Keep it Fresh

How to keep vegetables as fresh as possible for as long as possible

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We’ve all been there, spent a few days away and arrived home and inspected the fridge to find limp looking celery, salad leaves with water in the bottom of the bag (why does that happen?) mushrooms looking unappetising and what you think was once a cucumber!

Rachel Cole – Seed Buyer

A note on blanching

Before freezing, most vegetables need to be blanched first. This is a very simple process that stops enzymes causing a loss of flavour, vitamins and nutrients and helps to preserve the colour and texture of your vegetables. It also helps to clean your veg and kill any bugs or bacteria that might be lurking on it.

How to blanch:
- Heat a large pan of water to a rolling boil
- Add a large amount of salt (the water should be very salty)
- Add your vegetables to the water and boil for the correct amount of time for that variety
- Strain the veg and immediately plunge it into ice cold water so that it cools quickly and stops the cooking process.
- Strain again once the veg is completely cold and pat dry using kitchen roll – freeze as required

Using very salty water when blanching will help to lock in nutrients from the veg, stopping them leaking out into the water. It also helps to keep your green veg green and retain a crunchy texture.
Respecting Your Food

I wanted to investigate how to keep celery for longer as I never use it all whilst it is nice. I started scanning the Internet for solutions and came across a suggestion of wrapping it in foil. Well, I never imagined that it would last 21 days wrapped in foil but it did, and so began my quest. If I can save waste (and money) on celery, what else am I not storing correctly? There followed months of experimenting and researching of ideas on how to keep vegetables as fresh as possible for as long as possible.

I have listed most of the categories of vegetables which, with a little bit of care, could soon see less wastage and perhaps money savings. Some things may surprise you.

No expensive gadgets and gizmos are required. To store you require the most basic of kitchen equipment such as kitchen foil, cling film, kitchen towel, recycled takeaway tubs, Tupperware, glass jars are the order of the day. Even the plastic veggie bags from the supermarket usually can be reused a few times. A great excuse for a take away – free containers!!!

It’s not all about freezing although always a good option, as this is a very reliable way of conserving most of your vegetables if you have room in the freezer! Another worthwhile point is to only store the best quality fruits and roots. Do check regularly for any roots going off, this is important as one bad vegetable can spread – it is worth ‘an eyeball’ every other week or so.

Interestingly a report by East Malling research in 2008 highlights the issue of waste. Here are some statistics: 6.7 million tonnes of food is thrown away by UK consumers each year. Most of this could have been eaten and 40% of this avoidable food waste is made up of fruit and vegetables, worth almost £3 billion. 90% of the fruit & vegetable waste consists of fresh produce, 1.4 million tonnes. Most is thrown away as a result of not being used in time (going off or past the best before date).

One of their conclusions was the following: “Many consumers are unaware of storage advice, or the benefits of following this advice, and there is a clear need to ensure that the correct storage advice is available to all consumers, regardless of how or where they shop”.

A word on food safety, it is mainly common sense. Wash all food prior to eating or using with clean water, many storage processes require vegetables and fruit not to be washed before storing.

Sterilise containers before using for storage particularly freezing, canning or pickling. If the food looks poor or smells wrong do not use it.

Roughly speaking freezing vegetables – most require blanching and can be frozen for up to 12 months approximately.

Rachel Cole

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**Aubergine**
- Be careful not to cut or scrape the skin as the fruits deteriorate faster.
- Keep in the vegetable drawer in the fridge, well away from the freezer compartment.
- Keep ginger roots away from aubergine as fruits will absorb odours.

* Wrapped in a plastic perforated bag it should store for up to 10 days.

* Remove all leaves, trim tops, wash hearts, cook for 7 mins, blanch, drain & place in a freezer bag for up to 4-8 months.

** Asparagus **
- Stand in fridge or cool room with bottoms in a small glass of water.
- Standing in cool water will revive asparagus if wilting.
- Alternatively for space, just wrap cut ends in moist kitchen roll and keep in fridge.

*** To keep for longer stand in fridge or cool room in a glass of water.

*** Wash, trim, blanch 2-4 mins then place in airtight plastic container store for up to 8-12 months.

** Artichoke **
- Best kept at room temperature but can keep in a plastic bag, sprinkled with water, in fridge for up to 1 week.
- Do not wash before storing.
- Cooked leftovers will last up to 4 days in fridge.

