

A photograph of a grocery store aisle with shelves of yogurt. A hand is holding a container of Arla Original Yoghurt. The shelves are filled with various brands of yogurt, including Kløver and Arla. Price tags are visible on the shelves. The background is slightly blurred, focusing on the hand and the yogurt container.

Food “Best-by” & Thawing Guide 2020–2021



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This booklet was developed as a resource guide for the communities we serve.

Sources:
www.fsis.usda.gov
www.foodsafety.gov
www.usda.gov



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Food Shelf Life Laws



When you purchase food items at your local grocery store, you may notice a printed **sell-by date**, **use-by date** or **best-before date** on the packaging and wonder just what that date really means. Here at Island Harvest Food Bank we are doing our best to make sure that you, the conscious consumer, are fully informed about the **true shelf life** of the most popular food items. As we have learned, most **food is still edible after the printed expiration dates** have passed.

When reviewing the printed date on the food item in question, you may find it interesting to learn the following facts associated with the shelf life of foods.

- **Food Can Be Sold After a Date Expires** – Stores are not legally required to remove food from the shelf once the expiration date has passed. The expiration dates are strictly “advisory” in nature and are left entirely to the discretion of the manufacturer, thus not truly indicative of an items true Shelf Life.
- **Food Dates Are Not Required By Law** – With the exception of infant formula and baby food, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not require food companies to place dates on their food products. The only requirement is that the food is wholesome and fit for consumption.
- **Laws Vary By State** – States have varying food dating laws. For example, many states require that milk and other perishables be sold before the expiration date, while others do not.

The “Shelf Life” of food is how long it may be stored (exist on a shelf) before the quality deteriorates. Shelf life is used in reference to these common codes: (**Use-by Date**, **Sell-by Date**, and **Best-Before Date**). The Shelf Life depends on which code is used and the type of product in question. Please see the specific page for your product to determine the proper *shelf life of food* because the Shelf Life is different for each particular item!

Meaning of Labeling

The labeling “Sell-By” tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires. This is basically a guide for the retailer, so the store knows when to pull the item. This is not mandatory, so reach in back and get the freshest. The issue is quality of the item (freshness, taste, and consistency) rather than whether it is on the verge of spoiling.

“Best-if-used-by (or before)” date

This refers strictly to quality, not safety. This date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date. Sour cream, for instance, is already sour, but can have a zippier, fresh taste when freshly sour.

“Guaranteed fresh” date

This usually refers to bakery items. They will still be edible after the date, but will not be at peak freshness.

“Use-by” date

This is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product.

“Pack” date

You will find this one on canned or packaged goods, as a rule, but it’s tricky. In fact, it may be in code. It can be month-day-year-MMDDYY. Or the manufacturer could revert to the Julian calendar. January would then be 001-0031 and December 334-365.

*Julian Dates: Starting with January 1 as 001 and ending with December 31 as 365, these numbers represent the consecutive days of the year.

How to Thaw Meat



Step 1: Defrost Overnight

The best way to thaw meat safely is to plan ahead. Defrost it overnight on a plate in the refrigerator. By the next day, you’re ready to cook. Exception – a large item like a turkey needs 24 hours per 5 pounds of weight.

Step 2: Safety Tip

Never keep meat at room temperature for more than two hours. Once you’ve thawed frozen meat, you can’t refreeze it unless it’s in a stock, soup or liquid.

Step 3: Cooking Frozen Meat the Same Day

If you have frozen meat you want to cook today, there is a faster way to thaw: the “cold water” method. Keep the chopped or ground meat wrapped tight. Note: Proper packaging prevents bacteria from forming and water from seeping in.

Step 4: Cold-Water Thawing

Place the wrapped meat in a large bowl and fill with cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes as the meat continues to thaw. A 1-pound package of meat can thaw in an hour or less. Packages of 3 to 4 pounds can take more than two hours.

Step 5: Ready to Cook

Remember, don’t refreeze thawed meats. If you follow these tips, dinner will be ready in no time.

Turkey Thawing



TURKEY SIZE	In Refrigerator (24 hr per 4–5 lbs.)	In Cold Water (approx 30 min per lb.)
4 to 12 pounds	1 to 3 days	2 to 6 hours
12 to 16 pounds	3 to 4 days	6 to 8 hours
16 to 20 pounds	4 to 5 days	8 to 10 hours
20 to 24 pounds	5 to 6 days	10 to 12 hours

Thaw Food Safely

While frozen, a turkey is safe indefinitely. As soon as it begins to thaw, bacteria that may have been present before freezing will begin to grow again. There are three safe ways to defrost a turkey: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in a microwave oven.

Refrigerator Thawing (Recommended)

The USDA recommends thawing your turkey in the refrigerator. This is the safest method because the turkey will thaw at a consistent, safe temperature. This method takes some time, so allow one day for each 4–5 pounds of weight. If your turkey weighs 16 pounds, it will take about four days to thaw. Once thawed, the turkey is safe for another two days, so you can start thawing it six days before thanksgiving (the Friday before Thanksgiving).

The other two methods (cold water and microwave) must be done immediately before you start cooking the turkey, so you'll have to wait until Thanksgiving morning.

Cold Water Thawing

For the cold water method, leave the turkey in its original wrapping and submerge it in a sink (or container) full of cold water. It is important that the water be cold so that the turkey stays at a safe temperature. You should change the water every 30 minutes. Empty out the water and replace it with fresh cold water. With this method, allow 30 minutes of defrosting time per pound, so a 16 pound turkey will take 8 hours to thaw using this method (so you might need to start around 4 a.m. if you want to eat in the afternoon!). Once the turkey has thawed, cook it immediately.

Microwave Thawing

Before you commit to thawing your turkey in the microwave, check your owner's manual for the size turkey that will fit in your microwave oven, the minutes per pound and the power level to use when thawing a turkey. Remove all outside wrapping and place the turkey on a microwave-safe dish to catch any juices that may leak. Use the defrost function based on weight. As a general rule, allow 6 minutes per pound when thawing a turkey in the microwave. Be sure to rotate it several times, and even flip it, during the thawing process.

If the turkey starts to actually cook instead of just defrost, let it rest for 5 minutes or so before you resume thawing. Partway through thawing you may wish to cover the tips of the wings and drumsticks with a small piece of foil to shield them from the microwaves and keep them from cooking. Once the turkey has thawed you should cook it immediately.

How to Safely Thaw/ Refreeze Seafood



Yes, cooked or uncooked fish that has been thawed in the refrigerator can safely be frozen and refrozen. But there are some caveats: To preserve freshness, refreeze your fish within a few days of thawing and don't refreeze anything that's been left out for more than two hours, or one hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. You probably won't have any problems with that rule if you're looking to refreeze tonight's dinner, but if you served fish at a party, you should only refreeze the leftovers if you're certain you meet these time limits. Of course, you shouldn't eat the leftover fish at all if you think you've exceeded these time limits. While fish is expensive, and it can be painful to throw it away, you don't want to put yourself (or anyone else in your household) at risk for food poisoning. Always err on the side of caution when it comes to food. The USDA developed these guidelines for a reason.

