on its shoulders. Once ripe, eat within 12 hours or refrigerate.

OKRA -- Shelf Life: 3-7 days
Refrigerated, dry and loose in bag.

ONIONS (DRY SKIN) -- Shelf Life: 2 - 20 weeks
Pantry or basement.

ONIONS (GREEN AND SPRING) -- Shelf Life: 3-14 days
Must be refrigerated.

OREGANO -- Shelf Life: 2 - 5 days
Do not wash! Store loose in a bag in the warmest part of refrigerator. Best if used immediately.

PARSLEY -- Shelf Life: 4 - 21 days
Washed, drained and then refrigerated. In a sealed Tupperware, with a paper towel or cloth underneath to help regulate the moisture.

PARSNIPS -- Shelf Life: 3 months
Coldest part of the fridge. Best to store dry (in a bag). If they are too wet they will start to sprout or rot. Out of the bag they begin to go flaccid. Cellar only with great care.

PEACHES -- Shelf Life: Once ripened and refrigerated: 3 - 5 days
On countertop, loose and separated on platter, until just soft. Fruit should sit on its shoulders. Once ripe, eat within 12 hours or refrigerate.

PEARS -- Shelf Life: Once ripened and refrigerated: 3 - 14 days
Counter top, loose and separated on platter, until just soft. Once ripe, eat within 12 hours or refrigerate.

PEAS (BLACK-EYED, CROWDERS AND OTHER COWPEAS) -- Shelf Life: Up to 10 days
Refrigerator. Shell as soon as pods soften.

PEAS (ENGLISH) -- Shelf Life: 1 - 3 weeks, but sweetest eaten within 1-4 days after harvest
Refrigerator, keep in the bag. Shell as soon as pods soften.

PEAS (SNOW, SUGAR SNAP) -- Shelf Life: 3 - 14 days
Coldest part of fridge.

PEPPERS (GREEN - SWEET) -- Shelf Life: 1 - 5 weeks
Refrigerate, loose and dry.

PEPPERS (HOT) -- Shelf Life: 1 - 5 weeks
Refrigerate, loose and dry.

PEPPERS (RED - SWEET) -- Shelf Life: 3 - 21 days
Refrigerate, loose and dry.

PLUMS -- Shelf Life: Once ripened and refrigerated: 3 - 5 days.
On countertop, loose and separated on platter, until just soft. Once ripe, eat within 12 hours or refrigerate.

POTATOES (IRISH) -- Shelf Life: Up to 4 months in fridge, 6 weeks in pantry
Pantry, cellar or warmest part of the fridge. Very cold temperatures lead to increased sugar/sweetness; nice for some people, unexpected for others. New potatoes, on the other hand, must be refrigerated.

POTATOES (SWEET) -- Shelf Life: 5 weeks - 8 months, depending on variety and previous handling
Hate refrigeration: NEVER in fridge. Basement or Pantry. Ideally at 55 - 65F, but tolerates up to 80F or higher.

PUMPKINS -- Shelf Life: 3 - 8 weeks
In a cool basement (55 -65F) or pantry. Hate refrigeration.

RADISHES -- Shelf Life: 1 - 5 weeks
Washed, drained and then refrigerated, in a Tupperware, with a paper towel or cloth underneath to help regulate the moisture.

RASPBERRIES -- Shelf Life: 1-3 days
Must be refrigerated in coldest part of fridge. If storing in a plastic container, pack loosely. Okay to store in an open container. Wash only before eating/using: excessive or premature washing leads to fungal growth.

RHUBARB -- Shelf Life: 5 - 21 days
Store loose and dry in a plastic bag in any part of the refrigerator.

ROSEMARY -- Shelf Life: 1 - 2 weeks
Do not wash! Store dried, loose in a bag in any part of refrigerator.

RUTABAGA -- Shelf Life: 2 - 7 weeks
Loose and dry in any part of the refrigerator.

SAGE -- Shelf Life: 2 - 5 days
Do not wash! Store loose in a bag in the warmest part of refrigerator. Best if used immediately.

SQUASH BLOSSOMS -- Shelf Life: 1-3 days
Refrigerate ASAP! Store in a lidded tupperware with a moist papertowel in the bottom.

SQUASH, SUMMER (ALL) -- Shelf Life: 3-10 days
Refrigerate.

SQUASH, WINTER (ACORN, BUTTERCUP, DELICATA, HUBBARD, KABOCHA) -- Shelf Life: 3 - 8 weeks
In a cool basement (55 -65F). Hate refrigeration.

SQUASH, WINTER (BUTTERNUT, SPAGHETTI) -- Shelf Life: 3 weeks - 4 months
In a cool basement (55 -65F). Hate refrigeration.

STRAWBERRIES -- Shelf Life: 1-3 days
Must be refrigerated in coldest part of fridge. If storing in a plastic container, pack loosely. Best to store in an open container. Wash only before eating/using: excessive or premature washing leads to fungal growth.

TARRAGON -- Shelf Life: 4 - 7 days
Dry, loose in a plastic bag in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Wash just before using. You can also pack it in vinegar upon receipt -- it will keep indefinitely that way.

THYME -- Shelf Life: 1 - 2 weeks
Do not wash! Store loose in a bag in any part of refrigerator.

TOMATOES, BIG SLICING -- Shelf Life: Once ripened and refrigerated: 3 - 5 days
Countertop, loose and separated on platter, until just soft. On shoulders as per peaches and nectarines.

TOMATOES, CHERRY -- Shelf Life: In refrigerator: 7 - 10 days
Assuming they arrive ripe, eat within 12 hours or refrigerate. If underripe, store in open container on counter until fully ripe.

TOMATOES, PLUMS -- Shelf Life: In refrigerator: up to 10 days
Store loose on counter, separated from each other, until ripe. Use or refrigerate within 24 hours.

TURNIPS -- Shelf Life: 2 - 7 weeks
Loose and dry in any part of the refrigerator.

WATERMELON -- Shelf Life: 3 - 5 weeks
Counter storage will not help ripening, but much more tolerant of pantry, fridge or basement storage than other melons.

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