

Canned & Dry Goods Storage Guidelines

STAPLES STORAGE GUIDELINES			
Staples	Storage Times		HANDLING HINTS
	Storage at room temp, 70°F (21°C)	Frozen or Refrigerated	
Baking powder	Up to expiration date on package	Up to expiration date on package.	Keep dry and covered.
Baking soda	2 years	2 years	Keep dry and covered.
Bouillon cubes or granules	2 years		Keep dry and covered.
Bread crumbs, dried	6 months		Keep dry and covered.
Cereals ready-to-eat (unopened)	Unopened; 6-12 months, or 'best by' date on package for best quality. Opened; 2-3 months		If buying in bulk, to prevent possible weevil cross contamination, store away from other dry goods. Refold package liner tightly after opening.
Cereals, hot prep such as; oatmeal, cream of wheat, grits, etc.	Up to 'best by' date on package for best quality and cooking performance		Keep dry and tightly closed and in airtight container or Ziploc bag. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Chocolate, candy bars, candy pieces	Up to 'best by' date on package for best quality and flavor	Frozen; up to 1 year	Keep cool. May freeze several months past 'best by' date. Chocolate may have slight freezer burn to surface which may affect flavor and texture.
Chocolate, pre-melted semi-sweet	1-2 years		Keep cool.
Chocolate, unsweetened	18 months	Frozen; up to 1 year	Keep cool.
Chocolate syrup	Up to expiration date on package	Refrigerate; up to 1 year	Cover tightly.
Cocoa mixes, dry	Up to 'best by' date on package		Store in dry area.
Coffee, canned	Unopened; 2 Years Opened; 2-4 weeks	3-4 months.	Keep tightly closed. Use dry measuring spoon.
Coffee, instant	Unopened; 1-2 years Opened; 4 weeks		Keep tightly closed. Use dry measuring spoon.
Coffee Creamers, non-dairy, dry	Unopened; up to 'best by' date on package Opened; 6 months		Keep lid tightly closed.

Coffee Creamers, non-dairy, liquid		Unopened; refrigerated: up to expiration date Opened; refrigerated: 1 month Unopened, frozen: 2 months	IMPORTANT NOTE: flavors such as chocolate, hazelnut and vanilla are freezable. "Cream" flavor without and additional flavors is NOT freezable.
Cornmeal	12 months	12 months	Keep dry and tightly closed and in airtight container or Ziploc bag. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Cornstarch	18 months		Keep dry and tightly closed and in airtight container or Ziploc bag. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Flour white, whole wheat	6-8 months	Frozen; 12 months	Keep dry and tightly closed and in airtight container or Ziploc bag. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Gelatin, all types	18 months		Keep in original container.
Honey	12 months		Cover tightly. If it crystallizes, warm jar in pan of hot water.
Jellies and jams	12 months		Refrigerate after opening.
Molasses unopened	Unopened; 12 months	Opened; Refrigerate, 6 months	Keep tightly closed.
Marshmallow crème	3-4 months		Cover tightly. Refrigerate after opening to extend storage life. Serve at room temperature.
Marshmallows	2-3 months		Keep in airtight container.
Mayonnaise	Unopened; up to expiration date on package	Opened; Refrigerate up to 2 months, not exceeding expiration date.	Refrigerate after opening. Do not allow to warm up to room temperature once product is open.
Milk, condensed or evaporated	Unopened; 12 months		Invert cans every 2 months.
Milk, nonfat dry	6 months or up to 'best by' date.		Put in airtight container.
Pasta (spaghetti, macaroni)	2 years		Once opened, store in airtight container or Ziploc bag. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Pectin, liquid (opened)	1 month		Re-cap and refrigerate.
Rice, white or brown	2 years or up to 'best by' date.		Keep tightly closed. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.

Rice, flavored or herb	Up to 'best by' date on package		Keep tightly closed. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Salad dressings bottled	Unopened; up to expiration date on package	Opened; up to expiration date on package.	
Oil, Cooking	Up to 'best by' date on package	Up to expiration date	Once opened, refrigerate to maintain flavor quality.
Shortenings, solid	Unopened; 8 months	Refrigerated up to 1 year.	Refrigerate once open. Always use a clean utensil to portion out.
Sugar, brown	1-2 years		Put in airtight container.
Sugar, confectioners	1-2 years		Put in airtight container.
Sugar, granulated	2 years +		Cover tightly.
Sugar, artificial sweeteners	2 years +		Cover tightly.
Syrups	12 months		Keep tightly closed. Refrigerate to extend storage life.
Tea bags	18 months		Put in airtight container.
Tea, instant	3 years		Put in airtight container.
Tea, loose	18 months		Put in airtight container.
Vinegar	Unopened; 2 years Opened; 1 year		Keep tightly closed. Slightly cloudy appearance doesn't affect vinegar. Distilled vinegar keeps longer than cider vinegar.

Expiration date: date by which a food should maintain quality, safety and freshness if handled correctly.