How to Package Fish for Freezing

Fish that is packaged correctly can last up to 8 months in a freezer. With a little care, you'll be a lot happier with the quality when you pull it out later. Air is enemy No. 1 of frozen foods. It's what causes things to develop freezer burn. So, wrap your fish in freezer paper or a freezer bag. The thick layer will help to keep air out. If you use a freezer bag, squeezing the excess air out of the bag before you seal the top can also go a long way toward preventing freezer burn.

What is Freezer Burn?



Freezer burn looks like dry, leathery, and sometimes pale patches in various areas of frozen foods. On bread and buns, it looks more like dry, hard sections, usually more on the outer edges. Freezer burn does not make frozen foods unsafe to eat. However, it does make them unpleasant or difficult to eat as food quality has severely deteriorated.

There's also often an unpleasant freezer odor that accompanies freezer burn. You can often trim off freezer burn to save a good portion of the meat, but when freezer burn is extensive, discarding may be your only choice. There is no harm leaving the freezer burn areas on foods during cooking, but those areas are more difficult to remove later and will affect overall taste and texture.

Why Does Freezer Burn Occur?

Freezer burn occurs in any type of freezer and is the result of inadequate wrapping and air being trapped within robbing it of moisture, creating the dry hard areas. Even if you have removed air trapped inside, it also occurs when (air) is allowed to enter the bag or storage containers due to an inadequate seal. With bread and buns, the thin and loose shelf packaging you bought them in is inadequate for freezing and also allows condensation which in turn, leaves some of the bread soggy, as well as hard and crusty.

The longer the foods are stored in the freezer, the worse the freezer burn, and some foods are affected sooner than others. To avoid freezer burn, foods should be wrapped properly and as much air as possible should be removed from the bag or container. In addition, freezer foods should be consumed as soon as possible.

What is Freezer Burn? continued on next page

What is Freezer Burn? (cont.)

Tips to Avoid Freezer Burn

- Remove as much air as possible from the freezer bag or container. A vacuum sealing system is the best, but any method that draws out air will provide at least some protection from freezer burn.
- Use only bags and containers designed for freezing food and that are deemed to be food safe (not all plastics are).
- Avoid freezing with flimsy store bagging such as that found on bread, buns. Food wrap in itself does not provide any protection.
- Double or triple wrap prepackaged food items.
- When using butcher-style wrapping paper, the waxed side should be on the inside and also insert the wrapped food into a zip-style freezer bag to further protect the contents.
- Rotate freezer foods to use the oldest first.
- Always label freezer foods with a date, so you can more readily use it within the recommended freezer lifetime.

While inadequate packaging and extended freezer life are the main causes of freezer burn, the style of the freezer can also make frozen foods more susceptible. A self-defrost freezer cycles on/off to keep the interior of the freezer frost free. This fluctuation in temperature, though it does not cause foods to defrost, does make freezer foods more prone to quicker freezer burn. You should also avoid extended browsing (freezer door open), which also causes temperatures to fluctuate.

For this reason, you should store frozen foods intended for longer freezer storage, in a manual defrost freezer, which provides better protection. And keep mainly short-term frozen foods in the refrigerator freezer, or in a self-defrost upright freezer.

Color Changes



Color changes can occur in frozen foods. The bright red color of meat as purchased usually turns dark or pale brown depending on its variety. This may be due to lack of oxygen, freezer burn or abnormally long storage.

Freezing doesn't usually cause color changes in poultry. However, the bones and the meat near them can become dark. Bone darkening results when pigment seeps through the porous bones of young poultry into the surrounding tissues when the poultry meat is frozen and thawed.

The dulling of color in frozen vegetables and cooked foods is usually the result of excessive drying due to improper packaging or over-lengthy storage.

Microwave Ovens and Food Safety



The microwave oven is one of the great inventions of the 20th century; over 90% of homes in America have at least one. Microwave ovens can play an important role at mealtime, but special care must be taken when cooking or reheating meat, poultry, fish, and eggs to make sure they are prepared safely. Microwave ovens can cook unevenly and leave “cold spots” where harmful bacteria can survive. For this reason, it is important to use a food thermometer and test food in several places to be sure it has reached the recommended safe temperature to destroy bacteria and other pathogens that could cause foodborne illness.

How do microwaves cook food?

The magnetron inside the oven converts ordinary electric power from a wall socket into very short radio waves (around 4 inches from crest to crest). They are transmitted by the oven’s magnetron at a frequency of about 2450 Megahertz. At that frequency, power is readily absorbed by water, fats and sugars, resulting in very fast vibration and high temperatures that cook the food.

What are power levels?

On high power, the food is subjected to the highest amount of microwave energy because the magnetron produces microwaves at full capacity. To produce a power level less than high (100%), the magnetron cycles off and on. For example, medium power (50%) means that the oven produces microwaves 50% of the time and is off 50% of the time.

Foods best to cook on high power are basically tender foods and those with a high moisture content such as ground beef, poultry, vegetables and fruits. Eggs, cheese and solid meat can toughen when microwaved on high. They are best cooked on reduced power. Large cuts of meat should be cooked on medium power (50%) for longer periods. This allows heat to reach the center without overcooking outer areas.

Do microwaves cook food from the inside out?

No. Microwaves penetrate the food to a depth of 1 to 1½ inches. In thicker pieces of food, the microwaves don’t reach the center. That area would cook by conduction of heat from the outer areas of the food into the middle.

In a microwave oven, the air in the oven is at room temperature so the temperature of the food surface is cooler than food in a conventional oven where the food is heated by hot air. Therefore, food cooked in a microwave oven doesn’t normally become brown and crispy.

Do microwaves cook food safely?

Bacteria will be destroyed during microwave cooking just as in other types of ovens, so food is safe cooked in a microwave oven. However, the food can cook less evenly than in a conventional oven. Microwave cooking can be uneven just as with frying and grilling.

For that reason, it is important to use a food thermometer and test food in several places to be sure it has reached the recommended temperature to destroy bacteria and other pathogens that could cause foodborne illness.

To promote uniform cooking, arrange food items evenly in a covered dish and add some liquid if needed. Where possible, debone large pieces of meat; bone can shield meat from thorough cooking.

Cover the dish with a lid or plastic wrap. Allow enough space between the food and the top of the dish so that plastic wrap does not touch the food. Loosen or vent the lid or wrap to allow steam to vent. The moist heat that is created will help destroy harmful bacteria and ensure uniform cooking. Cooking bags also provide safe, even cooking.