*** Store in a plastic bag inside the fridge for up to 1 week.

** Beetroot **
- Roots and Leaves can be eaten. Leaves can be used as ‘swiss chard’ or added to salads.
- For short term storage, trim 2in from the root and remove leaves as this will sap moisture, prematurely ageing roots.
- Can be stored in a cool dark place like a garage for a few weeks alternatively great for clamps - please see section later about clamps.

*** Roots stored in a plastic bag will keep in the fridge for 7-10 days.

*** Wash, trim tops leaving 1/2in of stem & top root. Cook for 25-50 mins, cool, peel, remove stems & freeze in a tight container.

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**Broccoli & Calabrese**
- Keep in perforated bags or clingfilm to keep the heads fresher for longer.
- Can be stored in a garage for up to 28 days if temp does not go much above freezing.
- Don’t wash heads before going into fridge as could go mouldy.
- Calabrese florets on the stem will keep longer than florets separated.

***If fresh the heads could store in crisper drawer for longer up to 14 days.***

**Wash thoroughly, blanch florets for 3 mins, freeze in bags for up to 12 months.***

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**Broad Beans**
- Can be sown autumn, spring and summer.
- Stores for a few days in the fridge in a container but do not wash before storing.
- Wash before use.

***Store in plastic wrap inside the fridge to prolong life by 2-3 weeks.***

***Shell, wash, blanch for 3 mins and freeze in airtight plastic container for up to 12 months.***

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**Brussels Sprout**
- If cut for a few days, cut end that is going to be put in water.
- Try standing in water to prolong life, can last up to 1 month if water is changed regularly either in kitchen or outhouse.
- If storing for longer periods, try keeping the root in with a little soil in a garage.

***Store in plastic bag inside the fridge to prolong life by 2-3 weeks.***

***Trim, wash, blanch for 3-5 mins, depending on size, seal into freezer bags for up to 12 months.***

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**Cauliflower**
- Can be stored for a few weeks if you harvest with entire root, wrap root in newspaper and store in cool garage or equivalent, check roots every so often to see if they are moist.
- Try keeping head whole, until you are ready to use as florets will not keep fresh too long.

***Store in fridge for 1-3 weeks, wrapped in plastic or cling film.***

***Wash, break into florets, blanch for 3 mins and freeze in bags for up to 12 months.***
Cabbage

- Harvested ‘cabbage greens’ can be revived by putting in a jar of water which just covers a little of the base of the greens, keep at room temperature and this will give a significant increase in storage time.
- If you do not require the whole of the cabbage, cut what you need, sprinkle a few drops of water on the section that is not to be used and place the outer wasted larger leaves of the already used part to cover the unused section and place in a vegetable/food bag, pop into the fridge and this will keep nicely for quite a few days.
- Storing whole in fridge should be ok for 3-4 weeks.
- Comments from the commercial sector:
  - Interestingly Cabbages like Monarchy (pointed) will store in cold store until January from October harvest.
  - Round, ‘dutch types’ can store in a cold store from October harvest.
  - Savoys will store for 6 weeks in cold store.
  - Heads of Cabbages can store well in a cool garage or shed. By leaving some of the root ball on the heads and wrapping in newspaper this will enable the crop to keep even longer.
- To use up in order: Pointed/Savoys/Green

Cabbage greens can be wrapped in a slightly damp paper towel in the fridge.
Blanch in wedges or single leaves for 2-4 mins and put in freezer bags.

Carrot

- This is top of the vegetable charts in storage terms, with the potential to keep fresh in many ways.
- In the kitchen, don’t store in paper bags – the roots go limp very quickly after only a few days. Plastic perforated bags are preferable.
- Alternatively store roots in the completely dry crisper drawer with some kitchen roll in the bottom and the roots should keep fresh for 2-3 months. The kitchen roll will require changing every so often so do check.

Carrot Information for the experienced Gardeners

- Clamps – Old fashioned/Bin Clamps.
- Clamping is a good way to store carrots for many months please see section about clamping.
- If you have no space for a clamp, you can even try keeping the carrots in the ground over winter some varieties are already perfect for this, with a little more protection with straw they could survive the harshest of frosts.

