



Top and middle shelf

Ready-to-eat foods, such as dairy products, ready meals and packaged foods, leftovers, cooked meats and prepared salads. These should all be covered or kept in sealed containers to prevent contamination. Ready-to-eat foods are stored at the top of the fridge, away from raw foods so that harmful bacteria cannot transfer from the raw food to the cooked food.

Bottom shelf

Raw meat, poultry and fish in sealed containers to stop them touching or dripping onto other foods. Raw meats should always be stored at the bottom of your fridge to prevent cross-contamination. Ensure that each item is wrapped or in a sealed container so that it doesn't come into contact with other foods.

Salad drawer

Fruit, vegetables and salad vegetables that have been washed prior to storage. Make sure that your fruit, vegetables and salad are wrapped in paper or plastic with air holes to keep them protected from any contamination. For salads and herbs, try wrapping them in a damp paper towel before storing to prevent them from drying out and to keep them fresher for longer.

Food Hygiene Tips for Your Fridge

Remember that your fridge should be set at a temperature between 0-5°C so that the rate of food spoilage is slowed and harmful bacteria cannot multiply. At this temperature, your food will be kept safe to eat.

Also remember to keep an eye on use-by dates. Any food that has passed its use-by date should not be eaten as harmful bacteria has had chance to grow and make the food dangerous to health. Foods past their best-before dates can be eaten as this is only a mark of quality, not safety.

General Rules of Refrigeration

- Make sure that the refrigerator is never overloaded. Whilst cramming that last piece of food into the fridge may seem a good idea at the time, you are in danger of blocking the cooling unit that will chill your food. There is also a danger that the fridge door could not be properly shut, leaving you food that is unfit to eat the following morning! Air needs to be able to circulate around the food.
- New stock should always be placed behind old stock. Yes, the rules in a commercial kitchen should apply at home as well. Ensure you eat the food in the fridge based on the use by date in order to prevent food wastage which ultimately hits your wallet!
- Open cans should never be stored in the refrigerator as this may result in chemical contamination, especially acidic food such as fruit and tomatoes. If you wish to put canned food in the fridge, ensure that you put the food into a container that is suitable for chilling first.
- If your fridge temperatures are too high, it may be the result of overloading, the blocking of cooling units, or the thermostat being set too high. If your fridge does not have a thermometer built in, we recommend that you purchase a fridge thermometer to monitor the temperature. Remember that the correct temperature is- 0-5°C.