

Smart ways to live well

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Prevention®

SCIENCE-TESTED

10 WAYS TO LOSE WEIGHT AND KEEP IT OFF



summer special
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No-Cook Meals**

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BURN FAT FASTER!
Our 8-Week Walking Plan

**BEAT
THE
BLUES
NATURALLY**

The Big Chill

Which foods need it, which don't?

The answers will surprise you

BY RACHEL MELTZER

have guacamole fast? Add a whole apple or banana to the bag to shave a day or so off the wait. Once it's ripe, you can keep it that way for up to 3 days by moving it to the fridge.

FRUIT, PART ONE

☒ fridge ☒ counter

☐ cabinet

Peaches, plums, pears, honeydews, cantaloupes, mangoes, bananas, and tomatoes (yes, they're a fruit) keep on ripening whether they're on the

Location, location, location—it's crucial in choosing a home and in picking a place to store olive oil. In the right environment, oil in an opened bottle stays fresh and antioxidant rich for up to a year. But leave it on a sunny windowsill, and the healthy fats turn rancid in half that time. Most food stays fresher, tastes better, and delivers more health benefits if stowed in its proper place. For help navigating the real estate of your kitchen, here's our guide to what goes where.

AVOCADOS

☒ fridge ☒ counter ☐ cabinet

If you have a rock-hard avocado, put it in a brown paper bag on the counter; it'll be good to go in 2 to 5 days. Gotta

tree, in the store, or in your fruit bowl. Fact is, most produce sold at grocery stores is not fully mature when you bring it home, says Robert L. Wolke, PhD, author of *What Einstein Told His Cook*. To help these fruits ripen faster, keep them on the counter for 2 to 5 days. Once they start turning soft—or you've sliced them—relocate to the fridge; the 40°F temps delay decay. While the cold turns banana skins brown, the inside will still be fresh. (For the lowdown on apples, see "The Fridge Files," p. 143.)

FRUIT, PART TWO

☒ fridge ☐ counter ☐ cabinet

Citrus fruits, pineapples, raspberries, strawberries, grapes, watermelon, and cherries don't get any riper once they've

been picked—they just go bad. To slow the spoiling process, stash them in the refrigerator immediately.

BREAD

☐ fridge ☒ counter ☒ cabinet

Whether you prefer wheat, white, or another type of bread, it will stay fresh for up to 4 days at room temperature—depending on humidity—if sealed in its original wrapping. Although bread can be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months, steer clear of the refrigerator: It'll dry bread out, making it go stale faster.

COFFEE

☐ fridge ☐ counter ☒ cabinet

Depositing your coffee in the fridge or freezer exposes it to fluctuating temps and therefore condensation. "It's like your coffee is brewed a little each time it's exposed to water, and that diminishes the flavor," says Johnny McGregor, PhD, chair of the department of food science and human nutrition at Clemson University. For a better brew, keep coffee in an airtight canister in a cabinet.

POTATOES, ONIONS, GARLIC

☐ fridge ☐ counter ☒ cabinet

After these veggies are plucked from the cool, dark soil, they should be stored in a similar environment in your home—but not together. (See "Keep 'Em Separated," above.)

Keep 'em separated



OLIVE OIL

☒ fridge ☐ counter ☒ cabinet

You already know that olive oil should be placed away from light, but did you know that the refrigerator is a suitable dark spot? It shields oil from spoilage-inducing heat and oxygen. Although cold temperatures may solidify the oil, they won't affect its quality, Wolke says. If your cabinets are fairly cool, oil should be fine there, too. In a fridge or a chilly cabinet, it'll keep about 1 year opened and 2 years unopened.

FLOUR

☒ fridge ☒ counter ☐ cabinet

Grab an airtight container and plant your flour in the refrigerator. The cool temper-

ature helps keep white flour fresh for 2 years; whole wheat flour will last about 6 months. If you go through your white flour in less than a year, however, you can safely keep it on the counter in an airtight jar or canister. But stash wheat flour in the fridge no matter how fast you use it. The oils it contains make it more susceptible to spoilage.

Prevention Research Editor Rachel Meltzer has a master's degree in nutrition.

quicktip

Don't store any food on top of the refrigerator. It's warm up there, which will wreak havoc on almost any food—including wine

The fridge files

Now that you know what goes in the refrigerator, let us show you where to put it.

top shelves These **fruits and veggies** will be the first things you see—and the snacks you're most inclined to grab. Plus, up-high storage keeps them at just the right temperature.

When it comes to **butter**, forget the door—it's simply too warm. Instead, keep your stick in a covered butter dish on a top or middle shelf. In the same area, keep cheese tightly sealed in foil or plastic wrap.

the bottom shelf

Store all **meats** here; it's the coldest spot in your fridge. Low placement will also prevent any bacteria-laden juices from dripping onto other foods.

To keep **eggs** fresher longer, stow 'em low and in the carton they came in. And keep the carton shut to avoid odor absorption from other foods.

Separate large amounts of **leftovers** into small, shallow containers. The less food in each, the faster they cool—that helps prevent the growth of harmful microbes.

Though **milk** containers may fit snugly in the side door, this isn't an ideal place for storage. Milk is especially sensitive to temperature changes, so put it on a shelf as close to the bottom as it will fit.



one crisper

Leafy vegetables, broccoli, celery, or any veggies with lots of surface area tend to lose moisture quickly. The crisper keeps water vapor in.

the other crisper

Apples stored at room temperature deteriorate 10 times faster than when they're refrigerated. The best spot: the just-humid-enough crisper, away from anything else. Apples give off a natural gas called ethylene that can wilt, spot, or rot other food.

the door

Because **condiments** are high in natural preservatives, they're okay in the door.

Be sure to shelve **reduced-sodium soy sauce** here, too. Refrigeration is a must as there's not enough salt to keep it from spoiling.

Because **OJ** is pasteurized and citric acid hinders bacteria growth, the door is a fine choice.

Recorded **white wine** will stay fresh in the fridge door for 3 to 5 days. (For unopened wine, lay the bottle down so the cork remains moist.)