Store roots in the completely dry crisper drawer with some kitchen roll.
Blanch and freeze in bags. These can store for up to 12 months.
**Celeriac**

- Brilliant vegetable to leave in ground until required. Cover the roots with straw to keep frost off in the harshest weather.
- Don’t wrap should keep for several weeks without any significant loss of quality, in garage or such-like (in compost if desired).

*** Twist off leaves and stems. Will store in vegetable drawer for up to 4 weeks in foil or cling film.

*** Blanch diced washed roots, place in freezer bags. Can store for up to 12 months.

**Celery**

- Wrap uncut full heads in tin foil and these will stay fresh for up to 21 days. To use, just cut off what you require and re-wrap in foil again.
- After harvesting, with the roots celery can be stored in a cool place like a garage or outbuilding for 2-3 months if stored correctly, by re-planting these in sand or soil in a trench and keeping the roots moist will improve the longevity of the crop.

*** Wrap uncut full heads in tin foil and these will stay fresh for up to 21 days.

*** Cut into pieces, wash, blanch for 3 mins and freeze in bags, remove as much air as you can before freezing.

**Chard**

- A good ‘hungry gap’, crop all year round sowing and harvest variety. The Ideal variety that will look good and add to the flower garden! In particular the variety Bright Lights which has great foliage and stem colour.
- Can be grown almost anywhere including containers.
- Very winter hardy.

Able to keep picking, possibly until early summer next year!

Wash and blanch and place in freeze bags for up to 6 months.

**Chicory**

- For the most dedicated chicory growers this can be forced in a ‘forcing shed’ early in the season for creamy-white chicons.

*** Wrap in a paper towel then in a plastic bag. Will keep for 7-10 days in fridge.

Keep in a nice dark place for long storage until required.
Endive
• Loose curly edged salad leaves are slightly bitter but will add texture to salads, will cope with a few early frosts – this improves flavour making the leaves taste less bitter.

Put in fridge salad crisper and in a plastic bag will keep for 4-5 days.

Fennel
• Cut fennel, wrap in foil, put into the fridge, lasts for up to 3 days.
• Long term; can be placed in a cool, dry place and will keep for several weeks.

Store whole heads in a freezer bag in fridge for up to 10 days

Courgette/Summer Squash
• A more difficult vegetable to store.
• Alternative way to freeze wash, dry, slice, fry (low heat) cool and add them to freezer bags.

Fennel
• Cut fennel, wrap in foil, put into the fridge, lasts for up to 3 days.
• Long term; can be placed in a cool, dry place and will keep for several weeks.

Put in fridge salad crisper and in a plastic bag will keep for 4-5 days.

Cucumber
• When cutting cucumber and have some left over, try placing a piece of kitchen roll on the end.
• When cutting again simply cut away the end and the rest is good to use and this can be repeated until all the cucumber is used. This is a good way to use up all the cucumber without going off.

Wrapping in cling film increases storage time in the fridge rather than unwrapped.

To lock in the moisture wrap in cling film and store in the fridge.

Gherkins are a great crop for pickling.

Wash and Blanch for 1 min. After immersion in cold water drain on kitchen roll before freezing in bags for up to 12 months.
**French Beans**
- Freezing is a great option for these beans, but they are fantastic fresh, sow in succession 2-4 times to extend the season.
- Dwarf beans are prolific and grow well in pots, try a variety like Dual and these will keep coming as long as you keep picking.

Keep in a fridge in a container for 5-7 days after picking.  
Wash, top and tail, blanch and put in bags, store for up to 12 months.

**Herbs**
- They can be pickled in white vinegar.
- Herbs are easy to grow, try seed mats which once established can be kept on the windowsill in the kitchen all year round or keep outside and pick as required until the first frosts.
- Standing in water will keep herbs fresh for longer.

Chop herbs, place in plastic bag and keep in the fridge or freezer.  
Can be frozen in ice cube containers, and just added to dishes as required.

**Kale**
- Reliable and hardy, can be grown in large pots but is best grown in open ground, however it is definitely a ‘hungry gap’ vegetable and could keep you in kale leaves for several months. Harvest when required.