Stir, rotate, or turn foods upside down (where possible) midway through the microwaving time to even the cooking and eliminate cold spots where harmful bacteria can survive. Even if the microwave oven has a turntable, it's still helpful to stir and turn food top to bottom.

Follow cooking instructions on product label (or recipe instructions). If a range of time is given, start with the fewest minutes recommended. Add cooking time if necessary, to reach a safe internal temperature.

Observe the "standing time." Cooking continues and is completed during standing time. Most importantly, follow the manufacturer's instructions.

What are the USDA recommended temperatures for microwaving food safely?

Place the thermometer in the thickest area of the meat or poultry — not near fat or bone — and check the temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and in the thickest part of the breast of whole poultry. Cooking times may vary because ovens vary in power and efficiency.

- Cook ground meats to 160°F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.
- Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Eggs and casseroles containing eggs, 160°F.
- Fish should reach 145°F.
- After removing food from the microwave, always allow standing time of at least 3 minutes. This completes the cooking process. Then check the internal temperature with a food thermometer.

Is it safe to microwave food only until partially done?

Never partially cook food and store it for later use because any bacteria present wouldn't have been destroyed. When partially cooking food in the microwave oven to finish cooking on the grill or in a conventional oven, it is important to transfer the microwaved food to the other heat source immediately.

Is it safe to cook stuffed poultry in a microwave oven?

Cooking whole, stuffed poultry in a microwave oven is not recommended. Because food cooks so quickly in a microwave oven, the stuffing might not have enough time to reach the temperature needed to destroy harmful bacteria.

What is the best way to thaw frozen food in a microwave oven?

Remove food from its packaging before defrosting. Do not use foam trays and plastic wraps because they are not heat stable at high temperatures. Melting or warping from the heat of the food may cause harmful chemicals to migrate into it.

Select the "defrost" setting or 30% power. During microwave defrosting, rotate and turn food upside down where possible. For individual pieces such as chicken parts, break them apart when possible, rotate and turn upside down several times during defrosting. When thawing ground meats, scrape the thawed portion off as it softens; remove it from the oven. Continue to microwave defrost the remaining portion.

Cook meat, poultry, egg casseroles, and fish immediately after defrosting in the microwave oven because some areas of the frozen food may begin to cook during the defrosting time. Do not hold partially cooked food to use later.

How Long Does Bacon Last?



The shelf life of bacon depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the meat was stored. Bacon is tasty for breakfast, lunch, dinner or as a condiment. Just like ham, it is a cured meat. When properly stored, the shelf life of bacon past its sell-by date is approximately ...

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Bacon lasts for	7 Days	1 Months
Bacon bits lasts for	6 Months	6 Months
(Opened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Fresh bacon lasts for	1 Week	6 Months
Cooked bacon lasts for	7–10 Days	6 Months
Bacon bits lasts for	6 Weeks	6 Months

How Long Does Beef Last?



The shelf life of beef depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the beef was stored. When properly stored, the shelf life of beef past its sell-by date is approximately ...

(Uncooked)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh beef lasts for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
Ground beef lasts for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
Corned beef lasts for	1–2 Weeks	6–8 Months
Steak lasts for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
(Cooked)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Beef or steak lasts for	7 Days	6–8 Months
Ground beef lasts for	7 Days	6–8 Months
Canned beef (opened) lasts for	7–10 Days	–
Corned beef lasts for	7–10 Days	–

How Long Does Canned Meat Last?



Canned meats can last for years beyond their “best-by” dates. The shelf life of canned meat depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-before date, the preparation method and how the canned meats are stored. Since fresh meats have rather short shelf lives, canned meats like spam and chicken prove practical to have on hand and available at any time. Canned meats can include canned chicken, canned tuna, deviled ham, corned beef and spam.

(Unopened)	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Canned chicken lasts for	2–5 Years
Canned tuna lasts for	2–5 Years
Canned corn beef lasts for	2–5 Years
Deviled ham lasts for	2–5 Years
Canned ham last for	2–5 Years
Canned clams last for	2–5 Years
(After Opening)	Refrigerator
Canned chicken lasts for	5–7 Days
Canned tuna lasts for	5–7 Days
Canned corn beef lasts for	7–10 Days
Deviled ham lasts for	7–10 Days
Canned ham last for	7–10 Days
Canned clams last for	5–7 Days

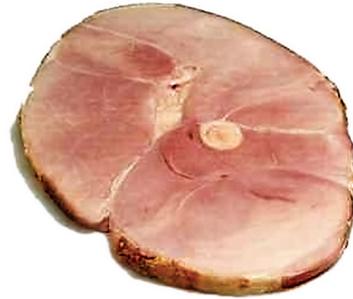
How Long Does Deli Meat Last?



Deli meat, or lunch meat, is a term used for a meat that has been cooked, cured, or smoked and then packaged. The meat from the deli section of the grocery comes in aseptic packaging which further preserves the shelf life of the meat, but once it is sliced the shelf life shrinks. The shelf life of deli meat depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the type of meat, the preparation method and how the deli meat was stored. Deli meats are also known as cold cuts, lunch meat, luncheon meats, sandwich meats, cooked meats, sliced meats and cold meats. When properly stored, the shelf life of lunch meat past its sell-by date is approximately...

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh sliced deli meats last for	5–6 Days	–
Pre-packaged deli meats last for	7–10 Days	6–8 Months
Bologna lasts for	1–2 Weeks	2–3 Months
Salami (hard) lasts for	3–4 Weeks	2–3 Months
(Opened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Fresh sliced deli meats last for	5–6 Days	–
Packaged lunch meat lasts for	7–10 Days	–
Bologna lasts for	1–2 Weeks	1–2 Months
Salami (hard) lasts for	2–3 Weeks	2–3 Months
Pepperoni lasts for	2–3 Weeks	6–8 Months

How Long Does Ham Last?



Ham lasts for 1–2 weeks beyond their labeled date, considering all the following variables. The shelf life of ham depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how it was stored.

Ham, just like bacon, is a cured meat prepared from the hind thighs of a hog. The rear of the pig is thick and flavorful. It is the curing process that makes a ham, it is fully cooked.

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Ham lasts for	1–2 Weeks	6–8 Months
(Opened/Cooked)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Ham lasts for	7–10 Days	6–8 Months

How Long Do Hamburgers Last?



The shelf life of hamburgers depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the hamburger was stored. When the ground beef is formed into round (or square) patties, they become hamburgers. When properly stored, the shelf life of hamburger past its sell-by date is approximately...

(Unopened/Uncooked)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh hamburgers last for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
Fresh ground turkey lasts for	1 Day	6–8 Months
(Opened/Cooked)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Hamburgers last for	5–6 Days	4–6 Months

How Long Does Pork Last?



