

Choosing & Storing Fruits and Vegetables

Choosing fruits and vegetables at the market can be a little tough if you don't know what you're looking for. Here are some helpful tips to get the most for your money.

Storing Fruit

It is important to know how to store your produce properly. Improper storage can cause faster rotting and waste the product even before you use it.

Here are some helpful tips:

Bananas are stored at room temperature. Too green? To ripen faster, store in a paper bag overnight. Brown spots? To slow down ripening, separate all bananas and store in a cool dry area. Freeze bananas if they are getting too ripe.

Nectarines, peaches, and pears are stored at room temperature.

Tomatoes, onions, garlic, and potatoes should be stored at room temperature.

Buy mushrooms whole instead of sliced since they will last longer. Unopened and packaged is ideal until use. To clean, gently wipe mushrooms with a damp paper towel. (It's a myth that they will absorb water!)

Avocados should be stored at room temperature until ripened. If sliced open, squeeze a little lemon over the flesh, cover in plastic wrap tightly with no air, and keep refrigerated. If ripe enough, store refrigerated to stop ripening.

Ripeness Advice	
Fruit	Smell the sweetness of fruit. Avoid ones that are bruised or moldy. Consider that most fruits continue to ripen.
Apples	They should be firm and sweet smelling with a rich color.
Pineapples	The top center leaves should be easily plucked, green, and fragrant.
Bananas	Slightly green in coloring.
Berries	Firm, bright colored, and fragrant.
Melons	Knocking them for ripeness gives a hollow sound. Smooth surface with well-rounded ends.
Nectarines, Peaches, Pears	Fragrant, slightly soft to the touch. Press gently near the stem with your thumb and see if the pear gives. (Pears ripen from inside out!)
Vegetables	
Tomatoes	Slightly firm, bright red
Mushrooms	Dry and plump, not slimy. Cap closed around the stem
Other	
Avocado	Slightly soft to the touch, dark color, no indentations on the skin

