

How to store food in the fridge and freezer

MEAT

	FRIDGE	FREEZER	STORAGE TIP
Sausages and mince	In original packaging or in a glass or ceramic dish covered in foil for 1-2 days only.	In sealed freezer bags or containers for 2-3 months.	If storing in the freezer, label the package with date of storage and expiry date to ensure you eat within the recommended timeframe.
Chops and steaks	In original packaging for one to two days or in a glass or ceramic dish covered in foil for 3-4 days.	In sealed freezer bags or containers for 4-6 months.	Plastic can cause meat to sweat so if storing in the fridge for more than a day, transfer the meat to a ceramic dish and cover loosely with foil to allow air to circulate.
Cold meats	Unopened in a factory sealed package for 1-2 months. Opened packages or deli-sliced meats, 3-5 days.	In sealed freezer bags or containers for 4-6 months.	Always keep cold meat at the back of the fridge, where it is coldest, for optimum freshness.
Roasts	In original vacuum sealed packaging for 3-5 days.	In original vacuum sealed packaging for up to 12 months.	Frozen roasts can take up to 48 hours to defrost properly. So, transfer your frozen roast to the fridge two days before you intend to cook it.

POULTRY

	FRIDGE	FREEZER	STORAGE TIP
Chicken	In original packaging for 1-2 days.	In original packaging for up to 2 months and in well-sealed, double-wrapped packaging or airtight containers for up to 6 months.	If in doubt, throw it out – if your chicken takes on a smell that you are not sure about or starts changing colour it's best to throw it out.
Roast chicken	In original vacuum sealed packaging for 3-5 days.	In original vacuum sealed packaging for up to 12 months.	Frozen roasts can take up to 48 hours to defrost properly. So, transfer your frozen roast to the fridge two days before you intend to cook it.

SEAFOOD

	FRIDGE	FREEZER	STORAGE TIP
Whole fish and fillets	In an airtight container or wrapped in foil for 2-3 days.	If possible, fillet whole fish before freezing and store in an airtight container or freezer bag for up to 4 months for white fish and up to 2 months for oily fish.	For best results when thawing, lay fish flat to freeze.
Lobsters and crabs	In an airtight container or wrapped in foil for 1-2 days.	Wrapped in individual foil parcels or freezer bags for up to 2 months.	Lobsters and crabs do not have to be cleaned before freezing, once thawed they can be cleaned just before cooking.
Prawns	In an airtight container or wrapped in foil for 1-2 days.	Best frozen in a block of water in a sealed freezer-safe container for up to 2 months. Shell should be left on for freezing.	Never freeze prawns in salty water, as this will dehydrate the flesh.

LEFTOVERS

	FRIDGE	FREEZER	STORAGE TIP
Homemade meals or takeaway	Homemade meals or leftovers can be stored in a container or covered with foil in a ceramic dish for 3-4 days.	Leftovers or food made specifically to freeze should be stored as soon as possible in sealed containers and can last between 2-6 months.	Always freeze meals in small portion sizes to limit the amount of wastage.

DAIRY

	FRIDGE	FREEZER	STORAGE TIP
Milk	In original packaging, opened or unopened until the expiry date, or until it starts to smell sour rather than sweet.	Not suitable for freezing, as it tends to curdle.	Keep in its original container with the cap on. Sunlight and temperature changes can shorten the shelf life of milk.
Yoghurt	In original packaging unopened until expiry date or opened for 7-10 days, whichever is first.	Not suitable for freezing unless it is specifically made as frozen yoghurt. Freezing alters the texture of yoghurt.	Always use a clean serving spoon when serving yoghurt from a bulk-size container, this will help to extend the shelf life of yoghurt.
Hard cheeses	Unopened, keep in original packaging; if opened, store in plastic wrap or resealable plastic bag. Depending on the variety, hard cheese can last from 2 weeks to 2 months.	Not suitable for freezing, it causes cheese to dry out and crumble. Grated cheese (used for cooking) can be frozen for up to 2 months.	If there is dryness or cracking, this could indicate you are not storing it correctly or that it is nearing its expiry date.
White mould cheeses (camembert, brie, etc)	Unopened, keep in original packaging; if opened, store in greaseproof paper or damp cloth for 1-2 weeks.	Not suitable for freezing as it will alter its consistency.	Over-ripe cheese will begin to smell of ammonia and should be discarded.
Butter	Unopened in original packaging or opened and resealed in original packaging for up to eight weeks.	Properly sealed in original packaging for up to 12 months.	Butter absorbs odours from other foods, so always re-wrap well after use.

EGGS

	FRIDGE	FREEZER	STORAGE TIP
Eggs	In original carton for up to 6 weeks from date of packaging.	Eggs cannot be frozen in their shells. Beat eggs until just blended and transfer to a freezer proof container for up to four months. Boiled whole eggs are not recommended for freezing as they become tough.	Eggs stored in the fridge last up to seven times longer than eggs stored on the bench top, so always pop them in the fridge as soon as you get home from doing the shopping.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

	FRIDGE	FREEZER	STORAGE TIP
Fruits & vegetables	Every fruit and every vegetable has a different shelf life. Some may only stay fresh for a couple of days (eg, beans), while others can last a few months (eg, onions). You can prolong the life of your produce by using a specially designed, breathable fruit and vegetable storage bag, available at your local supermarket. These special bags are kept in the crisper drawer of your fridge and can keep your produce fresh for up to three weeks longer than normal.	Vegetables that are chopped and blanched can be stored in small portions in sealed containers or airtight plastic bags. Berries are the most compatible fruit for storage in the freezer. Fruit and vegetables stored in the freezer can last 8-12 months.	Don't wash fruit and vegetables before storing them in the fridge as this can make them more susceptible to rotting.