The shelf life of pork depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the pork was stored. Pork is often considered the other white meat, but it is really a pinkish color after being cut from the pig and packaged. When properly stored, the shelf life of fresh pork past its sell-by date is approximately...

(Uncooked)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh pork chops last for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
Fresh ground pork lasts for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
Fresh pork shoulder lasts for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
Fresh pork loin lasts for	1–2 Days	6–8 Months
Pork sausage lasts for	3–4 Days	6–8 Months
(Cooked)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Cooked pork shoulder/loin/chops/sausage last for	7 Days	6–8 Months

How Long Does Poultry Last?



All raw poultry is fresh poultry, right? Wrong! The term fresh on a poultry label refers to a raw product that has never been stored at temperatures lower than 26°F. Raw poultry held at 0°F or lower must be labeled frozen or “previously frozen”. However, no specific labeling is required for raw poultry stored at temperatures between 0–25°F. But remember that most proteins, usually have a sell-by date and not a use-by date or expiration date. Because of this distinction, you may safely use it for a short period after the sell-by date has lapsed.

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh chicken lasts for	1–2 Days	1 Year
Cooked chicken lasts for	7 Days	1 Year
Roasted chicken lasts for	7 Days	6–8 Months
(Opened)	Pantry	Fridge
Canned chicken lasts for	–	7 Days

How Long Does Fish Last?



The shelf life of fish depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date the preparation method and how the fish was stored. Because of its abundance, proven health benefits and concentration of protein, fish is a great main dish choice.

	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Salmon lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Cod lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Halibut lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Ono lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Tilapia lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Catfish lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Cooked fish lasts for	–	5–6 Days	6–9 Months
Smoked salmon lasts for	–	5–7 Days	3–6 Months
Canned tuna lasts for	2–5 Years	5–7 Days	–
Sardines last for	2–5 Years	5–7 Days	–

How Long Does Salmon Last?



The shelf life of salmon depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the salmon was stored. Salmon contains omega-3 fatty acids (also known as the good cholesterol) which are proven to lower the risk of heart disease and help with numerous other health problems...

	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh salmon lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Smoked salmon lasts for	1–2 Weeks*	5–7 Days	6–9 Months
Canned salmon lasts for	6–8 Months	6–8 Months	9–12 Months**
Cooked salmon lasts for	–	5–6 Days	6–9 Months
Frozen salmon lasts for	–	4–5 Days	6–9 Months

How Long Does Shrimp Last?



The shelf life of shrimp depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how they were stored. Shrimp are full of protein, low in calories, easy to cook and so versatile in recipes that they are even delicious all by themselves served hot or cold.

	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh shrimp (shelled) lasts for	–	1–2 Days	6–9 Months
Fresh shrimp (shell on) lasts for	–	2–3 Days	9–12 Months
Cooked shrimp lasts for	–	3–4 Days	6–9 Months
Frozen shrimp lasts for	–	4–5 Days	9–12 Months
Canned shrimp lasts for	6–8 Months	36 Days–8 Months	9–12 Months (No can)

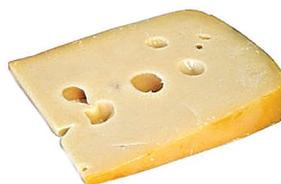
How Long Does Butter Last?



The shelf life of butter depends on a variety of factors, such as the production method, its best-by date and how it is stored. Butter is a dairy product made by churning fresh cream or milk until it reaches a solid form. When properly stored at or below 40° F, the shelf life of butter beyond its best-before date is approximately...

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Butter lasts for	1 Month	6–9 Months
Butter with oil lasts for	2 Months	6–9 Months
(Opened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Butter lasts for	2 Weeks	6–9 Months
Butter with oil lasts for	2–3 Weeks	6–9 Months

How Long Does Hard Cheese Last?



Hard cheese will last the longest, but even semi-hard cheeses will last beyond their “best-by” date for the times listed in the table below. Cheese consists of the proteins and fat from milk and is produced throughout the world in hundreds of flavors, textures, and forms. Some common hard cheeses include Parmesan, Romano, Asiago, Buffalo and Pecorino cheese.

The shelf life of hard cheese is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the type of cheese, the processing method and packaging date, its exposure to heat, how the cheese is stored and the best-by date or sell-by date.

(Unopened)	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Hard cheese (parmesan, asiago, romano) lasts for	2–4 Months	6–8 Months
Shredded hard cheese lasts for	1–2 Months	6–8 Months
Semi-hard cheese chunk (cheddar, swiss) lasts for	1–2 Months	6–8 Months
Sliced semi-hard cheese lasts for	1 Month	6–8 Months
(Opened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Hard cheese chunk (parmesan, asiago, romano) lasts for	3–6 Weeks	6–8 Months
Shredded hard cheese lasts for	3–4 Weeks	6–8 Months
Semi-hard cheese chunk lasts for	3–6 Weeks	6–8 Months
Sliced semi-hard cheese lasts for	2 Weeks	6–8 Months

How Long Does Soft Cheese Last?

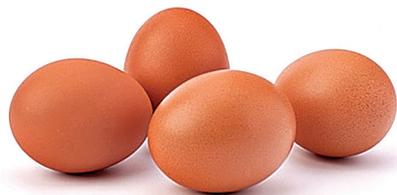


Soft cheeses will last about 1–2 weeks beyond their printed dates, specific cheeses are outlined in the following table. Some common soft cheeses include Mozzarella, Havarti and Monterey jack and semi-soft cheeses include Brie cheese, Feta cheese, Ricotta cheese and Cream cheese.

However, it is important to note that soft cheese does not last as long as hard cheese. The shelf life of soft cheese is influenced by a variety of factors such as the type of cheese, the processing method, the packaging date, its exposure to heat, and how the cheese is stored.

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Brie cheese lasts for	1 Week	–
Mozzarella cheese lasts for	1–2 Weeks	6 Months
Feta cheese lasts for	1 Week	–
Monterey jack cheese lasts for	1–2 Weeks	6 Months
Muenster cheese lasts for	1–2 Weeks	–
Havarti cheese lasts for	1–2 Weeks	6 Months
Gorgonzola cheese lasts for	1–2 Weeks	–

How Long Do Eggs Last?



How long do eggs last in the fridge?

Fresh eggs will last for at least 66 days from the date they are placed into a carton, this is 3–4 weeks beyond the “best-by” date normally stamped on the carton. There are many things to consider with egg safety.

The most accurate date to consider with eggs is a date placed on the egg carton by the manufacturer called the “pack date”. This date specifies the Julian date (numerical day of the year) on which the eggs were packaged.

