

Freezing Vegetables

Here are some simple guidelines for freezing a variety of vegetables commonly grown in home gardens.

Artichoke, Globe	Remove outer leaves. Wash and trim stalks. Remove "chokes" and blanch, a few at a time, for 7 minutes. Cool in iced water for 7 minutes. Drain. Pack in freezer bags, seal and label. Keeps up to 6 months.
Artichoke, Jerusalem	Peel and slice. Place in cold water with the juice of a lemon to prevent discoloration. Blanch for 2 minutes in boiling water. Cool in iced water for 2 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Asparagus	Wash and remove woody portions and scales of spears. Cut into 6 inch lengths and blanch in boiling water for 3 minutes. Cool in iced water for 3 minutes. Drain. Place on trays in a single layer and freeze for 30 minutes. Pack into suitable containers, seal and label. Keeps up to 6 months.
Beans, Broad	Shell and wash. Blanch in boiling water for 1½ minutes. Cool in iced water for 1-2 minutes. Place on tray in a single layer and freeze for 30 minutes. Pack into freezer bags, remove air, seal and label. Keeps up to 6 months.
Beets	Only freeze young tender beets, not more than 2-3 inches across. Cook until tender and slice. Cool and transfer to plastic containers. Label. Freeze up to 6 months.
Broccoli	Choose tender young heads with no flowers and tender stalks. Wash well and divide into sprigs. Blanch 3 minutes in boiling water. Cool in iced water for 3 minutes. Drain. Spread on tray in single layer. Cover with plastic wrap to prevent the smell from permeating the freezer. Freeze 30 minutes. Pack in freezer bags, remove air, seal and label. Keeps up to 6 months.
Brussels Sprouts	Remove outer leaves and cut a cross at the stem end of sprout. Wash thoroughly and blanch for 3 minutes. Cool in iced water for 3 minutes. Drain and spread on tray in a single layer. Cover with plastic wrap to prevent the smell from permeating the freezer. Freeze 30 minutes, remove from tray and pack into plastic bags. Remove air, label and seal. Keeps up to 6 months.
Cabbage	Remove outer leaves and wash the remainder. Cut into thin wedges or shred. Blanch 1½ minutes if shredded or 2 minutes if cut into wedges. Chill in iced water 1-2 minutes. Drain well. Pack in freezer bags, label and seal. Keeps up to 6 months.
Carrots	Wash and scrub carrots and cut large carrots into pieces. Blanch 3 minutes in boiling water. Chill in iced water 3 minutes. Drain. Spread on a tray in a single layer and freeze 30 minutes. Pack in freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps up to 6 months.

Cauliflower	Divide into florets and wash. Blanch for 3 minutes in boiling water. Chill in iced water for 3 minutes. Drain and place on a tray in a single layer. Cover with plastic wrap. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Celery	Use young, tender stalks. Wash and cut into 1 inch pieces. Blanch for 2 minutes in boiling water. Chill in iced water for 2 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Chayote	Cook sliced chayote until tender in boiling water. Drain well, mash and cool. Pack into plastic containers with well fitting lids, leaving space at the top for expansion. Freeze up to 6 months.
Chilies	Remove seeds, wash and dry. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Chinese Broccoli	Remove coarse leaves and thick stems. Wash and blanch in boiling water 2 minutes. Chill in iced water for 2 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Chinese Cabbage	Only freeze crisp and young cabbage. Wash and shred finely. Blanch for 1½ minutes. Chill in iced water for 1-2 minutes. Drain and place in freezer bags, label and seal. Keeps up to 6 months.
Chinese Spinach	Wash and trim leaves off stalks. Blanch 1 minute. Chill in iced water 1 minute. Drain, pack into freezer bags and remove air from bags. Seal and label. Keeps up to 6 months.
Cucumber	Peel and chop in food processor. Pack into plastic containers with tight fitting lids. Label and freeze. Keeps up to 6 months.
Eggplant	Cut into slices, sprinkle with salt and allow to stand 30 minutes. Drain off excess liquid and fry gently in butter or margarine until just tender. Cool and pack into plastic containers. Seal and label. Keeps up to 3 months.
Fennel	Use fresh young stalks. Wash thoroughly. Blanch 3 minutes. Chill in iced water 3 minutes. Drain, pack in freezer bags and remove air. Keeps up to 6 months.
Garlic	Place separated bulbs in freezer bags. Remove excess air from bags, seal and label. Keeps up to 3 months.
Ginger	Separate ginger into convenient sized knobs. Place in freezer bags. Remove excess air from bags, seal and label. Freeze up to 6 months.
Kohlrabi	Wash well, peel and cut into pieces. Blanch for 3 minutes. Chill in iced water 3 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.

