

Storing Fruits And Vegetables To Last

The amount of food we throw away every year is quite remarkable... in a bad way. A great deal of that food is produce – fruits and vegetables – that goes bad due to improper storage. This is especially frustrating when you grow your own food, as you're quite literally watching your hard work, time and money decompose and wind up in the trash.

But you can minimize the amount of fruit and vegetables that go bad on your watch with a few helpful storage tips. Read on to find a few such tips for various fruits and vegetables that will ensure your produce stays healthy and fresh for as long as possible – without the use of preservatives or chemicals, I might add.

Vegetables

Tomatoes – Always store tomatoes at room temperature to ensure they stay firm and fresh for as long as possible.

Cucumbers – You can keep cucumbers fresh for several days after buying them by wrapping them in a moist towel and placing them in your refrigerator.

Peppers – Store peppers in a plastic bag for up to two weeks. If you can flash freeze your peppers, even better – this will help them last up to a staggering 10 months!

Green Beans – Green beans do well with humidity but can get moldy when wet. The sweet spot can be found by draping a damp cloth over the beans.

Carrots – Keep carrots in a sealed container and dip them in cold water every few days. Cut off the tops for increased freshness.

Squash – Squash will keep quite well at room temperature if you can keep them out of direct sunlight.

Peas – Place peas in an open container and leave them in your refrigerator for best results.

Onions – Keep onions in a cool, dark area with good air circulation.

Broccoli – Keep broccoli in the fridge wrapped in a damp towel or left in an open container. I keep mine on the bottom shelf to avoid the smell of other food affecting the broccoli, a good tip in general if you're keeping anything in an unsealed container.

Corn – For best results, you should keep the corn in their husks until they're ready to be eaten. Keep corn refrigerated.

Garlic – Keep garlic away from direct sunlight in a dry place – they do not like dampness or humidity at all.

Celery – Wrap celery in foil and place them in the fridge. You can also keep them in a bowl of water on your counter for shorter-term storage.

Fruits

Bananas – After purchasing your bananas, separate them and store them in a well-ventilated basket for best results.

Apples – Apples will keep quite well for roughly two weeks away from heat. If you're storing apples for a longer period of time, put them in a cardboard box and leave them in your fridge. It's also handy to keep a drawer at the bottom of your fridge exclusively for apples if you've got a lot of them.

Grapes – Store grapes in your refrigerator and only wash them when you're about to eat them so that they stay firm and don't get mushy.

Peaches – Don't put peaches in the fridge until they are completely ripe.

Pears – Brown bag 'em and place them in your fridge for longer storage. They will do just fine for a few weeks on your counter.

Watermelon – Let watermelon ripen at room temperature for about 7-10 days.

Pineapples – You can store pineapples in the fridge – be sure to cut off the top. You can also slice them and put the pieces in an airtight container. Take care not to use tin foil as this will alter the taste.

Strawberries – Keep strawberries away from wet places as they do mold quite easily. Place them in a paper bag and they'll do fine for about a week if the bag is kept dry.