

Safe Food Storage: The Cupboard

Storing foods in the cupboard can be done safely. The length of time food can be stored in a cupboard is dependent upon factors such as the type of food, storage temperature, type of packaging, and cupboard location.

- Store foods in a cool, dry, dark location away from heat sources like appliances and the sun.
- Store foods away from chemicals to prevent contamination.
- While many foods may have a long shelf life, it is best to buy only what you can use to have the best quality food.
- Always check dates on packages and use the oldest products first.
- Check packages for damage during storage.
- Always use your common sense when storing food. When in doubt, throw it out!

STAPLES		
Product	At 70°F	Comments
Baking powder	18 months or expiration date on can	Keep dry and covered.
Baking soda	2 years	Keep dry and covered.
Bouillon cubes or granules	2 years	Keep dry and covered.
Bread	1-3 days	Store in moisture- and vapor-proof wrap. Refrigeration speeds staling; retards mold. Freeze for 3-5 months.
Bread crumbs, dried	6 months	Keep dry and covered.
Cereals: ready-to-eat, unopened ready-to-eat, opened hot cereal, dry	6-12 months 2-3 months 6 months	Refold package liner tightly after opening.
Chocolate: semi-sweet unsweetened premelted	2 years 18 months 12 months	Keep cool. Keep cool. Keep cool.
Chocolate syrup: unopened opened	2 years 6 months	Cover tightly. Refrigerate after opening.
Cocoa mixes	1 year	Cover tightly.
Cocoa powder	Indefinitely	
Coffee: cans, unopened cans, opened instant, unopened instant, opened	2 years 2 weeks 1-2 years 2 months	Refrigerate after opening; keep tightly closed. Use dry measuring spoon. Freeze to extend shelf life.
Coffee creamer: unopened, dry opened, dry	2 years 2-3 months	Keep tightly covered. Keep tightly covered.
Cornmeal	12 months	Keep tightly covered. Freeze for indefinite storage.
Cornstarch	18 months	Keep tightly covered. Freeze for indefinite storage.
Flour: white whole wheat specialty	6-8 months 6-8 months 6-8 months	Keep in airtight container. Keep refrigerated or freeze. Store in airtight container.

STAPLES

Product	At 70°F	Comments
Gelatin, all types	18 months	Keep in original container.
Grits	12 months	Store in airtight container.
Honey	12-24 months	Cover tightly. If it crystalizes, warm open jar in a pan of hot water.
Jellies, jams	6-18 months	Cover tightly. Refrigerate after opening.
Molasses: unopened opened	12 months 6 months	Keep tightly covered. Refrigerate to extend storage life.
Marshmallow cream, unopened	3-4 months	Cover tightly. Refrigerate after opening to extend storage life. Serve at room temperature.
Marshmallows	1 year	Keep in airtight container.
Mayonnaise, unopened	3-4 months	Refrigerate after opening. Check package date.
Milk: condensed or evaporated, unopened nonfat dry, unopened nonfat dry, opened	12 months 3-5 years 3 months	Invert cans every 2 months. Store in airtight container.
Pasta: spaghetti, macaroni, etc. egg noodles	1-2 years 2 years	Once opened, store in airtight container.
Pectin, liquid or dry	1 year or expiration date	
Rice: brown white flavored or herb	1 year 1-2 years 6 months	Keep tightly covered.
Salad dressings: bottled, unopened bottled, opened made from mix	10-12 months 3 months 2 weeks	Refrigerate after opening. Refrigerate prepared dressing.
Shortening	8-12 months	Refrigeration not needed. Store in cool, dark place in tightly closed container.
Sugar: brown confectioners granulated	18-24 months 18-24 months 2 years	Store in airtight container. Store in airtight container. Cover tightly.
Sweeteners, artificial	2 years	Cover tightly.
Syrups: corn syrup pancake syrup maple syrup	up to 3 years 6-12 months 4 years	Refrigerate to extend storage life. Cover tightly.
Tea: bags instant loose	18-36 months 3 years 2 years	Store in airtight container. Cover tightly. Store in airtight container.
Vegetable oils: unopened opened	6 months 3-5 months	Refrigeration not needed. Store in cool, dark place in tightly closed container.
Vinegar	2 years	Keep tightly covered. Slightly cloudy appearance doesn't affect quality.

