

# The Periodic Table of Produce

<b>A</b> <b>Apples</b> R, unwrapped, 3 weeks.	<b>Ch</b> <b>Cherries</b> R, in plastic, 5 days.											<b>Lk</b> <b>Leeks</b> R, in plastic, 2 weeks.				
<b>Av</b> <b>Avocados</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, 4 days.	<b>Co</b> <b>Coconut</b> RT or R, unwrapped, 1 month. Cut: R, in coconut juice or water, 1 week.	<b>L</b> <b>Lemons/ Limes</b> RT, unwrapped, 1 week; or R, 2 weeks.	<b>Pp</b> <b>Papayas</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, 1 week.	<b>Pl</b> <b>Plums</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, 4 days.	<b>Ar</b> <b>Artichokes</b> R, in plastic, 1 to 2 weeks.							<b>Mu</b> <b>Mushrooms</b> R, in paper bag or on baking sheet covered with just-damp towel, 3 days.	<b>Po</b> <b>Potatoes</b> CDV, in open paper bag or basket (not with onions), 1 to 2 months.	<b>Sqs</b> <b>Squash (summer)</b> R, in plastic, 5 days.	<b>F</b> <b>Fennel</b> R, in plastic, 5 days.	<b>O</b> <b>Onions</b> CDV, unwrapped, 2 months (2 weeks for Maui, Vidalia, etc.).
<b>Bn</b> <b>Bananas</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; if overripe, R, 2 days (skin will blacken).	<b>Gf</b> <b>Grapefruit</b> RT, unwrapped, 1 week; or R, 2 weeks.	<b>Ma</b> <b>Mangoes</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, 1 week.	<b>Pc</b> <b>Peaches/ Nectarines</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, in vented plastic bag, 4 days.	<b>Sb</b> <b>Strawberries</b> R, in vented container, 3 days.	<b>As</b> <b>Asparagus</b> R, in plastic, 4 days.	<b>Bk</b> <b>Bok choy</b> R, in plastic, 4 days.	<b>Cb</b> <b>Cabbage</b> R, tightly wrapped in plastic, 2 weeks.	<b>Ce</b> <b>Celery</b> R (no colder than 40° F), in vented plastic bag, 2 weeks.	<b>Cu</b> <b>Cucumbers</b> R, in plastic, 1 week.	<b>Ji</b> <b>Jicama</b> R, in plastic, 3 weeks. Cut: R, tightly wrapped in plastic, 1 week.	<b>Pa</b> <b>Parsnips</b> R, greens removed, in plastic, 2 weeks.	<b>Ra</b> <b>Radishes</b> R, greens removed, in plastic, 2 weeks.	<b>SqW</b> <b>Squash (winter)</b> CDV, unwrapped, 1 month.	<b>Ga</b> <b>Garlic</b> CDV, unwrapped, 2 months for whole bulbs, 10 days for cloves.	<b>S</b> <b>Scallions</b> R, in plastic, 5 days.	
<b>Be</b> <b>Berries</b> (raspberries, blackberries, boysenberries) R, in vented container, 3 days.	<b>Gr</b> <b>Grapes</b> R, in vented plastic bag, 1 week.	<b>Me</b> <b>Melons</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, 5 days. Cut: R, in plastic, 3 days.	<b>Pr</b> <b>Pears</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, 4 days.	<b>To</b> <b>Tomatoes</b> RT, unwrapped, 5 days.	<b>Bt</b> <b>Beets</b> R, greens removed, in plastic, 2 weeks.	<b>Br</b> <b>Broccoli</b> R, in plastic, 5 days.	<b>Ct</b> <b>Carrots</b> R, greens removed, in plastic, 3 weeks.	<b>Chi</b> <b>Chilies</b> R, wrapped in dry paper towel, in plastic, 2 weeks.	<b>Eg</b> <b>Eggplant</b> R (no colder than 40° F), in vented plastic or paper bag, 5 days.	<b>LeP</b> <b>Lettuce (prewashed)</b> R, in plastic bag with dry paper towel, 3 days.	<b>P</b> <b>Peas (English, a.k.a. garden)</b> R, unshelled, in plastic, 2 days.	<b>Ru</b> <b>Rutabagas</b> R, greens removed, in plastic, 2 weeks.	<b>Sw</b> <b>Sweet potatoes</b> CDV, unwrapped, 1 to 4 weeks.	<b>Gi</b> <b>Ginger</b> R, wrapped in dry paper towel, in plastic, 2 to 3 weeks.	<b>Sh</b> <b>Shallots</b> CDV, unwrapped, 1 month.	
<b>Bl</b> <b>Blueberries</b> R, in vented container, 6 days.	<b>K</b> <b>Kiwis</b> Ripen at RT, unwrapped; then R, 4 days.	<b>Or</b> <b>Oranges</b> RT, unwrapped, 1 week; or R, 2 weeks.	<b>Pi</b> <b>Pineapple</b> R, unwrapped, 5 days. Cut: R, tightly wrapped in plastic, 3 days.	<b>W</b> <b>Watermelon</b> RT, unwrapped, 4 days; or R, 2 weeks. Cut: R, in plastic, 3 days.	<b>Bp</b> <b>Bell peppers</b> R (no colder than 40° F), in plastic, 1 week.	<b>Bs</b> <b>Brussels sprouts</b> R, in plastic, 5 days. (Flavor gets stronger over time.)	<b>Cf</b> <b>Cauliflower</b> R, in plastic, 1 week.	<b>Cr</b> <b>Corn (on cob)</b> R, husks intact, in plastic, 2 days.	<b>Gb</b> <b>Green beans</b> R, in plastic bag with dry paper towel, 7 days.	<b>LeH</b> <b>Lettuce (whole head)</b> R, in plastic bag with dry paper towel, 1 week.	<b>Ps</b> <b>Peas (sugar snap or snow)</b> R, in plastic, 7 days.	<b>Sp</b> <b>Spinach</b> R, wrapped in dry paper towel, in plastic, 7 days.	<b>Sc</b> <b>Swiss chard/ kale/collard greens</b> R, in plastic, 5 days.	<b>H</b> <b>Herbs (leafy)</b> R, wrapped in just-damp paper towel, in plastic, 3 to 7 days.		

= Fruits  
 = Vegetables  
 = Herbs and spices  
 R = Store in refrigerator  
 CDV = Store in a cool dry, well ventilated place  
 RT = Store at room temperature

## A few useful things to know about produce storage and this chart:

- For best results, start by choosing produce that is plump, colorful, and free of blemishes.
- The table shows the average maximum shelf life. Food may be edible after this time, but its taste, texture, and nutritional value may be compromised. (Note: The chemicals and pesticides used in conventional agriculture can slow the decay of produce; organic produce tends to have a slightly shorter shelf life.)
- Unless otherwise indicated, produce should be stored unwashed and untrimmed. But with root vegetables, leafy tops can steal moisture from the roots, so if the vegetables won't be used within 3 or 4 days, all but 1 to 2 inches of stem should be removed.
- Where "plastic" is indicated, plastic bags (tightly sealed) or airtight containers may be used. "Vented bags" refers to the perforated bag some produce comes in, a bag open at the top, or a plastic bag poked with about 20 holes.
- A paper towel inside a container can help control moisture. Use a dry one to absorb water or a damp one to add it.
- Ideally, refrigerated items should go in the crisper drawers.
- Keep fruits and vegetables in separate drawers. Many fruits emit ethylene, which can accelerate ripening.
- Items stored at room temperature should be kept out of direct sunlight.
- Promptly discard any rotten or moldy produce; it can contaminate the good stuff.