Dry washed leaves on a moist paper towel in a plastic bag in fridge, lasts up to 2 weeks.  
Wash and blanch, put in freezer bags. Can store for up to 6 months.

**Kohl Rabi**
- Can be stored in a cool dark place after harvesting, for many, many weeks.
- Can be frozen whole, just remove stems and leaves, place in large freezer bag.

Cut and wash leaves, dry roots, seal in a plastic bag will last weeks in fridge.  
Wash, blanch for 3 mins and dry. Place on paper towels in a plastic bag in fridge.
**Marrow**

- Harvest just before they are completely ripe and will keep for some time if hung in netting in a dry frost proof store.
- Alternative way to freeze wash, dry, slice, fry (low heat) cool and add them to freezer bags.

**Lettuce**

- Put cut lettuce in a clean sealed glass jar and it will keep well for up to 5 days.
- Lettuce is very easy to grow, can be sown direct into a plot or containers and can also be transplanted. Sow at regular intervals.
- For container growing ideal varieties are Tom Thumb or small cos type, as require less space.

**Marrow**

- Harvest just before they are completely ripe and will keep for some time if hung in netting in a dry frost proof store.
- Alternative way to freeze wash, dry, slice, fry (low heat) cool and add them to freezer bags.

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**Melon**

- Store in a cool place away from other fruits as this speeds up the ripening.
- Do not wrap whole melons, the skin protects the fruit. Store cut melon in plastic bag in fridge, should last three days. Keep pips in until ready to use.
- Watermelon once picked will not ripen anymore, and needs to be eaten!

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**Leeks**

- Leeks have the ability to remain in the ground until required for literally months. Varieties can cover September to March. Baby leeks can be stored in a fridge like salad onions (see page 11).
- Leeks can be kept in a cool dark place, ie garage, and stored upright in a box with soil covering the roots – should keep well for a month or more.

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For storing wrap whole heads in moist kitchen roll.

For wilting lettuce, trim off the ends (base) and place in water to revive.

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Wash blanch for 1 min. After immersion in cold water drain on kitchen roll before freezing in bags. 12 months.

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Cut melon keeps in an air-tight container or wrapped in plastic, eat within a week.

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Cut into slices and put in airtight plastic container. Will store in freezer for 10-12 months.
Mushrooms
- To dry, slice mushrooms, put into oven, cook for 1hr at 150˚C, turn over and cook for another hour. Make sure there is no moisture left in mushrooms,
- For using in cooking take out what you need and add boiling water.

Keep in a paper bag at room temperature in the dark or in the fridge. If dry sliced mushrooms are stored in air tight containers they can last for months.

Onions (Bulb)
- To store, use a pair of tights. Knot the bottom, add onion, tie, keep adding, until the tights are full. If some are still a little damp the water will evaporate through the tights.
- Good storage: Onion Santero F1 (mildew tolerant), Onion Redspark F1 (red onion).

Onions and shallots can be hung in nets in a garage/outbuilding for long storage. Dice, freeze on baking trays. Once frozen, break up, put in freezer bags.

Onions (Salad)
- Use a knife and take away container. Take a bunch of spring onions, cut away most of the root leaving 2-3mm of root showing. Cut onions to fit container, put lid on, leave in fridge until required.

Stored in a container as above will last weeks. Put in airtight plastic container to freeze and these can store for up to 6 months.

Oriental Greens
- To revive leaves wrap in slightly damp kitchen roll and keep in fridge.
- Freeze oriental greens like Pak Choi, Wong Bok by washing thoroughly and blanching. Put in freezer bags, making sure to get as much air out of bags as possible.

To keep fresh wrap in slightly damp kitchen roll and keep in fridge. Wash and blanch and put in freezer bags for storage up to 12 months.
**Parsnip**
- Very similar to carrots to store, parsnips can be stored with foliage removed for many months in a cool/cold store.

**For the experienced Gardeners**
- Clamping is a good way to store parsnips for many months. See section on clamping.

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**Pepper (Sweet)**
- If not eating all the pepper take the sliced pepper, wrap in kitchen roll, then place in a container which has about a third water in it (so covers the pepper wrap) and put a lid on. This will last 5 days at best. Cook rather than adding to salad, as this can be a little watery.
- Trouble ripening peppers in time because the weather? Wrapping unripe fruits in cling film and putting them in the fridge extends the life of the actual fruits and slows the ripening. Therefore the fruits are not wrinkled when they are used.
- To increase ripening leave peppers out of fridge, but these will need to be used quicker.