Leek

Remove tough outer leaves, wash remainder. Cut away green part of stem, slice white flesh or cut in half lengthwise. Blanch 2 minutes if sliced and 3 minutes if cut lengthwise. Chill in iced water 2-3 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.

Winter Squash

Peel, cut into pieces and cook in boiling water until just cooked. Cool and place in freezer bags, remove air, seal and label. Keeps up to 3 months.

Mushrooms

Cultivated mushrooms need no preparation. Pack clean mushrooms in freezer bags. Remove air, seal and label. Freeze up to 6 months.

Okra

Wash and trim off stems. Blanch in boiling water 3-4 minutes. Cool in iced water 3-4 minutes. Drain and pack in freezer bags. Remove air from bags, seal and label. Freeze up to 6 months.

Onion

Peel, chop or cut into rings. Wrap in layers of plastic wrap, place in a plastic container. Label and freeze up to 3 months.

Parsnip

Peel and dice. Blanch 2 minutes, chill in iced water for 2 minutes, spread on a tray and freeze for 30 minutes. Pack into freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps up to 6 months.

Peas

Shell, wash and blanch 1 minute. Chill in iced water 1 minute. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.

Pepper

Wash, remove seeds and cut into slices or leave whole. Place on a tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Pack in freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Freeze up to 6 months.

Potato

- Scrub new potatoes. Cook in boiling water until almost done. Drain, cool, pack in freezer bags. Seal, label and freeze for up to 6 months.
- Slice and deep fry 4 minutes. They should be tender but not browned. Drain and cool on paper towels. Place on a tray in a single layer and freeze 30 minutes. Pack in freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Freeze up to 3 months.
- Prepare mashed potatoes and freeze up to 3 months.

Pumpkin

Peel and cook in boiling salted water until tender. Mash, cool and pack into plastic containers leaving headspace. Freeze up to 3 months. Alternatively, peel and cut into pieces. Bake until almost done. Pack into freezer bags when cool, remove the air, seal and label. Keeps up to 3 months.

Rutabaga

Only use tender young rutabaga. Cut to required size and blanch 3 minutes. Chill in iced water 3 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.

Shallots	Separate cloves and place in freezer bags. Remove excess air. Keeps up to 3 months.
Snow Peas	Use tender leaves. Wash and trim. Blanch 30 seconds. Chill in iced water 30 seconds. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Spinach	Wash well and trim leaves from stalks. Blanch in small quantities of boiling water for 1 minute. Chill in iced water for 1 minute. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Squash	Peel and cook in boiling salted water until tender. Mash, cool and pack into freezer containers leaving room for expansion. Seal and label. Freeze up to 3 months.
Sugar Snap Pea	Remove pods, wash and blanch for 1 minute. Chill, drain and spread on a tray. Freeze for 30 minutes, pack in plastic bags, remove air, seal and label. Will keep up to 6 months.
Sweet Corn	Clean well and remove all silk. Cut off top of cob. Wash, blanch a few cobs at a time for 5-7 minutes, depending on size. Chill in iced water 5-7 minutes. Drain and wrap each cob in plastic wrap. Pack in freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Freeze up to 6 months.
Sweet Potato	Peel and cut into pieces. Blanch 3 minutes in boiling water, chill in iced water 3 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Tomatoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash, remove stems, cut into halves or quarters or leave whole. Dry and pack into freezer bags. Remove air, label and seal. Keeps 6 months. • Dip into boiling water 1 minute. Remove and peel. Place on a tray and freeze for 30 minutes. Place in plastic bags, remove air, seal and label. Keeps up to 6 months. • Simmer chopped tomatoes in a pan for 5 minutes or until soft. Push through a sieve or food mill to remove skins and seeds. Cool and pack in plastic containers, leaving headspace. Keeps 6 months.
Turnip	Peel and trim young, tender turnips. Cut to required size and blanch 3 minutes. Chill in iced water for 3 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.
Water Chestnuts	Bring chestnuts to a boil. Drain and peel off shells. Pack in freezer bags or plastic containers, remove air, seal and label. Freeze up to 6 months.
Witloof	Wash well. Blanch for 3 minutes. Drain and place on tray in a single

layer. Freeze for 30 minutes. Transfer to freezer bags, remove air, label and seal. Keeps for 6 months.

Zucchini

Slice into 1 inch pieces without peeling. Sauté gently in a little melted butter until barely tender. Cool, pack into plastic containers leaving headspace at the top. Freeze up to 3 months.

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