	Refrigerator
	Past Sell-by Date
Fresh eggs are good for	3–4 Weeks
Egg substitutes are good for	3–4 Days
Egg whites are good for	2–4 Days
Egg yolks are good for	1–2 Days

Julian Dates:

Starting with January 1 as 001 and ending with December 31 as 365, these numbers represent the consecutive days of the year. This number system is sometimes used on egg cartons to denote the day the eggs are packed. You can store fresh shell eggs in their cartons in the refrigerator with insignificant quality loss for four to five weeks beyond this date. Egg cartons from plants producing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-graded eggs must display a Julian date—the date the eggs were packed. Although not required, egg cartons may also carry an expiration (sell-by) date and/or a best-by (use-by) date.

How Long Does Milk Last?



Milk lasts for 7 days beyond its “best-by” date if properly stored as described below. It comes in a variety of types (whole milk, reduced fat, skim and non-fat milk) and can be processed into other dairy products such as yogurt, butter and cheese.

From the full taste and high cream content of whole milk to the skim and non-fat versions, The shelf life of milk is influenced by a variety of factors, such as processing method and carton date, exposure to light and heat, and how it is stored.

When properly stored at or below 40°F, containers of milk last for the time periods past the date printed on the carton as indicated in the table below:

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	
Lactose-free milk lasts for	7–10 Days	1 year
Non-fat milk lasts for	7–10 Days	1 year
Skim milk lasts for	7 Days	1 year
Reduced-fat milk lasts for	7 Days	1 year
Whole milk lasts for	5–7 Days	1 year

How Long Does Almond Milk Last?



Milk alternatives, depending upon things like their packaging, can last a month beyond the date printed on the package. Once opened, milk alternatives will stay fresh for a week.

The shelf life of milk alternatives is influenced by a variety of factors, such what was used as the substitute for milk, its exposure to light and heat, its packaging and how the milk alternatives are stored. When properly stored at or below 40°F, containers of milk alternatives (soy milk, rice milk, almond milk, hemp milk) last for the time periods indicated in the table below:

(Unopened)		Pantry	
Unrefrigerated packaging		Past Printed Date	
Soy milk lasts for		1 Month	
Almond milk lasts for		1 Month	
Rice milk lasts for		1 Month	
Coconut milk lasts for		1 Month	
(Unopened)		Refrigerator	Freezer
Refrigerated packaging		Past Printed Date	
Soy milk lasts for		7–10 Days	1 year
Rice milk lasts for		7–10 Days	1 year
Almond milk lasts for		7–10 Days	1 year
Coconut milk lasts for		7–10 Days	6–8 months
Hemp milk lasts for		7–10 Days	6–8 months
(Opened)		Refrigerator	
All open packages		Past Printed Date	2–3 months

Dating Infant Formula



Federal regulations require a “Use-By” date on the product label of infant formula under inspection of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Consumption by this date ensures the formula contains not less than the quantity of each nutrient as described on the label. Formula must maintain an acceptable quality to pass through an ordinary bottle nipple.

The “Use-By” date is selected by the manufacturer, packer or distributor of the product on the basis of product analysis throughout its shelf life, tests, or other information. It is also based on the conditions of handling, storage, preparation, and use printed on the label. **Do not buy or use baby formula after its “Use- By” date.**

How Long Does Sour Cream Last?



Sour cream lasts for 1–2 weeks beyond the date printed on the container if unopened, about a week beyond if opened close to the date. The shelf life of sour cream is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the type of cream, the processing method, packaging date, its exposure to heat and how it is stored. When properly stored, containers of sour cream last for the time periods indicated in the table below beyond their printed date:

(Unopened)	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date
Sour cream lasts for	1–2 weeks
Reduced fat sour cream lasts for	1–2 weeks
Sour cream dip lasts for	2 weeks
(Opened)	Refrigerator
All sour creams last for	7–10 Days
<i>Although freezing is not preferred, you can freeze for 6–9 months</i>	

How Long Does Yogurt Last?



Yogurt can last from 1–3 weeks beyond its “best-by” date stamped on the carton. The shelf life of yogurt and its ultimate expiration date depends on a variety of factors, such as its sell-by date, its preparation method and how it is stored. When properly stored, yogurt lasts past its printed date for the time periods indicated below:

(Unopened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Frozen yogurt lasts for	–	2–3 Months
Drinkable yogurt lasts for	7–10 Days	1–2 Months
Greek yogurt lasts for	1–2 Weeks	1–2 Months
Reduced fat yogurt lasts for	1–2 Weeks	1–2 Months
Yogurt lasts for	2–3 Weeks	1–2 Months
Yogurt with fruit lasts for	7–10 Days	1–2 Months
(Opened)	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
All opened yogurt lasts for	1 Week	1 Month

How Long Does Pudding Last?



Prepared pudding can last for 1 week in the refrigerator, whereas packaged dry pudding will last for months beyond its “best-by” date according to our table. The shelf life of pudding can vary due to the type, packaging, storage method, and thickening agent used so see our table for more details.

(Unopened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Vanilla pudding lasts for	3–4 Weeks	3–4 Weeks
Chocolate pudding lasts for	3–4 Weeks	3–4 Weeks
Dry pudding mix lasts for	4–5 Weeks	–
(Opened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
Pudding prepared from dry mix lasts for	1 Day	5–7 Days
Homemade pudding lasts for	1 Day	5–7 Days

How Long Do Canned Vegetables Last?



Canned vegetables last for 1-2 years beyond the date stamped on the can, but read on for complete information. The shelf life of canned vegetables depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-before date, the preparation method and how the canned vegetables are stored.

Because of the high heat process used to can vegetables and the added salt, canned vegetables do enjoy an extended shelf life but also lose some nutrient value in that same process.

(Unopened)	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Canned vegetables last for	1–2 Years
Can corn lasts for	1–2 Years
Canned soup lasts for	1–2 Years
(Opened)	Refrigerator
Canned vegetables last for	7–10 Days
Can corn lasts for	7–10 Days
Canned soup lasts for	7 Days

How Long Do Frozen Vegetables Last?



Frozen Vegetables – Frozen vegetables generally last 8–10 months in the freezer if kept at a constant temperature, complete details are provided below. The shelf life of frozen vegetables depends on the best-by date, the preparation method and how the frozen vegetables were stored. Fresh vegetables are great, but frozen are available all year round. With new flash freezing processes frozen vegetables now retain most of their vitamins.

(Open/Unopened)	Freezer
	Past Printed Date
Frozen vegetables last for	8–10 Months

How Long Does Spaghetti Sauce Last?



The shelf life of spaghetti sauce, pasta sauce or tomato sauce depends on a variety of factors including the best-by date, the preparation method and the way it is stored. Spaghetti sauce is most often tomato based and can be used for many dishes besides spaghetti. When properly stored, the shelf life of spaghetti sauce past its best-by date is approximately...

