

ExpirationFinder

# ExpirationFinder – Mini Guide

A curated starter set of popular items

Mini Edition (Free)

# How to Use This Guide

Each item lists typical fridge & freezer guidance, plus quick safety cues so you can make confident decisions and cut waste.

Times are guidelines—always trust your senses. If color, smell, or texture seems off, err on the side of caution.

Tip: Opened vs. unopened matters. For best quality, seal tightly, keep cold foods cold, and label leftovers with the date.

# A Brief History of Expiration Dates

Before refrigeration, food safety was mostly trial-and-error. Families relied on smell, taste, and "grandma's wisdom." Preservation meant salting, drying, or pickling.

In the early 1900s, as packaged foods spread, some cans carried vague freshness notes, but there was no standard.

In the 1970s, U.S. consumers pushed for clarity. "Open dating" appeared, giving us today's familiar "Best By" and "Sell By" codes. Europe and the UK followed with their own rules.

Even now, there is no single global standard. In the U.S., "Best By" means quality, "Use By" means safety, and "Sell By" is for retailers. Yet studies show most people misinterpret these, discarding good food.

Fun fact: American households throw away hundreds of dollars each year due to label confusion. ExpirationFinder was created to help stop this waste and boost confidence.

# Disclaimer & Safety

---

This guide provides general freshness and storage guidance. Food conditions vary; always consider your specific situation, product labeling, and local regulations. When in doubt, discard.

## About ExpirationFinder

ExpirationFinder helps households waste less and save more with clear, practical freshness guidance. We combine research with everyday sense checks so you can make confident choices quickly.

# A-Z Freshness Tables

Item	Fridge	Freezer	Notes
2% Milk	≤40°F (4°C)	Not recommended (texture change)	Off odors, color change, slime, mold
Acne Treatment (Benzoyl Peroxide)	—	—	Drying, separation
Acorn Squash	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Acorn Squash (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	2–3 months	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Acorn Squash (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Acorn Squash (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Adhesive Bandages	—	—	Won't stick, dirty
Agave Syrup	Refrigerate after opening (most)	Not needed	Separation, off odors, mold
Agave Syrup (Opened)	Refrigerate after opening (most)	Not needed	Separation, off odors, mold
Aioli	Refrigerate after opening (most)	Not needed	Separation, off odors, mold
Air Freshener (Aerosol)	—	—	Weak spray
Air Freshener (Plug-in Refill)	—	—	Leaking, clogging
Alfredo Sauce (Jarred)	Refrigerate after opening (most)	Not needed	Separation, off odors, mold
Alfredo Sauce (Jarred) (Opened)	Refrigerate after opening (most)	Not needed	Separation, off odors, mold
All-Purpose Cleaner	—	—	Separation, odor
All-Purpose Flour	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
All-Purpose Flour (Opened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests

All-Purpose Flour (Unopened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Almond Butter	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Almond Butter (Opened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Almond Butter (Unopened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Almond Flour	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Almond Flour (Opened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Almond Flour (Unopened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Almond Milk	≤40°F (4°C)	Not recommended (texture)	Off odors, fermentation, bulging cartons, fizz loss (for sodas)
Almond Milk (Opened)	≤40°F (4°C)	Not recommended (texture)	Off odors, fermentation, bulging cartons, fizz loss (for sodas)
Aloe Drink	≤40°F (4°C)	Not typical	Off odors, fermentation, bulging carton
Aloe Vera Gel	—	—	Discoloration, odor
American Cheese	≤40°F (4°C)	6 months (best shredded)	Off odors, color change, slime, mold
Anchovies (Canned)	Refrigerate after opening	Not needed	Off odors, color change, slime, mold
Animal Crackers	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Stale, rancid odors, off taste
Antacid Tablets	—	—	Crumbly, soft

Anti-Diarrheal (Tablets)	—	—	Cracking, odor
Antifungal Cream	—	—	Separation, irritation
Antihistamine Eye Drops	—	—	Cloudiness, irritation
Antihistamines (Tablets)	—	—	Discoloration
Apple	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Apple (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Apple (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Apple Cider	≤40°F (4°C)	Not typical	Off odors, fermentation, bulging carton
Apple Juice	≤40°F (4°C)	2–3 months	Off odors, fermentation, bulging cartons, fizz loss (for sodas)
Apple Juice (Opened)	≤40°F (4°C)	2–3 months	Off odors, fermentation, bulging cartons, fizz loss (for sodas)
Apricot	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Apricot (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Apricot (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Arugula	≤40°F (4°C)	Not recommended (texture)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Arugula (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	Not recommended (texture)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Arugula (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	Not recommended (texture)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Asparagus	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Asparagus (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	2–3 months	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors

Asparagus (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Asparagus (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Aspirin Tablets	—	—	Vinegar smell = degraded
Avocado	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Avocado (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Avocado (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Apple (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Apple (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Apple (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Bell Pepper (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Bell Pepper (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Bell Pepper (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Carrot (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Carrot (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Carrot (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Carrots	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Carrots (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Carrots (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors

Baby Cereal (Dry)	Follow label	Not typical	Off odors, swelling package, separation, discoloration
Baby Cucumber (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Cucumber (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Cucumber (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Food (Jar, Opened)	Refrigerate after opening	1–2 months	Off odors, swelling package, separation, discoloration
Baby Food Pouch (Fruit)	Refrigerate after opening	1–2 months	Off odors, swelling package, separation, discoloration
Baby Food Pouch (Vegetable)	Refrigerate after opening	1–2 months	Off odors, swelling package, separation, discoloration
Baby Formula Dispenser (Prepared)	Follow label exactly	Do not freeze prepared formula	Off odors, swelling package, separation, discoloration
Baby Grapes (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Grapes (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Grapes (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Kale (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Kale (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Kale (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Lettuce (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Lettuce (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors

Baby Lettuce (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Onion (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Onion (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Onion (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Potato (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Potato (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Potato (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Snack Bars	Follow label	Not typical	Off odors, swelling package, separation, discoloration
Baby Spinach (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Spinach (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Spinach (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Tomato (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Tomato (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Tomato (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Zucchini (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Zucchini (Cut)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Baby Zucchini (Whole)	≤40°F (4°C)	8–12 months (blanched if veg)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors

Bacon (Cooked)	≤40°F (4°C)	1 month	Off odors, color change, slime, mold
Bacon (Raw)	≤40°F (4°C)	1 month	Off odors, color change, slime, mold
Bagels	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Baking Powder	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Baking Powder (Opened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Baking Powder (Unopened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Baking Soda	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Baking Soda (Opened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Baking Soda (Unopened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Banana	Pantry until ripe; then fridge	2–3 months (peeled)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Banana (Cut)	Pantry until ripe; then fridge	2–3 months (peeled)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Banana (Whole)	Pantry until ripe; then fridge	2–3 months (peeled)	Wilting, mushy spots, mold, off odors
Bar Soap	—	—	Cracking, scent loss
Barley	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Barley (Opened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests

Barley (Unopened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Not typical	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Basmati Rice	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Basmati Rice (Opened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests
Basmati Rice (Unopened)	Room temp, cool/dry	Optional (extends freshness)	Bulging cans, rust, off odors, rancid/foul smell, pests