

Stocking Your Cupboards

Your kitchen is not just for preparing food. It is also a place to store food. Food is stored in kitchen cupboards, shelves, cabinets, refrigerators and freezers, depending on the type of food. Each of these places can also be considered a pantry. A pantry is any cool, dry place used to store food.

There are tricks to storing food well, so that it's ready to use when you need it. By keeping your pantry stocked with basic supplies, you will be able to prepare healthy meals, shop less frequently, and save money.

The key to storing food is to rotate your supply regularly. Some foods keep longer than others, so for every item you buy, write the date you buy each item directly on the bottle or can. Keep the oldest items on the front of the shelf. If you remember to check the expiration date of the item behind the one you are using, and use that next item before it expires, you will never have to throw away outdated food!

In the absence of expiration dates stamped on the food you buy, use these charts to determine the shelf life of various foods.



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Food	Shelf Life	Helpful Hints
Canned vegetables Whole, crushed, or chopped tomatoes Tomato sauce Tomato paste Sweet potatoes Artichoke hearts Chilies Corn Green beans Mushrooms Peas Pumpkin	1 year	Store cans in your coolest kitchen cabinet. Choose low sodium vegetables or rinse with water before cooking to reduce the sodium
Canned Fruit – low sugar syrups Mandarin oranges Pineapple Pears Peaches Fruit cocktail	1 year	
Beans Canned: Pork and beans Baked beans Canned or dry: Red, black, chickpeas, kidney, white, pinto Dry: lentil, split pea	1 year canned 6 months to 1 year, dry	
Canned Meats Tuna (water packed) Minced clams Chicken Pink or red salmon	1 year	
Soups and Broth Chicken, vegetable and beef broth Cream soups (low fat) – mushroom, broccoli, chicken, and celery Other broth-based or water-based soups	1 year	
Herbs and Spices Salt Black pepper Rosemary Oregano Paprika Chili powder Cinnamon Thyme Curry powder	Ground, 6 months Whole (dry), 1 year	Keep in a cool spot. Replace if aroma fades. Spices can be expensive, so buy small amounts and replace when freshness is gone.

Continued on the next page...>>

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Food	Shelf Life	Helpful Hints
Staples		Refrigerate to keep longer.
Baking powder	6 months	
Baking soda	18 months	
Corn starch	18 months	
Bouillon cubes	12 months	
Whole wheat, all-purpose flour	6-12 months	
White, brown, and confectioner's sugar	Never spoils	Pack brown sugar in an airtight container to avoid hardening.
Honey	1 month	
Olive oil	3 months	
Salad oil	6 months	
White, wine, cider vinegar	12 months	
Evaporated milk	12 months	
Dry milk	12 months	
Cooking spray	2 years	
Peanut butter	6 months	Keeps 2 months once opened.
Ketchup, barbecue sauce, chili sauce	1 year	
Bread, Pasta, Rice and Cereal		
Whole wheat bread	2-4 days, if left on counter 7-14 days, if left in refrigerator	
Macaroni, spaghetti	1 year	
Other types and sizes of noodles	1 year	
Oats	6-12 months	
Ready to eat cereal	Check date	
Tortillas	2-4 days, or 4-7 days in refrigerator	
Brown and white rice	1 year	

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Food	Shelf Life	Helpful Hints
Refrigerated foods		
Fresh fruits and vegetables	Varies, about 1 week	
Eggs	1 month	1 week for best flavor.
Milk	1 month	
Yogurt	2 weeks	
Cheese	6 months, unopened 3-4 weeks, opened	
Freezer items		
Frozen vegetables such as corn, peas, spinach, broccoli, green beans	8 months	
Frozen fruits like blueberries, strawberries, peaches and raspberries	4-6 months	
Chicken breasts	6 months	

There are times that you will find yourself without the proper measuring tool. The following guidelines will help you figure out the correct measurements and help you estimate the quantities of food you need for a recipe as you make your grocery list.

Equivalent Measures	
Dash	2 to 3 drops or less than 1/8 teaspoon [tsp.]
1 tablespoon [Tbsp.]	3 teaspoons
1/4 cup	4 tablespoons
8 ounces [oz.]	1 cup
1 pound [lb.]	16 ounces
1 pint	2 cups
1 quart	4 cups
1 gallon [gal.]	4 quarts

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Food Equivalents

Food	Quantity	Is Equivalent to:
Apple	1 medium	1 cup
Banana	1 medium	1/3 cup mashed
Beans, dry	1 cup	2 to 2 1/2 cups cooked
Bread	1 1/2 slices	1 cup soft crumbs
Butter	1 stick or 1/4 pound	1/2 cup
Cheese, grated	1 pound	5 cups
Crackers, graham	14 squares	1 cup fine crumbs
Crackers, saltine	28 crackers	1 cup fine crumbs
Egg	4-5 whole	1 cup
Flour, white, all-purpose	1 pound	3 3/4 cups
Lemon	1 medium	3 tablespoon juice
Marshmallows	16 large (1" square)	1/4 pound
Noodles, cooked	8 ounce package	7 cups
Noodles, uncooked	4 ounces (1 1/2 cups)	2-3 cups cooked
Noodles, macaroni, cooked	8 ounce package	6 cups
Noodles, macaroni, uncooked	4 ounces (1 1/4 cups)	2-3 cups cooked
Noodles, spaghetti, uncooked	7 ounces	4 cups cooked
Nuts, chopped	1/2 pound	1 cup
Onion	1 medium	1/2 cup
Orange	3-4 medium	1 cup juice
Raisins	1 pound	3 1/2 cups
Rice, brown or wild	1 cup	4 cups cooked
Rice, regular	1 cup	3 cups cooked
Sugar, brown	1 pound	2 1/2 cups
Sugar, powdered	1 pound	3 1/2 cups
Sugar, white	1 pound	2 cups
Vanilla wafers	22 wafers	1 cup fine crumbs