Product	Pantry (Unopened)	Refrigerator (Opened)
	Past Printed Date	After Opening
Tomato based pasta sauce lasts for	1 Year	5–10 Days
Cream based pasta sauce lasts for	6–8 Months	7 Days
Oil based pasta sauce lasts for	1 Year	2 Weeks
Dry package pasta sauce mix lasts for	6–12 Months	7–10 Days(prepared)
Cheese based pasta sauce lasts for	6–12 Months	3 Days

** The important thing with spaghetti sauce is that the jar lid must not be "popped" or raised prior to opening.

Spaghetti Sauce continued on next page

How Long Does Spaghetti Sauce Last? (cont.)

Remember, once spaghetti sauce is opened – whether it came from a jar, a can, a package, or homemade spaghetti sauce it should be kept stored in the refrigerator and used within 5–10 days depending on the brand of sauce. Therefore, be sure to cook your sauce if it has been opened and stored in the fridge for longer than 4–5 days – but toss the sauce for sure if it has been more than 9–10 days or if you see any signs of mold formation.

Product	Freezer (Opened)
	In Freezer Container
Cheese based pasta sauce lasts for	3 Months
Tomato based pasta sauce lasts for	3 Months

How Long Do Fresh Fruits Last?



Fruits are nature’s healthy cure for the sweet tooth and so much more. Fruits provide protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and fiber all wrapped up into neat little packages. Fruits and vegetables do slowly lose anti-oxidants as they age beyond their peak, so for optimal nutrition they should be eaten at their peak of freshness. In any case, fruits can remain safe to consume for extended periods of time beyond their peak of freshness, if properly handled.

Apples Expiration Date			
(Unopened)	Pantry	Refrigerator	
Fresh apples lasts for	2–4 Weeks	1–2 Months	
Packaged fresh cut apples lasts for	–	3–5 Days	
Applesauce lasts for	1–2 Months (Unopened)	1–2 Weeks (Open)	
Apple pie lasts for	1–2 Days	4–5 Days	

More fresh fruits on next two pages

How Long Do Fresh Fruits Last? (cont.)

Avocados Expiration Date

(Unopened)	Shelf	Fridge	
Fresh avocados last for	3-4 Days	7-10 Days	
Homemade guacamole lasts for	3-4 Hours	1-2 Days	

Bananas Expiration Date

	Counter	Refrigerator	Freezer
Fresh bananas last for	2-7 Days	2-9 Days	2-3 Months

Blueberries Expiration Date

(Unopened/Opened)	Counter	Refrigerator	Freezer
Fresh whole blueberries last for	2-3 Days	5-10 Days	6-8 Months

Grapes Expiration Date

(Whole)	Counter	Refrigerator	Freezer
Grapes last for	3-5 Days	5-10 Days	3-5 Months

Oranges Expiration Date

	Counter	Refrigerator	
Fresh oranges last for	2-3 Weeks	1-2 Months	
Cut oranges last for	Same Day	1-2 Days	

How Long Do Fresh Fruits Last? (cont.)

Strawberries Expiration Date

(Unopened/Opened)	Counter	Refrigerator	Freezer
Fresh whole strawberries last for	1-2 Days	5-7 Days	6-8 Months
Fresh cut strawberries last for	1 Day	1-3 Days	3-4 Months

Tomatoes Expiration Date

	Counter	Refrigerator	
Fresh tomatoes last for	1 Week	2 Weeks	
Canned tomatoes last for	1 Year-18 Months (Unopened)	7 Days (Opened)	

Watermelon Expiration Date

	Counter	Refrigerator	
Watermelon - whole lasts for	7-10 Days	2-3 Weeks	
Watermelon - cut lasts for	1 Day	3-5 Days	

How Long Does Bread Last?



Since preservatives play a large part in the answer to how long bread lasts, the answer ranges from a few days to several weeks or more. The shelf life of bread depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-by date, the preparation method and how it was stored.

Opened/ Unopened	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Bakery bread lasts for	2–3 Days	Not Recommended	6 Months
Packaged bagels (soft) last for	5–7 Days	7–14 Days	6 Months
Bakery bagels last for	2–3 Days	Not Recommended	6 Months
Packaged bread (soft) lasts for	5–7 Days	Not Recommended	6 Months
Refrigerator biscuit dough (biscuits & rolls) lasts for	2 Hours	1–2 Weeks	Not Recommended
Frozen bread dough (soft) lasts for	1 Day	2–3 Days	1 Year
Cooked french toast lasts for	2 Hours	5–7 Days	6–8 Months
Bread crumbs last for	5–6 Months	Not Recommended	6–8 Months
Croutons last for	5–6 Months	Not Recommended	Not Recommended

How Long Does Cereal Last?



The shelf life of cereal depends on a variety of factors, such as the best before date, the preparation method and how and where the product is stored. Because of its relatively low cost, ease of use and high calorie density, cereal is one of the most popular grains around when looking for a quick breakfast or a late night snack. Cereal can be processed from almost any type of grain.

(Unopened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Cheerios last for	6–8 Months	–
Shredded Wheat lasts for	6–8 Months	–
Box of Cereal lasts for	6–8 Months	–
(Opened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
Cereal lasts for	4–6 Months	–
Cooked Cereal lasts for	–	4–5 Days

How Long Does Oatmeal Last?



The shelf life of oatmeal is so long that many ask “does oatmeal go bad?”. The actual shelf life of oatmeal varies with the variety, packaging and storage method used on the product.

Oatmeal is the most popular hot cereal, but it can also be used in many other recipes. It is both high in fiber and low in fat which makes it a great nutritional choice. Oatmeal is typically prepared on the stove top and then milk and sugar are added.

Unopened or Opened (and re-sealed)	Pantry	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	
Instant Oatmeal lasts for	1–2 Years	–
Flavored/Cream Instant Oatmeal lasts for	6–9 Months	–
1 minute Oatmeal lasts for	2–3 Years	–
5 minute Oatmeal lasts for	2–3 Years	–
Steel Cut Oatmeal (Irish Oatmeal) lasts for	1–2 Years	–

How Long Does Rice Last?



The shelf life of rice is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the type of rice, whether it is cooked or not, its packaging and how it is stored. It is the most important staple food for a large part of the world’s human population, providing more than one fifth of the calories consumed worldwide by the human species. Like pasta, another grain, rice comes in a variety of types (white, brown, wild, short grain, long grain, etc.) and is often mixed with spices. Because of its relatively low cost, high calorie density, long shelf life and strong nutritional qualities, it is no wonder that it is enjoyed by billions of people daily. However, not all rice is created equal. So how long does white, brown or wild rice last?

When properly stored, the shelf life of rice is approximately...

(Raw)	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
White rice lasts for	4–5 Years	–	–
Oxygen free white rice* lasts	25–30 Years	–	30* Years
Brown rice lasts for	6–8 Months	8–12 Months	–
Wild rice lasts for	6–8 Months	–	–
Minute rice lasts for	4–5 Years	–	–
(Cooked)	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
White rice lasts for	–	5–7 Days	6–8 Months
Brown rice lasts for	–	4–5 Days	6–8 Months

How Long Does Pasta Last?



