

Code Date Extensions

■ When is it safe to use food beyond the printed dates?

If an item is generally considered safe to store and use beyond the printed BEST BEFORE date (based on general knowledge and industry practices), that duration is listed in the table below. Remember, don't consume food that has a foul odor, mold, foreign objects, or a change in color.

Product		Storage Life Past Expiration Date on Package		
		Shelf	Refrigerator	Freezer
Baby Food	Dry cereal mixes	<i>printed date</i>		
	Food in jars or cans	<i>printed date</i>		
	Formula	<i>printed date</i>		
	Juice	1 year		
Beverages	Bottled water (all varieties)— <i>store in a cool, dark place, away from chemicals</i>	12 months+		
	Cocoa, cocoa mixes	36 months		
	Coffee (ground)	2 years		
	Coffee (instant)	1-2 years		
	Juice bottles (shelf-stable)	9 months		
	Juice boxes	4-6 months		
	Milk (evaporated or non-fat dry)	12 months		
	Milk (shelf-stable)	6 months		
	Non-dairy milk (rice or soy, shelf-stable)	6 months		
Canned Foods	Beans	3 years		
	Fish: salmon, tuna, sardines, mackerel	3 years		
	High-acid foods: fruit (including applesauce, juices), pickles, sauerkraut, baked beans with mustard/vinegar, tomatoes and tomato-based soups/sauces	1-2 years		
	Low-acid foods: non-tomato-based soups/sauces/gravy, pasta, stews, cream sauces, vegetables (not tomatoes)	2-3 years		
	Meat: beef, chicken, pork, turkey	2-3 years		
Condiments, Sauces, Syrups	BBQ sauce, jam/jelly, ketchup, mustard, salsa, salad dressing, syrup, olive/vegetable oil	12 months		
	Mayonnaise (jar, bottle, or packet)	3-6 months		
	Spaghetti sauce (canned or jarred)	18 months		
	Vinegar	2 years		

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Dairy and Cooler Items	Butter		2-3 months	12 months
	Cheese—cottage		10-15 days	
	Cheese—hard		6 months	6-8 months
	Cheese—soft		1-2 weeks	6 months
	Crust—pie or pizza, ready to bake		<i>printed date</i>	2 months
	Dough—biscuit, bread, pizza, cookie		<i>printed date</i>	2-3 months
	Eggs—in shell		4-5 weeks	
	Eggs—pasteurized carton egg substitute, unopened		10 days	12 months
	Margarine		6 months	12 months
	Milk (not shelf-stable)		1 weeks	1-3 months
	Sour cream		2-3 weeks	
	Yogurt		10-14 days	1-2 months
Dry Goods (freshly baked)	Bread—sliced	4 days	14 days	3 months
	Bread—French, loaf, etc.	1 days	14 days	2 months
	Cake—angel food, chiffon, sponge	2 days	7 days	2 months
	Cake—chocolate (unfrosted)	2 days	7 days	4 months
	Cake—pound	4 days	7 days	6 months
	Croissants	1 day	7 days	2 months
	Danish, muffins	2 days	7 days	2 months
Dry Goods (packaged, unopened)	Bagels	1 day	7 days	2 months
	Baking mixes (brownie, cake, muffin, etc.)	12-18 months		
	Beans (dried)	12 months		
	Bread and rolls (commercially prepared)	3-5 days	2-3 weeks	3 months
	Cereal (cold or hot)	12 months		
	Cookies	4 months	2 months	10 months
	Crackers	8 months		
	Flour (white, all purpose or cake)	12 months		
	Flour (whole wheat)	6 months	6+ months	
	Graham crackers	2 months		
	Macaroni and cheese mix	9-12 months		
	Oatmeal	12 months		
	Pasta (dry)	2-3 years		
	Peanut butter	18 months		
	Popcorn kernels	2 years		
	Popcorn (microwave packets)	12 months		
	Rice (brown)	12 months		
	Rice (white)	2 years		
Spices— <i>they lose flavor over time but remain safe to use indefinitely</i>	whole: 4 yrs ground: 2 yrs			
Sugar (brown)	18 months			
Sugar (white)	2+ years			

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Fish	Fatty fish—cooked (salmon, mackerel, perch, bluefish)		5-7 days	3-6 months
	Fatty fish—uncooked (salmon, mackerel, perch, bluefish)		2 days	3-6 months
	Lean fish—cooked (cod, flounder, sole, haddock)		5-7 days	3-6 months
	Lean fish—uncooked (cod, flounder, sole, haddock)		2 days	12 months
Meats (raw)	Beef roasts, beef steaks, pork roasts, pork chops		3-5 days	12 months
	Poultry (chicken or turkey)		2 days	12 months
	Ground meats (beef, pork, lamb, or poultry)		2 days	9-12 months
Meats (processed)	Bacon (unopened)		2 weeks	6 months
	Bacon (opened)		1 week	2 months
	Chicken (fried)		4 days	4 months
	Chicken (nuggets, patties)		2 days	3 months
	Ham (unopened)		2 days	12 months
	Ham (opened)		1 week	1-2 months
	Hot dogs (unopened)		2 weeks	9 months
	Luncheon meats (deli sliced or opened)		3-5 days	
	Luncheon meats (unopened commercial packages)		2 weeks	1-2 months
	Pepperoni, salami		1 month	6 months
	Sausage (smoked links or patties)		1 week	9 months
	Prepared Items, Deli Foods	Chicken (roasted or fried)		3-4 days
Fruit (cut)			<i>printed date</i>	
Guacamole			5-7 days	6 months
Hummus (with preservatives)			2 months	
Main dishes and meals			3-4 days	2-3 months
Meats in gravy or broth (including meat pies)			1-2 days	6 months
Pasta (fresh)			1 week	1 month
Salads (prepared: macaroni, egg, potato, chicken, tuna, etc.)			3-5 days	
Sauces (egg-based, such as hollandaise)			10 days	
Side dishes, cooked vegetables (including potatoes and rice)			3-4 days	1-2 months
Soups, stews			2-3 days	4-6 months
Spinach, salad greens (bagged)			<i>printed date</i>	