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**Pepper (Chilli)**
- Store unwashed and wrapped in paper towels for up to three weeks in fridge.
- De-seed, chop up and put in an airtight bag and then freeze.

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**Wrap cling film around the Sweet Peppers to store in the fridge for weeks.**

**Wash and halve. De-seed and blanch for 3 mins can store for up to 12 months.**

**Wash, peel cut and dice. Blanch and freeze for up to 9-12 months.**

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**Wash, dry and cut off tops. Wrap loosely in a plastic bag, keeps for several weeks.**

**Washed peppers in airtight plastic container can store for up to 12 months.**

**Washed, drained. Use an airtight plastic container can store for up to 12 months.**
**Pumpkin & Squash**

- Great storage
- **Pumpkins** and **Butternuts** 2-3 months. **Acorn** 3-6 months, **Onion** 1-2 months. Very hard skinned like **Crown Prince** up to 6 months. Ensure you store good unblemished fruits and harvest before frosts begin, cut stem 2-4in from fruits.

Pumpkins without a good handle do not store as well as the fruits that have.

Cook thoroughly and freeze puree. Put in airtight plastic container to freeze and these can store for up to 12 months.

**Radish**

- Tupperware is the best way to keep radishes fresh (fill with water so half the roots are covered).
- Remove greens before storing, will keep roots nice.
- Radishes are very easy and quick to grow successfully. Sow throughout the season for a regular supply – do not need a large area.
- Sow in succession, for radishes all season long!

Radishes keep well and fresh in a glass jar or a tupperware container for weeks.

Winter radish roots will store in cool a garage or similar for a few weeks. Can also be stored in a clamp.

**Runner Beans**

- Freezing – the ultimate vegetable to freeze.
- If beans go soft in fridge, put them in cold water to crisp up.

Can be stored in the fridge in a plastic bag or container for up to a week.

Wash, prepare, blanch for 3 mins place in freezer bags, can store for up to 12 months.

**Salad Leaves**

- Easy to grow anywhere and in any container.
- South facing windowsill if inside.
- Try seed mats for good spacing or growing in pots.
- Try mixes – rocket with mixed lettuce leaves.
- Try recycling ‘living salad’ containers.
- Try container growing on a patio
- Succession growing for cut and come again.

Not great to store long term so growing these in succession is ideal.

To revive wilted leaves after picking, pop the bottom of leaves into a glass of water or place kitchen roll on salad packs to make them last a bit longer.
**Spinach**

- If purchasing salad packs, place a piece of kitchen roll either side of leaves against the plastic, will keep from spoiling for a couple of days.
- Growing in a pot is ideal, pick in 4 weeks, continue picking for quite a few cuts. Enough varieties for a good crop of spinach for the majority of the year if you successionaly sow.
- Very easy to grow.

Can be revived with a little water. Wash, blanch and place in freezer bags, can store for up to 12 months.

**Strawberry**

- To keep strawberries fresher for longer. Put strawberries in a bowl and fill with water until it covers the fruit, pour a quarter of a cup of white vinegar in water, soak for 5 minutes and wash thoroughly through a colander. Store as you would normally, in the fridge. This will not work if the Strawberries are too over-ripe.

Can be pickled, try pickling in white vinegar with herbs, like lemon balm. Freeze whole on a baking sheet. Put in a freezer bag after a day, lasts 2 months.

**Swede**

- These will stand for sometime in the garden until required. If harsh frosts are predicted try covering these with straw. Once lifted store in a cold but not too dry place, brush off excess soil but do not wash before storing. Will keep fresh for weeks.
- Clamping – also an option for this vegetable (see back page).

Store in an airtight plastic bag to keep for a couple of weeks in the fridge. Peel and cut, blanch and freeze, can store for up to 12 months.

**Sweetcorn**

- Not great for storage, sugar becomes starch quickly. Supersweet varieties retain sweetness longer, none will store for too long. Keep in ‘ears’ to store for longer (2-3 days).
- New Super Start (SS) varieties hold sweetness and flavour on the plants so you do not have to use them all at once.
- Freeze as soon as possible to lock in sweetness.