Dried pasta will last for 1–2 years beyond a “best-by” date, whereas fresh pasta will last for 4–5 days beyond a “best-by” date. The shelf life of pasta depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-by date, the preparation method and how it was stored.

Dried pasta is made from semolina flour and water. Fresh pasta (homemade or purchased in the refrigerator section) usually includes eggs. Because of its relatively low cost and major versatility, it is one of the most popular food items in the world.

Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer	
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	
Dry Pasta lasts for	1–2 Years	–	–
Dry Noodles last for	1–2 Years	–	–
Fresh Pasta lasts for	–	4–5 Days	6–8 Months
Fresh Noodles last for	–	4–5 Days	6–8 Months
Cooked Pasta lasts for	–	7 Days	6–8 Months
Cooked Noodles last for	–	7 Days	6–8 Months

How Long Does Pizza Last?



Leftover pizza lasts for 5 days in the refrigerator. Frozen pizza last for about a year, or 6 months past a “best-by” date, in the freezer. The shelf life of pizza depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the pizza is stored.

Unopened)	Counter	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Date	Past Date	Past Date
Frozen Pizza lasts for	1 Day	3–5 Days	4–6 Months
Homemade Pizza lasts for	–	3–5 Days	4–6 Months

How Long Do Tortillas Last?



Tortillas generally last for a week after their “best-by” date on the counter and about a month if placed in the fridge. But, the shelf life of tortillas depends not only on the best-by date but also the processing and how they are stored.

(Unopened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Flour Tortillas last for	1 Week	3–4 Weeks
Corn Tortillas last for	7–10 Days	6–8 Weeks
Spinach Tortillas last for	1 Week	3–4 Weeks
Whole Wheat Tortillas last	1 Week	3–4 Weeks
Homemade Tortillas last	2–3 Days	5–7 Days

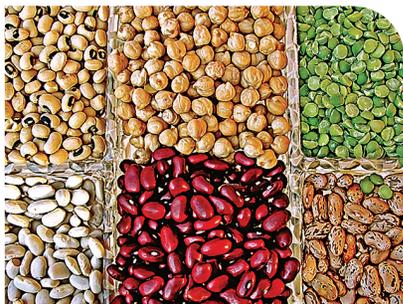
How Long Does Peanut Butter Last?



The shelf life of peanut butter depends on a variety of factors, such as the best before date, the preparation method and how it was stored. Fresh peanut butter is made of peanuts, that’s it! But manufacturers will add oil, salt, sugar and/or other preservatives to their jars. Peanut butter is naturally high in fat which raises the “good” cholesterol levels, just beware of any added trans fats on the nutrition label of your specific brand.

(Unopened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Smooth Peanut Butter lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Crunchy Peanut Butter lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Natural Peanut Butter lasts for	2–3 Months	3–6 Months
(Opened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
Homemade Peanut Butter lasts for	–	3–6 Months
Natural Peanut Butter lasts for	–	5–6 Months
Smooth Peanut Butter lasts for	3–4 Months	6–8 Months
Crunchy Peanut Butter lasts for	3–4 Months	6–8 Months

How Long Do Beans Last?



Dried beans last indefinitely, canned beans last for years and fresh beans last about a week. The shelf life of beans depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date the preparation method and how the beans are stored. Beans are classified as legumes—not technically a vegetable. They are technically seeds, although sometimes, as in green beans, the whole pod can be eaten. Because of their relatively low cost, low fat, low cholesterol and low maintenance—balanced with high protein, high fiber, high vitamins and high versatility—beans are a great addition to any meal.

Unopened	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Dried Beans last for	Indefinite	–	–
Canned Beans last for	1 Year	–	–
Fresh Green Beans last for	1–2 Days	7–10 Days	Cook first
Lentils (Dried) last for	Indefinite	–	–
Opened	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
Canned Beans last for	–	5 Days	3–5 months
Cooked Beans last for	–	5 Days	1 Year
Bean Sprouts last for	1 Day	3–4 Days	2–3 weeks
Hummus lasts for	–	4–5 Days	Not recommended

How Long Do Peas Last?



Fresh peas can last up to 7 days in the fridge, but there are lots of variables that need further explanation. The shelf life of peas, since there is usually no sell-by date, depends on the preparation method and how the peas are stored. Peas, like beans, are classified as legumes—not technically a vegetable but usually considered one for cooking purposes. Peas are technically the seeds which grow inside the pea pod. Because of their relatively low ratings in cost, fat, size and cholesterol yet high rankings in protein, fiber, vitamins and starch—they are easy to slip into many recipes.

Unopened	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh Pea Pods last	2–3 Days (Do not shell until ready to use)	3–5 Days	1 Year (Blanch and shell first)
Fresh Snap Peas last	2–3 Days	5–7 Days	1 Year (Blanch first)
Dried Split Peas (regular packaging) last for	4–5 Years	–	–
Dried Split Peas (with O2 absorbers) last for	Indefinite	–	–
Canned Peas last for	1 Year	–	–
Lentils (Dried) last for	Indefinite	–	–
Opened	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
Canned Peas last for	–	5–6 Days (remove from can first)	–
Cooked Peas last for	–	5–6 Days	1 Year
Chic Peas last for	–	4–5 Days	–

How Long Does Coffee Last?



Coffee is a beverage that can be served hot or cold and provide the body with nourishment and hydration, replacing many of the fluids that we lose each day. Most of these drinks contain caffeine, but they also come in decaffeinated varieties.

They are only stay safe to drink for a certain period of time once prepared.

(Unopened/ Sealed)	Pantry	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Ground Coffee lasts for	3–5 Months	1–2 Years
Whole Bean Coffee lasts for	6–9 Months	2–3 Years
Instant Coffee lasts for	2–20 Years	Indefinite
(Opened)	Pantry	Freezer
	Once Opened	Once Opened
Ground Coffee lasts for	3–5 Months	3–5 Months
Coffee Beans last for	6 Months	2 Years
Instant Coffee (freeze dried) lasts for	2–20 Years	Indefinite

How Long Does Tea Last?



Unopened, packaged tea can last a year beyond any “best-by” date stamped on the package. Does tea expire? Tea will eventually lose its flavor, but dry leaves will last a very long time. The shelf life of tea depends on a variety of factors, such as the best before date, the preparation method and how it was stored.

Tea is rich in antioxidants and relatively low in cost, it is one of the most popular drinks in the world.

(Unprepared)	Pantry	Freezer
	Past Date	Past Date
Packaged Tea lasts for	6–12 Months	1–2 Years
Loose Tea lasts for	6–12 Months	1–2 Years
Powder Iced Tea Mix lasts for	6–12 Months	1–2 Years
(Prepared)	Refrigerator	Freezer
Prepared Tea lasts for	3–5 Days	6–8 Months

How Long Do Sports Drinks Last?



