



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
PICKING & STORING
PRODUCE

How To Fill Your Kitchen with the
Freshest Fruits and Vegetables



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We all want to eat more healthy, whole foods.

No matter what diet, meal plan, or food philosophy you may follow, if you're eating to feel better, fruits and vegetables are most definitely on the menu.

I am a Certified Nutritionist who trains Functional Medicine Health Coaches. We help our clients make healthy lifestyle changes and unlock the power of food-as-medicine every day.



If you're reading this, I'm betting you already eat healthy fruits and vegetables. Great work! Now let's up your game.

In this guide, I'll break down how to choose and store the best-quality fruits and vegetables so that every bite is fresh, nourishing, and delicious.

Ready to say goodbye to wilted greens, bland berries, and shriveled peppers? Read on.

How to Pick and Store Produce



Let's break down what signs to look for when choosing your fruits and vegetables and the steps you can take to keep them fresh.

How to pick and store VEGETABLES:

BEETS: Choose firm beets with fresh stems and slender taproots. Avoid beets with wilted leaves, scaly tops, or large, hairy taproots as they may be older and more woody in taste and texture.

Storage: Remove green tops from beets so they don't pull moisture. Do not wash before storing. Place in a plastic bag squeezing out as much air as possible. Beets will store in fridge for up to 3 weeks.

BROCCOLI: Choose broccoli with firm stalks, tight florets and crisp green leaves. Avoid yellowed or flowering florets.

Storage: Do not wash before storing. Keep broccoli in plastic bag and remove as much air as possible. Store in fridge where it will keep for up to 10 days.

CABBAGES: Choose firm, compact heads that feel heavy for their size. Check that the stems are fresh and compact.

Storage: Keep cabbage cold to retain nutrient content. Store the head of cabbage in a plastic bag. It will keep for 1 to 2 weeks.



CARROTS: Choose firm, smooth carrots without dents or soft spots.

Storage: Cut green tops off carrots. Store in coolest part of the fridge. Store away from apples, pears, potatoes and other fruits and vegetables that will cause carrots to become bitter. Carrots will keep longer than many other veggies when stored properly.

CELERY: Choose firm, unblemished stalks. The stalks and leaves should be green, not yellow.

Storage: Keep celery in plastic bag and squeeze out any extra air. Celery will keep uncut for 5 to 7 days.



COLLARD GREENS: Choose collard greens that have firm leaves which are not wilted and are vibrantly green with no yellowing or browning.

Storage: Place collard greens in plastic bag, removing as much air from the bag as possible. Store in refrigerator where they should keep fresh for about 3 to 5 days.

CUCUMBERS: Choose cucumbers that are uniformly green (not yellow) without any blemishes or brown spots.

Storage: Do not leave out at room temperature—they will become limp and wilt. Store in fridge where they will keep for several days. If only using a small amount, place in sealed container to keep moist.



FENNEL: Choose fennel with white, firm, unblemished bulbs, firm stems and fresh leaves. Stalks and leaves should be green.

Storage: Keep in fridge crisper; will stay fresh for about 4 days.

RHUBARB: Choose firm pink or red stalks. Green stalks tend to be stringy & sour.

Storage: Keep stalks in a plastic bag and remove as much air as possible.

SWISS CHARD: Choose chard with crisp stalks and shiny, bright, vivid green leaves that don't show signs of wilting, browning or yellowing.

Storage: Do not wash prior to storing. Keep in a plastic bag, squeezing as much air out as possible. Place in fridge for up to 5 days.



KALE: Choose crisp, deeply-colored leaves. Avoid yellowed leaves. Smaller leaves tend to be the most tender.

Storage: Place kale in plastic storage bag removing air from bag. Store in fridge where it will keep for up to 5 days. Wash just before using.

LETTUCE, SPINACH AND OTHER LEAFY GREENS: Choose greens with fresh, crisp green leaves. Avoid any that are wilted, bruised or slimy.

Storage: Do not wash before storing. Keep in fridge for up to 5 days.

PEPPERS: Choose firm, un-waxed, naturally shiny peppers that feel heavy for their size.

