

if I buy it, how long will it last ?

Buying large quantities may work out to be cheaper, but only if you can store it properly and use it before it goes bad. All items should have a use by date. This tells you how long you can keep an unopened item. Once the food is open, use this guide to help you decide how long you can store it for.

storage on the shelf or in the pantry

food item	how long can it be stored?
DRY NOODLES	1-2 months
DRY PASTA	1 year
FLOUR	6-8 months
SPICES	2-4 years
SAUCES	1 year
SUGAR	2 years. Sugar does not spoil but eventually may change flavour.
NOTE:	<i>Store all opened packets in air tight containers.</i>

foods stored in the freezer

food item	how long can it be stored?
Bacon	1-2 months
Casserole	2-3 months
Fish	3-4 months
Lamb Chops	2-3 months
Mince	2-3 months
Roasts (beef, lamb, pork, chicken)	4-6 months
Sausages	1-2 months
Steak and Chops	3-4 months
NOTE:	<i>When storing any food in the freezer, wrap food tightly in plastic wrap or in a freezer bag.</i>

cool cooking tips

- If you're trying to save time, keep a jar of crushed garlic and crushed ginger in the fridge so it's always on hand to add to a stir-fry or pasta dish.
- Rinsing your hands with fresh lemon juice helps get rid of the smell of garlic, onions and seafood.
- Curry, the spice traditionally used in Indian cooking does not grow on trees! It is a blend of as little as 5 and as many as 20 spices. Buy a jar of curry paste from the supermarket and keep it in the fridge so you can whip up a quick curry whenever you feel like it. Try red and green Thai curry pastes or Indian curry pastes.
- For good health we should have 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables every day. A serve is equal to a medium potato or ½ cup of frozen veggies or one banana or one medium sized apple.
- For strong bones we need 3 serves of dairy products each day to get our daily calcium requirements. A serve is equal to a glass of milk, a piece of cheese or a tub of yoghurt.
- There are certain fruits and vegetables that should not be stored together. Apples give off a gas called ethylene, which will turn carrots bitter. Potatoes will spoil faster when stored with onions.
- To retain good colour in cooked vegetables, try steaming, stir-frying or micro-waving them until just cooked (al dente!).
- Did you know that you can buy frozen chopped onion in the freezer section of the supermarket? One cup of chopped onion is equivalent to one onion. No more tears!!

I don't have what else can i use ?

- If you don't have all the right cooking bits and pieces, you can usually still create a great meal.
- Here's a list of everyday things you can use for cooking so you can always make do with what you've got in the cupboard.

must haves:

- Fry pan
- Saucepan
- Can opener
- Plate and cup
- Cutlery (knife, fork, spoons)
- Chopping board
- Sharp knife
- Kitchen stove, sink/water, fridge, bench

if you don't have a ...	try a ...
Airtight container	Plastic bag with a tie/peg Clean glass jar Ice cream container
Aluminium foil	Use a plate as a lid In the oven use a baking tray or cake tin as a cover
Baking dish, Casserole dish	Roasting pan Large cake tin Any dish that is oven proof (e.g. pyrex - often these are glass or white with a design) The food will take longer to cook in a deep dish than a wide shallow dish. If you need a lid use aluminium foil.
Bowl	Saucepan Ice cream container Cake tin Salad bowl or jug
Cake tin	Cheap to buy a new or second hand one
Can opener	Very hard to get around this - buy one, buy ring pull tinned foods, or don't buy cans until you have bought a can opener
Chopping board	Large plate
Fry pan	Large saucepan or wok
Grater	Use a sharp knife and chop things finely (<i>watch the fingers</i>)
Greaseproof paper	Clean writing paper butter wrapper

one of those...

what else can i use ?

if you don't have a ...	try a ...
Griller	BBQ Fry pan
Lifter	Egg flip Fork Wide flat knife Spatula
Measuring cup	Any reasonable size coffee mug will do Empty glass jar - as long as you are consistent in your recipe, it doesn't matter
Oven mitt	Dry folded tea towel Dry clean hand towel
Peeler	Peelers are very cheap but a sharp knife will do (<i>watch the fingers</i>) Wash food thoroughly instead of peeling.
Pie plate	Try a cake tin, but you will probably have to cook things a bit longer because the cake tin will be deeper. Disposable foil container
Plastic wrap	Plastic bag, sealed container Aluminum foil
Saucepan	A wide deep fry pan
Saucepan lid	Cover with foil or sit a dinner plate, cake tin, or roasting pan on top (<i>watch out for steam!</i>). Use an oven mitt to lift off.
Steamer	Metal colander (strainer), steaming saucepan or just place a small amount of water in the bottom of a saucepan
Strainer	Wire or plastic sifter Lid of a saucepan held against the pan (<i>watch out for steam!</i>)
Tongs	Forks or spoons
Tray	Any metal oven-proof pan with a flat base Foil, if you don't need a solid base Save the foil base from a frozen pizza.
Wooden spoon	Fork Metal spoon with long handle Spatula Bread and butter knife