Sport drinks are good for 9 months beyond a “best-by” date. Gatorade will eventually deteriorate. The shelf life of sport drinks is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the processing method, best-by date, exposure to light and heat, and how the sport drink was stored. Gatorade, Powerade, Propel and Vitamin Water are all unique formulas containing sodium, potassium, and essential carbohydrates (sugars) and some also have caffeine. Gatorade and other sport drinks are used to replenish the body during or after exercise.

(Unopened)	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Gatorade bottles last for	9 Months
Powerade lasts for	9 Months
Propel lasts for	9 Months
Vitamin Water lasts for	9 Months
Gatorade Dry Powder lasts for	6–8 Months
(Opened)	Refrigerator
All Sport Drinks last for	3–5 Days

How Long Does Water Last?

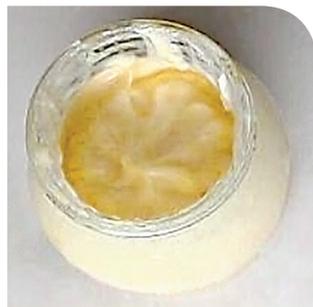


Water is the most abundant compound on Earth and it is essential to every form of life. Since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not require a shelf life for bottled water, the actual shelf life of water is indefinite! Because of this, you will probably not find any sell-by, use-by or best-by dates on your bottle of water. Because of this, many people ask does water go bad? It really does not go bad on its own, but packaging and other environmental factors can actually cause water to go bad.

(Unopened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
Bottled water lasts for	2+ Years	2+ Years
Flavored water lasts for	9 Months	9 Months
Vitamin water lasts for	9 Months	9 Months
Sparkling water lasts for	1+ Years	1+ Years
(Opened)	Pantry	Refrigerator
Sparkling water lasts for	2–3 Hours	2–3 Days
Bottled water lasts for	2–3 Hours	3–5 Days

Freezing bottled water for consumption is not recommended because of the chemicals contained in the bottle. Freezing and boiling temperatures break down the chemicals in plastic bottles which can then leak into the liquid. You can freeze and re-freeze them (but NOT sparkling water) for use in a cooler or ice chest – but do not drink them when thawed (see further notes below).

How Long Does Mayonnaise Last?



Unopened mayonnaise will last at least a week beyond a “best-by” date, erring on the safe side. The shelf life of mayonnaise regardless of such things as the sell-by date, use-by date, or best before date is not very long. Mayonnaise, or Mayo for short, despite its high concentration of fat is a tricky one—it can look fine, but make you very sick.

Unopened	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Mayonnaise lasts for	1 Week
Miracle Whip lasts for	1 Week
Opened	Refrigerator
Mayonnaise lasts for	1 Month
Miracle Whip lasts for	1 Month

How Long Does Salad Dressing Last?



Salad dressings last for 1–4 months beyond the date printed on the bottle, depending on several variables discussed below. The shelf life of salad dressing lasts beyond the sell-by date or best-by date if unopened or stored properly in the refrigerator. Both storage and shelf life greatly depend upon that difference in the base of the dressing.

Unopened/Opened	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Ranch Dressing lasts for	1–2 Months
Blue Cheese Dressing lasts for	1–2 Months
Caesar Dressing lasts for	1–2 Months
Thousand Island Dressing lasts for	1–2 Months
Italian Dressing lasts for	3–4 Months
Balsamic Vinaigrette lasts for	3–4 Months

How Long Does Oil Last?



The shelf life of oil depends on the best before date and how it is stored. Many people ask “does oil go bad”? Although they do tend to last longer than their best before dates, the answer to does oil go bad is most definitely “yes”!

Oils are extracted from various plants—either from fruits as in olive, vegetables as in corn, seeds as in sunflower, or nuts as in peanut.

(Unopened)	Pantry	Fridge
Avocado Oil lasts for	9–12 Months	1 Year
Blended Oil lasts for	2 Years	–
Canola Oil lasts for	2 Years	–
Coconut Oil lasts for	Months–Years	–
Corn Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Chili Oil lasts for	9–12 Months	1 Year
EVOO(Extra Virgin Olive Oil) lasts for	2–3 Years	–
Grape Seed Oil lasts for	3 Months	6 Months
Hazelnut Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Macadamia Nut Oil lasts for	2 Years	2–3 Years
Olive Oil lasts for	2–3 Years	–
Peanut Oil lasts for	3 Years	3 Years
Sesame Oil lasts for	1 Years	2 Years

How Long Does Oil Last? (cont.)

(Unopened)	Pantry	Fridge
Safflower Oil lasts for	2 Years	2 Years
Sunflower Oil lasts for	2 Years	2 Years
Truffle Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Vegetable Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Walnut Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
(Opened)	Pantry	Fridge
Avocado Oil lasts for	6–8 Months	9–12 Months
Blended Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Canola Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Coconut Oil lasts for	Month–Years	–
Corn Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Chili Oil lasts for	6 Months	1 Year
Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) lasts for	2–3 Years	–
Grape Seed Oil lasts for	3 Months	6 Months
Hazelnut Oil lasts for	3 Months	9–12 Months
Macadamia Nut Oil lasts for	2 Years	2–3 Years
Olive Oil lasts for	2–3 Years	–
Peanut Oil lasts for	2 Years	2 Years
Sesame Oil lasts for	6–8 Months	2 Years
Safflower Oil lasts for	1 Year	1–2 Years
Sunflower Oil lasts for	1 Year	1–2 Years
Truffle Oil lasts for	4–6 Months	6–8 Months
Vegetable Oil lasts for	1 Year	–
Walnut Oil lasts for	3–4 Months	6–8 Months
Spray Oil Can lasts for	2 Years	–



About Island Harvest Food Bank

Island Harvest Food Bank is a leading hunger-relief organization that provides food and other resources to people in need. Always treating those it helps with dignity and respect, its goal is to end hunger and reduce food waste on Long Island through efficient food collection and distribution; enhanced hunger-awareness and nutrition-education programs; job training; and direct services targeted at children, senior citizens, veterans, and others at risk of food insecurity. As a result of Island Harvest Food Bank's dynamic business model, more than 94 percent of expended resources go directly to programs and services that support more than 300,000 Long Islanders facing hunger. Island Harvest Food Bank is a lead agency in the region's emergency response preparedness for food and product distribution and is a member of Feeding America®, the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief organization. For five consecutive years, Island Harvest Food Bank has earned a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, a leading independent charity watchdog organization. Island Harvest Food Bank is among just 9% of the organizations rated by Charity Navigator to merit the four-star designation. More information about Island Harvest Food Bank is at www.islandharvest.org.

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