

The Workweek Lunch Produce Storage Guide

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Vegetables:

- **Artichokes**
 - Sprinkle with a few drops of water and store in a perforated bag in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
 - Lasts up to 1 week
- **Asparagus**
 - Cut the ends off and store upright in about an inch of water
 - Lasts up to 1 week
- **Bell Peppers**
 - Make sure peppers are firm when purchased
 - Unwashed and keep them dry, as moisture will speed spoilage.
 - Red and yellow peppers will last 4 - 5 days; green, 1 week
- **Broccoli**
 - Place in your crisper unwrapped, make sure it's dry, don't wash until ready to use
 - Lasts 4 days in the fridge
 - Blanch raw broccoli for effective freezing. Blanching preserves the bright green color and tasty flavor. Blanch in boiling water for three minutes or steam for five minutes.
 - Freezer-friendly for up to 6 months
- **Brussels Sprouts**
 - Don't wash until needed, moisture speeds spoilage but remove yellow or wilted leaves
 - The longer you store them, the stronger they will be and less sweet
 - Up to 1 week but best at 3 to 4 days
- **Cabbage**
 - Wrap it tightly in wrap if it's been cut already, or put it in a sealable bag if it's still whole. Store in the crisper drawer.
 - Up to 2 weeks
- **Carrots**
 - Cut off green tops, store in the refrigerator (loose) in a container with lid and covered in water. Change water every 4 - 5 days
 - Up to 1 month
- **Cauliflower**
 - Remove from sealed plastic from store, place unwashed in loosely sealed container with paper towel under to absorb moisture.
 - Lasts 4 - 7 days
- **Celery**
 - To keep it crisp, dampen a paper towel and wrap in aluminum foil
 - Store pre-cut celery sticks submerged in water
 - Raw 1 - 2 weeks

● Cucumbers

- Cucumbers are sensitive to temperatures below 50°F. When stored at room temperature, cucumbers thrive and last longer, up to 1 week.
- Stored below 50 degrees, they're get cold injuries, including water-soaked areas, pitting, and accelerated decay.
- *Limit exposure to cold no more than three days.* Store unwashed in a bag, towards the front of the refrigerator shelf, where temperatures are warmer, and off the bottom shelf, which is usually the coldest part of the fridge.
- Keep them away from bananas, tomatoes, and melons, which are all high ethylene producers.

● Eggplant

- Store at room temperature in a cool spot and out of direct sunlight and in a ventilated bowl away from ethylene producing fruits.
- Lasts 3 - 5 days

● Garlic

- Store at room temperature in a dry, dark place that has plenty of air circulation, like in a wire-mesh basket or open paper bag in a cupboard or pantry.
- Whole bulb will last up to 6 months.
- Unpeeled clove will last for 10 days to a month.

● Greens

- Wrap in damp paper towels and store unwashed in a perforated container in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- Lasts 3-5 days

● Green Beans

- Store unwashed, in a container or bag with a paper towel to soak up moisture, place in the crisper.
- Helpful hint: Fresh beans still have a 'snap' when broken in half.
- 7 days

● Leeks

- Unwashed and untrimmed in perforated or loosely wrapped to retain moisture.
- 1 - 2 weeks (depending on freshness when bought)

● Mushrooms

- Store in a brown paper bag
- Do not store in plastic wrap or tightly sealed container, this speeds spoilage.
- Properly stored, will last 4 - 7 days

● Onions

- Store whole onions in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place.
- Lasts 1 - 2 months if stored properly

● Potatoes

- Store potatoes in a brown paper or burlap bag (not plastic) in a cool, dry, well-ventilated location - think cool pantry, dry, cool basement.
- Never store them with onions, as the onions will cause the potatoes to rot.
- Last for up to 2 months if stored properly

● Scallions

- Unlike regular onions, which stay freshest at room temperature, scallions should be stored in the fridge standing upright in an inch of water in a tall container covered loosely with a zipper-lock bag.
- 1-2 weeks

