

Cold Food Storage Guide

Commercial kitchens and those responsible for serving food to patrons must take special care when storing food within the refrigerator or freezer for extended periods of time. The below table indicates the expected storage time for common food groups; however, it is essential to use these times as a guide and regularly monitor the condition of each ingredient to avoid placing patrons at risk of food-related illnesses due to spoiled meals.



Food	Expected Refrigerator Storage Time	Expected Freezer Storage Time
Whole Red Meat (Beef, lamb etc.)	3 to 5 Days	6 to 12 Months
Poultry (Chicken, duck etc.)	3 Days	Whole: 12 Month Pieces: 9 Months
Pork	3 Days	6 to 12 Months
Processed meat (Mince, sausages etc.)	3 Days	1 to 2 Months
Fish	3 Days	3 to 6 Months
Shellfish	2 Days	3 Months
Deli Meat	3 to 5 Days	1 to 2 Months
Milk	3 Days	Do not freeze
Eggs	3 to 6 Weeks	Do not freeze
Fruit	3 to 4 Days	6 Months
Vegetables	1 Week	Avoid freezing unless blanched, then 12 Months
Leftovers	2 to 3 Days	Not recommended

Food Storage Tips

- Utilise high-quality **storage containers** when storing ingredients within the refrigerator or freezer. Ensure to inspect each container's condition before use and discard any with cracks, broken seals, or evidence of contamination.
- **Vacuum seal bags** can help extend the expected storage times by removing any opportunity for bacteria to enter the food storage area. These products are especially recommended for fleshy ingredients such as fish and poultry cuts such as chicken breast.
- Ensure to regularly monitor the internal temperatures of refrigerators and freezers to ensure that unexpected changes are rectified immediately. Utilising a **specialised thermometer** with an alert system helps safeguard against product spoilage in a power or product failure.
- Implement a **labelling system** to help with stock rotation. Through using First in, First out (FIFO) principles, rest assured that the product isn't at deteriorating the back of the freezer.