

How Long Does Chicken Last in the Fridge or Freezer?

If you're stocked up on chicken and want to save some for later, the Glad® guide to storing chicken is here to help. So how long does chicken last in the fridge and in the freezer? How long chicken lasts depends on how it's stored and whether it's cooked or raw. Here's what you need to know about properly storing chicken so it lasts.



Storing Chicken in the Fridge

Storing chicken to use in the immediate future? No need to stash it in the freezer—it's OK to store raw chicken (whole or in pieces) for 1-2 days in the fridge. If you have leftovers that include cooked chicken, you can expect those to last in the refrigerator for 3-4 days.

Curious about how to store chicken in the fridge so it lasts longer? First, wrap unwashed pieces of chicken in Glad® Press'n Seal, one at a time, creating an airtight seal. Next, store them in an airtight bag, like Glad® Flex'n Seal Food Storage Quart Bags – and be sure to squeeze out any extra air before sealing it. Finally, store your chicken on the lowest shelf in the fridge to avoid accidental leaks onto other food.



How to Freeze Chicken for Later Use

If you have raw or cooked chicken that you don't plan to cook or eat for a while, you should store it in the freezer instead of the fridge. Here's how to freeze chicken for later use in just a few simple steps.

For either raw chicken or cooked chicken, wrap each individual piece of chicken in Glad® FreezerWrap. Next, store the chicken in an airtight bag such as Glad® Flex'n Seal Freezer Quart Bags and squeeze out any extra air before sealing it. Finally, store your chicken in the deepest part of the freezer. Be sure to wash your hands before and after handling chicken, especially if it's raw.

Once stored, how long does chicken last in the freezer? Individual pieces of raw chicken stay good in the freezer for 9 months, and whole chickens are good for up to a year when frozen.

If you're freezing cooked chicken, you can expect that to last for 2-6 months. Freezing cooked chicken is a great way to reduce food waste. When freezing cooked chicken, it's a good idea to mark the bag with the date it was cooked and frozen so you remember to use it while it's still good.



How to Thaw Chicken

Per the USDA's guidelines, you should never thaw chicken (or meat of any kind) on the counter or in hot water, nor should you leave it at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

The best way to thaw chicken is to move the frozen package from the freezer onto a plate and into the fridge, and then let it thaw gradually. Because it can take a full day for chicken to thaw in the fridge, this method is best if you're planning ahead for a meal the next day. If frozen chicken is thawed in the refrigerator, the defrosted chicken can last in the fridge for an additional 1-2 days before cooking.

Planning to cook your frozen chicken sooner rather than later? Ensure it is in an airtight bag – such as Glad® Flex'n Seal Food Storage Quart Bags – then submerge it in cold tap water, changing the water every 30 minutes so it continues to thaw. You can also

thaw frozen chicken in the microwave, but if you want to use that method, you should plan to cook it immediately after thawing to prevent bacteria from growing.

You can learn more about how to store meat and how long meat can last in the fridge or freezer with our meat storing tips.