MIXES AND PACKAGED FOODS

Product	At 70°F	Comments
Biscuit, brownie, muffin mix	9 months	Keep cool and dry.
Cakes: purchased mixes prepared	1-2 days 12-18 months 3-7 days	Refrigerate if whipped cream or custard filling. Keep cool and dry.
Casserole mix, complete or add meat	9-12 months	Keep cool and dry. After preparation, store refrigerated or frozen.
Cookies: homemade packaged	2-3 weeks 2 months	Store high moisture, perishable cookies in the refrigerator. Put in airtight container. Keep tightly closed.
Crackers	8 months	Keep tightly closed.
Frosting: canned mix	10-12 months 8 months	Store leftovers in refrigerator.
Hot roll mix	18 months	Once opened, store in airtight container.
Pancake mix	6-9 months	Store in airtight container.
Pie crust mix	8 months	Keep cool and dry.
Potatoes, instant mix	6-12 months	Keep in airtight package.
Pudding mixes	12 months	Keep cool and dry.
Rice mixes	6 months	Keep cool and dry.
Sauce and gravy mixes	12-14 months	Keep cool and dry.
Soup mixes	12 months	Keep cool and dry.
Toaster pastries	2-3 months	Keep in airtight package.
Tortillas	2-3 months	Refrigerate or freeze after opening.

CANNED AND DRIED FOODS

Product	At 70°F	Comments
Canned fruit juices	9 months	Keep cool.
Canned foods, unopened	12 months or longer	Keep cool. Use home canned foods within one year of preserving.
Fruits, dried	6 months	Keep cool in airtight container. Refrigerate if possible.
Vegetables: dried dehydrated flakes	1 year 6 months	Keep cool in airtight container. Refrigerate if possible.

SPICES, HERBS, CONDIMENTS, EXTRACTS

Product	At 70°F	Comments
Catsup, chili sauce: unopened opened	12 months 1 month	Refrigerate for longer storage.
Hot sauce, worcestershire, etc.	1 year	Refrigerate after opening.
Mustard, prepared yellow: unopened opened	1 year 6-8 months	May be refrigerated. Stir before using.
Spices and herbs: whole spices ground spices herbs herb, spice blends	3-4 years 2-3 years 2-3 years 2-3 years	Store in airtight containers in dry places away from sunlight and heat. Check aroma; if faded, replace. Whole cloves, nutmeg, and cinnamon sticks maintain quality beyond 2 years. Can be stored in freezer to extend shelf life.

SPICES, HERBS, CONDIMENTS, EXTRACTS

Product	At 70°F	Comments
Vanilla: unopened opened	2 years 12 months	Keep tightly closed. Volatile oils escape.
Other extracts, opened	12 months	Keep tightly closed. Volatile oils escape.
Commercial salsa, unopened	12-18 months	Refrigerate after opening. Use within 1-2 months.

OTHER GOODS

Product	At 70°F	Comments
Cheese, parmesan, grated	10 months	Refrigerate after opening. Keep tightly covered.
Coconut, shredded, canned or packaged, unopened	12 months	Refrigerate after opening.
Meat substitutes (imitation bacon, etc.)	12 months	Keep tightly covered. Refrigerate for longer storage.
Powdered breakfast mixes, liquid breakfast formulas	6 months	Stored in covered containers or original packages.
Nuts: in shell, unopened vacuum can, unopened package or can, opened	4 months 3 months 2 weeks	Refrigerate after opening. Freeze for longer storage. Unsalted and blanched keep longer than salted.
Peanut butter: unopened opened	6-12 months 2-3 months	Refrigeration not needed. Keeps longer if refrigerated. Use at room temperature.
Peas and beans, dried	12 months	Store in airtight container.
Popcorn microwave popcorn	2 years 1 year	Store in airtight container.
Vegetables, fresh: onions potatoes: white sweet garlic	2-4 weeks 2-4 weeks 1-2 weeks 1 month	Keep cool, dry, well ventilated and away from sun. For longer storage, keep below 50°F. Store unwashed and away from sun. Do not refrigerate sweet potatoes. Keep cool, dry and well ventilated.
Whipped topping, dry	12 months	Keep cool and dry.
Yeast, dry	Expiration date on package	Refrigerate or freeze after opening to extend shelf life.
Fruit, fresh apples bananas citrus tomatoes	3 weeks 2-3 days 2 weeks 3-5 days (unripe); 2-3 days (ripe)	Refrigerate up to 1 month. Freeze ripe bananas for baking. Keep cool and dry. Ripen at room temperature away from sun. For best flavor, use at room temperature. Refrigerate when fully ripened and after cutting.

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Revised by Karen Blakeslee, M.S. Extension Associate, Department of Grain and Food Science

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