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MIXED AND PACKAGED FOODS STORAGE GUIDELINES			
Mixed and Packaged Foods	Storage Times		HANDLING TIME
	Storage Time at 70°F (21°C)	Frozen or Refrigerated	
Biscuit, Pancake mix	9 months or up to 'best by' date.		Keep cool, dry & airtight. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Brownie, cornbread, muffin or pie crust mixes	9 months or up to 'best by' date.		Keep cool, dry & airtight. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Cakes, purchased	1-2 days	Refrigerated; 2-4 days Frozen; 1-2 months	Refrigeration recommended.
Cake mixes	Up to expiration date on package		Keep cool, dry & airtight. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Casserole mixes such as Hamburger Helper™ brand.	Up to 'best by' date on package.		Keep cool and dry.
Cookies homemade	1-2 weeks		Put in airtight container, keep cool.
Cookies, packaged	2 months		Keep box tightly closed.

Crackers	Up to expiration date on package		Keep box tightly closed.
Frosting, canned	Up to expiration date on package	Once open, refrigerate up to 1 week.	Refrigerate once open.
Pies and pastries		Refrigerate; 2-4 days	
Potatoes, instant	Up to expiration date on package		Keep cool, dry & airtight. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Pudding mixes	Up to expiration date on package		Keep cool and dry.
Rice, mixes	Up to expiration date on package		Keep cool, dry & airtight. Upon receipt of product, freeze below zero for 1 week to prevent weevil infestation and cross contamination.
Sauce and gravy mixes	Up to expiration date on package		Keep cool and dry.
Soup mixes	Up to expiration date on package		Keep cool and dry.
Toaster pastries	Unopened; 2-3 months or up to 'best by' date. Opened; up to 1 week.		Keep cool, dry & airtight.

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CANNED AND DRIED STORAGE GUIDELINES			
Canned and Dried Foods	Storage Times		HANDLING HINTS
	Storage Time at 70°F (21°C)	Frozen or Refrigerated	
Canned foods	Unopened; up to expiration date on package	Opened; refrigerate: 2-3 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Canned fruit juices	Unopened; up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate 2-3 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Catsup, chili sauce	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate up to 4 months or up to 'best by' date.	
Baby food, jarred	Unopened; up to expiration date on package	Open; up to 2 days.	IMPORTANT: Once opened, if feeding directly from jar only refrigerate for 1 day and discard if not used.

Fish and seafood	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate tightly closed, 1-2 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Fruit	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate, 2-4 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Fruits, dried	6 months to 1 year		Keep cool in airtight container; if possible, refrigerate.
Meats	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate, 1-2 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Mustard, prepared yellow	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate up to 4 months or up to 'best by' date.	
Pickles and olives	Up to expiration date on package		
Poultry	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate 1-2 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Sauce, tomato	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate, 2-4 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Vegetables	Up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate, 1-2 days.	Once opened, transfer to glass or plastic ware to avoid metallic taste to transfer to product. Cover tightly and refrigerate
Vegetables, dried	6 months to 1 year		Keep cool in airtight container: if possible, refrigerate.
Spices and herbs, whole and unground	1-2 years		Store airtight, dry, dark and cool. Occasionally check aroma; if faded, replace. Whole cloves, nutmeg and cinnamon sticks maintain quality beyond 2-year period.
Spices, herbs and blends	6 months		
Vanilla and other liquid flavorings	Unopened; 2 years Opened; 1 year		Keep tightly closed. Flavors within the oils escape. IMPORTANT: Upon receipt of product, remove box and discard to prevent infestation transference from grocery store.

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OTHER FOODS STORAGE GUIDELINES			
Other Foods	Storage Times		HANDLING HINTS
	Storage Time at 70°F (21°C)	Frozen or Refrigerated	
Cheese, parmesan and other grated cheeses	Unopened; up to expiration date on package	Open; refrigerate up to 2 months or by 'best by' date.	Refrigeration recommended for both open and closed product. Keep tightly closed.
Coconut, shredded, canned or packed.	Unopened; 12 months	Open; refrigerate, up to 6 months or by 'best by' date.	Once open, transfer product to glass or plastic ware and refrigerate.
Meat substitutes, textured protein products (e.g., imitation bacon bits)	Up to expiration date on package	Refrigerate up to expiration date on package. Follow package instructions.	Some tofu and soy products require daily water change and refrigeration. For bacon bits and preserved meat products, refrigeration is recommended but not necessarily required. In all cases, follow package instructions.
Breakfast, Slim Fast™, or meal substitution drinks	Unopened; up to 'best by' date.	Unopened; refrigerate up to 'best by' date.	Keep in can, closed jars or original packets.
Nuts in shell or cracked nutmeats	Unopened; plastic packaged: 6 months Unopened, canned: 1 year Grocer/deli packaged: 3 months		Refrigerate or freeze for longer storage.
Peanut butter	Unopened; 6-9 months or up to 'best by' date. Opened; 2 months or up to 'best by' date.		Refrigeration extends flavor quality. Use at room temperature.
Peas and beans, dried	12 months		Store in airtight container in cool place.
Popcorn	2 years or up to 'best by' date.		Store in airtight container.
Whipped topping, dry	12 months		Keep cool and dry.
Yeast, dry	Up to expiration date on package	Refrigerate or freeze up to expiration date on package	

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Disclaimer; The guidelines listed above are minimum standards which solely depend upon proper food handling, temperature and light exposure, and exercise of common sense. Improper handling, storage, temperature and light exposure, and exposure to infestation negate all recommended standards and no food should be consumed as a result. Linda Ely, Organizing Matters, is not responsible for intentional or accidental oversight of proper food care, handling, storage or preparation, common sense nor any of the resulting consequences.