food safety tips

did you know ...

- Foods that are “off” or “bad” and will cause food poisoning may not look, smell or taste any different to food that is safe.
- Bacteria multiply on most foods if given the chance - particularly if the temperature is between 5°C and 60°C. You need to keep foods either very cold (*refrigerator cold*) or very hot (*steaming hot*) and NOT at room temperature.
- Bacteria can grow easily on chicken, seafood, eggs, red meats, dairy products and even cooked rice.
- Bacteria can also grow in tea towels and dishcloths.
- Wash tea towels regularly and hang to keep dry.
- The microwave can be used to kill bacteria in:
 - Dishcloths (*dry - high for 30 seconds, wet - high for 3 minutes*)
 - Sponges and non-metal scourers (*dry - high for 30 seconds, wet - high for 1 minute*).

how to store food in the fridge:

- Do not store food in a can once you have opened it. When the can is opened, the rusting process starts and this could make you sick. So transfer food to another storage container.
- Keep raw meat on the bottom shelf of the fridge so the juices don't drip on to other foods.
- Use or freeze meat or left-overs within a day of preparation.
- Check the use-by-date.



food safety tips

how to store fresh fruit and vegetables:

- Potatoes and onions - take out of plastic bag and store in a cool dark spot.
- Leafy and root vegetables such as spinach, carrots and lettuce should be left in a plastic bag in the fridge to prevent wilting and softening.
- Pumpkin pieces should be kept in the crisper section of the fridge.
There is no need to wrap them.
- Tomatoes can be placed straight in the crisper.
- In hot weather, it is advisable to store fruit in the fridge. Always cover cut fruit before placing in the fridge.

how to store meat in the freezer:

HINT: Freezing makes the use-by-date further away

1. Divide meat into meal sized amounts.
2. Wrap tightly in glad wrap or freezer bags.
Make the packages as flat as possible for quick freezing.
3. Write date and name of meat on each package so you can easily identify it later.
4. When packing in freezer, make sure there is air space around each package of meat.
Don't overload the freezer.
5. Keep raw sliced meat in the freezer for a maximum of 3 months.
A piece of meat for roasting will keep for 4-6 months.



food safety tips

how to thaw something frozen:

- Thaw meat and other frozen food in the fridge. Do not thaw food at room temperature (*on a bench*) or in water.
- Only thaw meat in the microwave if you are planning to cook it straight away. Once thawed, cook immediately.
- Thawed meat should not be re-frozen in an uncooked state. If thawed meat is cooked in a meal such as a casserole it is safe to freeze.

how to handle and prepare food properly:



- Wash hands in hot soapy water before preparing food and after touching raw meats.
- Use a different chopping board and utensils when preparing foods which are “*ready to eat*” like a salad, and those which are “*to be cooked*”, like meat. If you have only one chopping board, wash well with hot soapy water before re-using.
- Use different utensils for cooked foods and never place cooked foods on plates that have contained raw products such as meat, poultry and fish.
- When cooking mince, sausages, hamburger patties, rolled roasts and chicken, make sure they are cooked right through and there is no pink meat.



food safety tips

what to do with leftovers:

- Put leftovers in the fridge to cool. Do not leave to cool on the bench.
- Put leftovers in an airtight container and freeze for a quick easy meal.
- When re-heating foods, heat to steaming hot (*above 75°C*) - this will kill any bacteria.
- When re-heating in a microwave, check food is heated all the way through before eating.
- After you have re-heated left over food once, if there is any left, throw it away.
- Use or freeze leftovers within a day of preparation.

cleaning tips:

- Wash dishes with very hot water and detergent
- Always wash glasses first so they don't get food bits on them
- Allow dishes to drip dry
- Always wash the heavily greasy stuff last

