

Food Preparation

What Can I Freeze?



Meat: Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb, and Wild Game

Check for holes in trays and plastic wrap of fresh meat. Rewrap if needed. For best quality, double wrap.

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Bacon	1 to 2 months
Canned Meat (marked "Keep Refrigerated")	Do not freeze.
Chops: Beef, Lamb, Pork, or Veal	4 to 6 months
Corned Beef	1 month, drained
Frankfurters	1 to 2 months. Freeze in original packaging.
Ground Meat (uncooked)	Overwrap if storing longer than 2 months.
Ham (vacuum-sealed, whole, half, or sliced)	1 to 2 months
Luncheon Meats	1 to 2 months. Product may "weep" when defrosted.
Roasts: Beef, Lamb, Pork, or Veal	6 to 12 months
Sausage (fresh, unsalted, or smoked)	1 to 2 months
Steaks: Beef, Lamb, Pork, or Veal	6 to 12 months

Fruit

Visit go.illinois.edu/FoodPreservation for more information on freezing fruits.

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Berries, Cherries, Peaches, Pears, Pineapple	9 to 12 months
Fruit Juice Concentrates	8 to 12 months
Citrus Fruits	4 to 6 months

Fish

For best quality, double wrap.

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Cooked, Commercially Frozen Seafood	3 months
Lean Fish: Cod, Flounder, Haddock, Sole, Trout, Polluck, Perch	6 months
Fatty Fish: Mackerel, Bluefish Salmon, Tuna, Smelt	2 to 3 months
Shellfish	3 months

Poultry: Chicken, Duck, Turkey

For best quality, double wrap.

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Whole or cut up	12 months
Livers or Giblets	3 to 4 months
Cooked Poultry	4 to 6 months
Chicken Nuggets and Patties	1 to 3 months

Other Food Staples

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Coconut (shredded)	1 year
Herbs	1 to 2 years
Nuts (unsalted)	9 to 12 months
Nuts (salted)	6 to 8 months
Popcorn (unpopped)	2 to 3 years
Rice (uncooked)	6 months
Spices (ground)	1 to 2 years
Spices (whole)	2 to 3 years

Eggs

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Eggs in the Shell	Do not freeze.
Whole Eggs Out of the Shell	12 months
Egg Substitutes (unopened)	12 months If opened, do not freeze.

Baked Goods

Freezing does not refresh baked goods; it can only maintain whatever the quality of the food was before freezing.

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Yeast Bread and Roll Dough (unbaked)	1 month
Yeast Bread and Rolls (baked)	2 to 3 months
Quick Bread and Muffins (baked)	2 to 3 months
Cake Batter	1 month
Baked Cake (unfrosted)	2 to 4 months
Baked Cake (frosted)	1 month
Angel Food Cake	6 to 12 months
Chiffon Sponge Cake	1 to 2 months
Fruit Cake	6 to 12 months
Cookies (baked at home)	8 to 12 months
Cookies (commercially packaged)	8 to 12 months
Cookie Dough (unbaked)	3 months
Fruit Pies and Pastries (baked)	1 to 2 months
Fruit Pies and Pastries (unbaked)	2 to 4 months
Cream Pies and Pastries	3 months
Pancake and Waffle Batter	3 months

Vegetables

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Commercially Frozen	8 months
Frozen from Fresh in the Home	8 months

Main Dishes

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Meat, Fish, Poultry: Pie and Casseroles	2 to 4 months
Commercially Frozen Meals/TV Dinners	3 to 4 months
Soups and Stews	2 to 3 months
Prestuffed Pork, Lamb, Chicken, Beef	Do not freeze.

Dairy

Food	Recommended Storage Time for Top Quality at 0 F.
Butter or Margarine	12 months
Hard Cheeses: Cheddar, Swiss, etc.	4 to 6 months
Processed Cheeses (loaves, slices)	4 to 6 months
Soft Cheeses: Brie, Cottage	Do not freeze well.
Milk	3 months. Place into smaller airtight containers and leave an inch at the top to allow it to expand.
Cream, Heavy	2 to 4 months. Lighter cream and half-and-half do not freeze well.
Yogurt	1 to 2 months
Ice Cream and Sherbet	2 months months

Modified March 2025



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