

# Food Safety Education

FDA Center for Food  
Safety and Applied Nutrition

September  
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USDA Food Safety  
and Inspection Service

## Cold Storage Chart

Product	Refrigerator (40 °F)	Freezer (0 °F)
<b>Eggs</b>		
Fresh, in shell	3 to 5 weeks	Don't freeze
Raw yolks, whites	2 to 4 weeks	1 year
Hardcooked	1 week	Don't freeze well
Liquid pasteurized eggs, egg substitutes, opened	3 days	Don't freeze well
unopened	10 days	1 year
<b>Mayonnaise</b>		
commercial refrigerate after opening	2 months	Doesn't freeze
<b>Deli &amp; Vacuum-Packed Products</b>		
Store-prepared (or homemade) egg, chicken, ham, tuna, macaroni salads	3 to 5 days	Doesn't freeze well
<b>Hot dogs &amp; Luncheon Meats</b>		
Hot dogs, opened package	1 week	1 to 2 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1 to 2 months

Luncheon meats, opened package	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
unopened package	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
<b>Bacon &amp; Sausage</b>		
Bacon	7 days	1 month
Sausage, raw from chicken, turkey, pork, beef	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months
Smoked breakfast links, patties	7 days	1 to 2 months
Hard sausage—pepperoni, jerky sticks	2 to 3 weeks	1 to 2 months
Summer sausage—labeled "Keep Refrigerated"		
opened	3 weeks	1 to 2 months
unopened	3 months	1 to 2 months
<b>Ham, Corned Beef</b>		
Corned beef, in pouch with pickling juices	5 to 7 days	Drained, 1 month
Ham, canned—labeled "Keep Refrigerated"		
opened	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
unopened	6 to 9 months	Doesn't freeze
Ham, fully cooked vacuum sealed at plant, undated, unopened	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
Ham, fully cooked vacuum sealed at plant, dated, unopened	"use by" date on package	1 to 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, whole	7 days	1 to 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, half	3 to 5 days	1 to 2 months
Ham, fully cooked, slices	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months
<b>Hamburger, Ground &amp; Stew Meat</b>		

Hamburger & stew meat	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Ground turkey, veal, pork, lamb & mixtures of them	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
<b>Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb, Pork</b>		
Steaks	3 to 5 days	6 to 12 months
Chops	3 to 5 days	4 to 6 months
Roasts	3 to 5 days	4 to 12 months
Variety meats—tongue, liver, heart, kidneys, chitterlings	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Pre-stuffed, uncooked pork chops, lamb chops, or chicken breast stuffed with dressing	1 day	Don't freeze well
<b>Soup &amp; Stews</b>		
Vegetable or meat added	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
<b>Meat Leftovers</b>		
Cooked meat and meat casseroles	3 to 4 days	2 to 3 months
Gravy and meat broth	1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months
<b>Fresh Poultry</b>		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1 to 2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey, pieces	1 to 2 days	9 months
Giblets	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
<b>Cooked Poultry</b>		
Fried chicken	3 to 4 days	4 months
Cooked poultry casseroles	3 to 4 days	4 to 6 months
Pieces, plain	3 to 4 days	4 months
Pieces covered with broth, gravy	1 to 2 days	6 months
Chicken nuggets, patties	1 to 2 days	1 to 3 months

<b>Pizza</b>		
Pizza	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months
<b>Stuffing</b>		
Stuffing—cooked	3 to 4 days	1 month
<b>Beverages, Fruit</b>		
Juices in cartons, fruit drinks, punch	3 weeks unopened 7 to 10 days opened	8 to 12 months
<b>Dairy</b>		
Butter	1 to 3 months	6 to 9 months
Buttermilk	7 to 14 days	3 months
Cheese, Hard (such as Cheddar, Swiss)	6 months, unopened 3 to 4 weeks, opened	6 months
Cheese Soft (such as Brie, Bel Paese)	1 week	6 months
Cottage Cheese, Ricotta	1 week	Doesn't freeze well
Cream Cheese	2 weeks	Doesn't freeze well
Cream—Whipped, ultrapasteurized	1 month	Doesn't freeze
Cream—Whipped, Sweetened	1 day	1 to 2 months
Cream—Aerosol can, real whipped cream	3 to 4 weeks	Doesn't freeze
Cream—Aerosol can, non dairy topping	3 months	Doesn't freeze
Cream, Half and Half	3 to 4 days	4 months
Eggnog, commercial	3 to 5 days	6 months
Margarine	4 to 5 months	12 months
Milk	7 days	3 months
Pudding	package date; 2 days after opening	Doesn't freeze
Sour cream	7 to 21 days	Doesn't freeze

Yogurt	7 to 14 days	1 to 2 months
<b>Dough</b>		
Tube cans of rolls, biscuits, pizza dough, etc.	Use-by-date	Don't freeze
Ready-to-bake pie crust	Use-by-date	2 months
Cookie dough	Use-by-date unopened or opened	2 months
<b>Fish</b>		
Lean fish (cod, flounder, haddock, sole, etc.)	1 to 2 days	6 months
Fatty fish (bluefish, mackerel, salmon, etc.)	1 to 2 days	2 to 3 months
Cooked fish	3 to 4 days	4 to 6 months
Smoked fish	14 days or date on vacuum package	2 months in vacuum package
<b>Shellfish</b>		
Shrimp, scallops, crayfish, squid, shucked clams, mussels and oysters	1 to 2 days	3 to 6 months
Live clams, mussels, crab, lobster and oysters	2 to 3 days	2 to 3 months
Cooked shellfish	3 to 4 days	3 months

**Note:** These short but safe time limits will help keep refrigerated foods from spoiling or becoming dangerous to eat.

Because freezing keeps food safe indefinitely, recommended storage times are for quality only.

Storage times are from date of purchase unless specified on chart. It is not important if a date expires after food is frozen.

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### Sources:



USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service



*The Food Keeper*, The Food Marketing Institute

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Food Safety and Inspection Service  
[www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)

U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition  
[www.cfsan.fda.gov](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov)

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline  
**1 (800) 535-4555**  
In Washington, DC: (202) 720-3333  
TTY: 1 (800) 256-7072

FDA Food Information Line  
**1 (888) SAFEFOOD** (toll-free)

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<sup>SM</sup> **International Food Safety Council**

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