● Sweet Potatoes

- Avoid storing in the refrigerator, which will produce a hard center and unpleasant taste.
- Store your sweet potatoes in a cool, dry, mesh bag (not plastic).
- For best results, store them in a basement or root cellar away from strong heat sources.
- Will last for 1 to 2 weeks at normal room temperature.
- With ideal storage conditions, will last about 1 month

● Winter Squash

- Store at an even 50°F in a dark place. This could be a cool and dark shelf, cabinet, or drawer in the kitchen, pantry, or closet.
- They also store well in a warmer section of the root cellar such as on the top shelf.
- Acorn squash will keep for 5 - 8 weeks.
- Butternut squash are good for 2 - 3 months.

● Zucchini & Summer Squash

- Unwashed in a perforated bag for airflow, and then placed in the vegetable crisper drawer.
- Up to 1 week

Fruits

● Apples

- Place them in the crisper drawer in a bag with holes in it to let in moisture or cover the apples with a damp paper towel.
- 6-8 weeks

● Avocados

- Allow to ripen at room temperature and eat within 1 to 2 days
- After ripe, can be placed in refrigerator in warmest part of fridge to extend life 2 -3 days

● Bananas

- Break the bunch and wrap the stems in plastic wrap to avoid them ripening too fast.
- Placing them in the fridge stops the ripening process but do not do so before they are ripe or they will not ripen when removed.
- Once ripe, they are best within 3 - 5 days

● Berries

- Wash and dry the store container. It is perfect for allowing air circulation necessary to keep fresher longer.
- Rinse berries and place in container with paper towel on bottom.
- Don't wash raspberries until ready to eat. It will actually cut their lifespan. Wash container and then store in container with paper towel in bottom. Refrigeration is key for raspberries.
- 5 - 10 days

- **Citrus (limes, lemons, oranges)**
 - Note: Citrus doesn't ripen any further after picked
 - Store on counter for up to 1 week
 - Store in refrigerator for 3 to 4 weeks
- **Grapefruit**
 - If planning to eat soon, store whole grapefruit at room temperature up to a week
 - If needing to last longer, refrigerate in a bag and in the crisper for 6 weeks
 - Helpful Hint: grapefruit will be juicier and sweeter if returned to room temperature right before serving.
- **Peaches, Plums & Nectarines**
 - Store at room temperature and eat within 3 - 5 days
 - Helpful Hint: Choose the ones that smell fresh and sweet because they will not get sweeter if they don't smell sweet.
- **Pineapple**
 - At room temperature - a ripe one will keep for around 3 days.
 - Do not store whole pineapples in the fridge.
 - Once the flesh has been peeled and chopped it's fine to chill it, stored in an airtight container.
 - Choose pineapples with bright green leaves, yellow coloring to the rind and a sweet odor indicating ripeness. Avoid fruit with brown leaves.
 - To ripen, place a whole pineapple into a paper bag with a whole apple. Fold the top of the bag over and leave at room temperature for 1 day.
- **Pumpkin**
 - Store whole in a cool, dry and dark place. Avoid hot and humid places, even if storing for only a couple of weeks.
 - Pumpkins are best stored on a board or piece of cardboard. Do not store the fruit on a cement floor, as they tend to rot.
 - Lasts 8 - 12 weeks
- **Tomatoes**
 - Unripe green tomatoes store each in brown paper bag stem side down until ripe.
 - Ripe tomatoes store on counter for 2 - 3 days if you're going to use right away.
 - Refrigerate only ripened and allow to return to room temperature before using.

Helpful eco-friendly produce storage products:

- [Perforated produce bags](#) - they're reusable and perfect to take with you to the grocery store!
- [Beeswax food wraps](#) - these replace the need for plastic wrap and I love them
- [Simple counter fruit bowl](#) - for your counter! It provides ventilation to your produce (unlike a solid bowl)
- [Glass containers](#) - what I use for storing chopped fruit like pineapple

Head over to workweeklunch.com for [free recipes](#) or to sign up for the [WWL Meal Prep Program](#) to access all of our meal prep recipes.