

FROZEN ≠ FOREVER

Strategy Tips

The length of time for the storage of food in the freezer is a question of food quality rather than food safety.

Proper Storage Means Freshness

Choosing the appropriate frozen food storage containers prolongs the quality of your frozen foods. Rigid freezer containers, besides being reusable, are easily stacked in the freezer and can hold foods high in liquid content.

Flexible freezer bags and freezer wrapping paper will protect your food from freezer burn. Using leftover food containers, wax paper, milk cartons or paper cartons will shorten the life of your frozen foods because air and moisture easily enters the food. (fitday.com)

Freezing Won't Kill Bacteria

When it's time to cook, use caution. The recommended method of thawing foods is the refrigerator because the temperature stays below 40 degrees. To ensure that you kill all bacteria, heat leftovers to an internal temperature of 165 degrees; stews and soups should be brought to a boil. For best flavor, cook foods immediately once thawed. (David L. Katz, M.D.)

How long does food really last in your freezer?

Below is a time-table for the quality of your frozen foods.

Leftovers Months

Cooked meat or poultry.....	3 - 6
Fish.....	3
Shellfish.....	3
Lobster.....	2
Soups and Stews.....	2 - 3
Chowders.....	6
Pizza.....	1 - 2
Casseroles (meat, cooked)...	up to 3

Meats - Fresh Months

Uncooked roasts.....	4 - 12
Uncooked ground meats (hamburger, turkey, pork)....	3 - 4
Uncooked whole poultry.....	12
Uncooked poultry parts.....	9
Steaks.....	6 - 12
Chops.....	4 - 6

Meats - Processed Months

Bacon and sausages.....	1 - 2
Ham.....	1 - 2
Hot dogs (opened or unopened).....	1 - 2
Luncheon meats.....	1 - 2

Fresh Fish (fatty) Months

(Salmon, mackerel, mullet, hamachi, swordfish, ahi).....	2 - 3
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Fresh Fish (lean) Months

(Cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, pollack, perch).....	6
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Shellfish, raw Months

Crab.....	3
Shrimp, tako, calamari.....	4
Scallops.....	3 - 6

Dairy Months

Butter.....	9
Ice cream, sorbet.....	2

Bread and Baked Goods Months

Bread.....	3
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