Storage: Do not cut peppers prior to storage. Keep whole unwashed peppers in the fridge for 7 to 10 days. Include a damp cloth in the veggie compartment to maintain moisture.

How to pick and store FRUITS:

AVOCADO: Choose avocados that feel slightly soft to the touch. Firmer avocados may be ripened at home. Avoid rock-hard ones. Also avoid avocados with cracks or dents.

Storage: Once ripened, avocados will keep in the fridge for about 7 days. Best to keep whole until using to avoid browning.

BLUEBERRIES: Choose plump blueberries with a uniform indigo color, firm skin and a dull white frost.

Storage: Store ripe blueberries in a covered container in fridge for up to 3 days. Berries may spoil if left out at room temperature.



GRAPES: Find plump, wrinkle-free grapes that are firmly attached to stems. Green grapes with a yellowish hue are sweetest.

Storage: Keep unwashed in a shallow bowl in the fridge for up to 1 week.

KIWI: Choose ripe kiwis that will be slightly yielding to the touch. Avoid mushy or wrinkled ones with an “off” smell or bruised spots.

Storage: Leave at room temperature to ripen. To quicken the process, place kiwis in a paper bag with an apple or a ripe banana. Once ripe, refrigerate in a plastic bag for up to 1 week.

PAPAYA: Look for papayas that are starting to turn a reddish-orange and yield a bit when lightly squeezed. Do not purchase totally green papayas.

Storage: Green papayas should be ripened at room temperature in a dark setting until yellow blotches appear. Once ripened, eat immediately or refrigerate for up to 3 days.

PEARS: The perfect pear should have a pleasant fragrance and some softness at the stem end. Some brown discoloration is fine.

Storage: Ripen at room temperature in a loosely-closed paper bag. Keep in the fridge for a few days.

PEACHES: Choose peaches with a fruity aroma and a yellow or warm cream background color with no green shoulders. They’re ready to eat when they yield to gentle pressure on the seams. Peak season is May to October.

Storage: Leave unripened peaches out at room temperature. Ripe ones go in the fridge but should be eaten within 2 to 3 days.

PINEAPPLES: Pick pineapples with vibrant green leaves, a bit of softness to the fruit and a sweet fragrance at the stem end. Avoid spongy fruit. Choose pineapples that are free of soft spots and bruises.

Storage: If unripe, keep at room temp for 3 to 4 days until softened when it gives off a pineapple aroma. If you’re not ready to eat the pineapple then, wrap it in a plastic bag and store in the fridge for 3 to 5 days.



RASPBERRIES: Plump, dry berries are best; look for good shape and intense, uniform color. Avoid berries that are soft, mushy or moldy.

Storage: Do not leave berries at room temperature, and avoid direct sunlight. Store unwashed in a single layer on a paper towel, removing mold-covered or spoiled berries. Cover with a damp paper towel and refrigerate 2 to 3 days.

STRAWBERRIES: Choose unblemished berries with a bright red color extending to the stem, and a strong fruity smell; they should be neither hard nor mushy. Choose firm, plump berries that are free of mold and have a deep rich red color with green caps.

Storage: Place unwashed berries in a single layer on paper towel inside sealed container. Strawberries will maintain nutrient content in the fridge for up to 2 days. Do not leave strawberries at room temperature or exposed to sunlight, causing them to spoil.

TOMATOES: Choose tomatoes that are fragrant, smell earthy by the stem and feel heavy for their size, well-shaped and smooth. Avoid tomatoes with wrinkled skins, blemishes or brown spots.

Storage: Keep at room temperature and out of sunlight. To slow the ripening process, keep in a paper bag. Do not cut tomato prior to storage. Tomatoes will stay fresh for up to 7 days.

WATERMELON: When picking a watermelon, pick one heavy for its size. Make sure the rind is smooth. Its green color will vary in shades from a very light green to deeper shades of green.

Storage: Keep whole in the fridge for as long as a week to prevent flesh from drying out and turning fibrous. Avoid storing next to passion fruit, apples, peaches, pears and papaya. Store cut watermelon in sealed, hard plastic or glass containers with a lid.





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