



Keep your fresh fruits and veggies from going to waste with these tips:

- When purchasing fresh fruits and veggies: if you will eat them right away, buy ripe. If you won't, buy them before they are ripe. Or, buy a mix – a few that are ripe to eat right away and a few that will ripen later.
- If refrigerator space is limited, some fruits and veggies can be stored in a cool room or basement instead. Try potatoes, beets, carrots, other root veggies, apples, and pears.

FOOD STORAGE

Buying fruits and veggies in bulk can save money if you have extra storage space. Freeze the extras to use another time.

Most produce maintains its quality when frozen up to about 6 months (for fruits) or 12 months (for veggies).

Blanching slows the loss of flavor, color, texture, and nutrients during freezing. Veggies frozen without blanching are safe to eat, but may not maintain their quality for as long. Hearty veggies like broccoli, carrots, corn, and squash can be frozen without blanching, but less-hearty veggies like cooking greens and peas do better with blanching.

Ready to freeze some fruits and veggies? Follow these simple steps:

1. Rinse produce. Pat dry.
2. Prep as directed in the chart on page 2.
3. If freezing vegetables, blanch for the amount of time shown in the chart below. Using a slotted spoon, immediately transfer boiled veggies to a bowl of ice water. Drain well and pat dry.
4. Place produce in a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze.
5. Transfer frozen produce to a large freezer-safe bag or other airtight container.

blanching

verb.

Blanching is a cooking process in which a food, usually a vegetable or fruit, is quickly cooked in boiling water, removed after a brief, timed interval, and finally plunged into iced water or placed under cold running water to halt the cooking process. Blanching foods helps reduce quality loss over time.

FOOD STORAGE

Fruit/Veggie	Prep Steps	Blanching Time
BELL PEPPERS	Cut out stem and remove seeds. Cut into ½-inch pieces.	2-3 minutes
BROCCOLI & CAULIFLOWER	Cut into 1- to 1 ½-inch florets.	3 minutes
BLACKBERRIES, BLUEBERRIES, & RASPBERRIES	Remove any stems	Not needed
CARROTS	Peel and cut into ¼-inch slices.	2 minutes
CHERRIES	Remove stems and pit.	Not needed
COOKING GREENS (SPINACH, COLLARDS, KALE, SWISS CHARD)	Remove any tough stems and ribs. Chop.	2-3 minutes
CORN	Remove husks and cut corn off the cob.	2 minutes
GREEN BEANS	Trim stem ends.	3 minutes
NECTARINES, PLUMS, & PEACHES	Remove pit and cut into sixths.	Not needed
PEAS	For edible pods, remove tough stems. If using shelled peas, remove from pod.	1-2 minutes
STRAWBERRIES	Remove stem and hull. Cut large berries in half.	Not needed
SUMMER SQUASH	Remove stem and hull. Cut large berries in half.	2-3 minutes
TOMATOES	Remove core.	Not needed