

# Basic tips for freezing food



Freezing is one of the simplest and least time-consuming ways to save money, by preparing food in advance or saving excess amounts from going to waste. A full freezer is most energy efficient. Post a 'frozen foods' inventory near the freezer and keep it up-to-date by listing the foods and dates of freezing as you put them in the freezer. Check them off as you take them out. By keeping an inventory, you will know the exact amounts and kinds of foods that are in the freezer at all times. It also helps to keep foods from being forgotten!

## Foods which DO NOT freeze well:

Cabbage, tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, parsley, radishes, whole celery  
Cream or custard fillings, milk sauces, sour cream  
Cooked egg whites, icings made from egg whites  
Fried foods  
Fruit jelly, gelatine  
Mayonnaise (it separates; use salad dressing instead)  
Sour cream (it becomes thin and watery)  
Cooked macaroni, spaghetti or rice

## Storage times for basic products:

Bacon - one month  
Butter or margarine - nine months  
Cheese:  
- Dry-cured cottage cheese, ricotta two weeks  
- Natural, process three months  
Cream - two months  
Whipped cream - one month  
Fish or shellfish:  
- 'Fatty' fish, three months  
- 'Lean' fish, six months  
- Shellfish, three months  
Fruits (except citrus) - eight to twelve months  
Citrus fruits and juices - six to eight months  
Ham - two months  
Meat, ground or stewing - three months  
Meat, cooked or leftover - two to three months  
Fresh beef or lamb roasts - twelve months  
Fresh pork or veal roasts - eight months  
Fresh beef steak - twelve months  
Fresh lamb or veal chops/steak - nine months  
Fresh pork chops - four months  
Fresh variety deli meats - four months  
Poultry:  
- Cooked, with gravy, six months  
- Cooked, no gravy, one month  
- Duck or Goose, six months  
- Uncooked (whole), chicken or turkey, 12 months  
- Uncooked chicken pieces, nine months  
- Uncooked turkey pieces, six months  
Vegetables - eight to twelve months  
Yoghurt (regular, plain) - one month  
Yoghurt (regular, flavoured) - five months

## Prepare ready-to-eat frozen meals

You can buy 50 containers from a packaging company for around \$14. When cooking meals, I always cook too much and freeze the remainders. These can be used for lunches. If ever I don't feel like cooking, we have a frozen meal instead of ordering take away.

Contributed by: *Kate O*

## Bulk buy and freeze for bacon lovers

Our family loves bacon so I always buy it in bulk on special and freeze by rolling each strip up and putting into a Tupperware container rind side down. It's easy to get out when frozen, and we enjoy our bacon even more at half the usual price!

Contributed by: *Vicky D*

## Freeze leftover wine into ice cubes for cooking

If you don't want to waste leftover wine, simply pour it into an ice-cube tray and freeze it. When you next need wine with for cooking, simply take out a wine ice cube and use it. Easy!

Contributed by: *Cornelia M*

## Freeze week's sandwiches

My mother used to make a week's worth of sandwiches at once and freeze them. While this is not suited to fresh tomato and similar fillings, it works a treat with ham, cheese and most savoury spreads.

Contributed by: *Leonie Edge*

## Freeze tomato paste

Don't let leftover tomato paste or puree go to waste. I buy a large tin of tomato puree and freeze it in blocks in an ice cube tray. Keep the blocks frozen in bags and just use them as needed. Each one is equivalent to about a teaspoon of paste in taste, they are convenient and don't go off. The cost comes out at least as good as the jars of paste.

Contributed by: *Ben C*

## Freeze vegetables for no waste

We found that too much money was being wasted on vegetables that were not eaten in time, and would 'go off'. This little method has fixed the problem! As soon as we return from the shops, I peel, chop, bag and freeze my vegetables. Not only have I saved money, but they cook in less than half the time. It really works! None of our vegetables go to waste anymore, we save money and also save on electricity as my cooking time is cut in half. Try it!

Contributed by: *Cristina G*

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