To extend the quality store in a brown paper bag in fridge. Wash, blanch, cool and take off kernels. Freeze, can store for up to 12 months.
Tomato

- Try putting tomatoes in a container (to keep light out with ventilation). An old ice cream/sweet container will suffice. Cover the bottom with kitchen roll, pop tomatoes in. Put kitchen roll on top, place lid diagonally for ventilation. Keep on a worktop in the kitchen or utility at room temperature to remain flavoursome for longer. Note, keep the stem scar facing upwards if at all possible.
- If you are using a larger tomato and only require ‘half’, place a folded paper towel over cut edge and wrap in plastic to keep for a few days.
- The best to freeze whole are plum/roma type as these have more pulp than other varieties.
- Try not to put the fruits on a sunny windowsill as this will warm the fruit and cause them to soften more rapidly!

Wash, cut away stem. Freeze on baking tray. After freezing place in freezer bags. Can store up to 6-12 months.

Will lose flavour in fridge if kept more than 2-3 days.

Turnip

- Fast maturing versatile veg, you can eat the greens as well as the root.
- Ideally stored in a cool moist, dark place in strong cardboard or wooden boxes (single layer).
- Cut away tops from the roots as this will aid storage. Can store up to 5 months.
- Alternatively can be stored in clamps (see section on clamping).

Wash, peel, dice and blanch for 2 mins. Freeze in an airtight container for up to 9-12 months.

Keep in a plastic bag in fridge to store up to 2 weeks.

Unusual Beans

- Can be stored in a dry dark garage or equivalent to dry.
- Beans will then keep well in jars or cans. Dwarf Bean Canadian Wonder produces Red Kidney Beans when dried.
- Soak for 8 hours and rinse before using.

Shell, wash and blanch. Freeze in an airtight container for up to 12 months.
More Great Ideas to Keep it Fresh . . .

**Little and Often**

One way to try to avoid gluts but also to have lots of fresh vegetables over a long period is to plan well and sow successionaly. Normally sowings are made every fortnight but rather than doing that automatically it is perhaps best to use your judgement and sow when you think that plants from the previous sowing are well developed.

Quick maturing vegetables such as carrots, salads, spinach and French beans are best sown regularly to crop over a long period. Plants that bolt make successional sowing essential and these include coriander, rocket and spinach.

Some crops may be worth sowing twice to extend the season. Courgettes, runner beans and sweetcorn are perfect for this and the season can then extend well into the autumn.

Some plants will just crop over a long period anyway, such as tomatoes and peppers and don’t need to be successional sown (although a later sowing does extend the season as we are beginning to discover) while some winter veg will stand well anyway such as leeks and Brussels.

**Our recommendations for little and often are:**

**In particular for 'baby' veg:**
- Beetroot
- Carrot
- Leek

**Standard**
- Chard
- Courgette, variety like Midnight
- Herbs
- Kale
- Salad Leaves – all including Rocket, Corn Salad, Spinach
- Lettuce
- Spring Onion
- Radish
- Turnip
- Dwarf Beans, Dwarf Runner Beans and Broad Beans

**Unusual**
- Chinese Broccoli - Kailaan Express
- Oriental greens

**Grow indoors**

One great way to keep things fresh is to grow it on your windowsill ready for when you need it – even in the winter months. Our research showed great results with a wide range of vegetables especially for leaf production, such as:
- Salad leaves
- Rocket
- Lambs lettuce
- Spinach
- Chard
- Herbs
- And even peppers!

This will all be a bit of fun and experimentation for you, but we have had some staggering results!
Vegetables for pots

Lots of vegetables can be successfully grown in pots and even hanging baskets to prolong the season and provide a regular supply of fresh, wholesome veg even where space is at a premium. These are all species and varieties that we know will perform well for you.

- **Beetroot** – baby round beets such as Bettolo F1
- **Carrot** – Amsterdam’s and Paris market but try coloured varieties and pull them when small
- **Chard** – all are suitable and can last throughout the year
- **Courgette** – Midnight F1/Endurance F1 are great but also look at compact yellow types such as Atena F1
- **Gherkin** – maybe in hanging baskets!
- **Herbs** – all are suitable, in fact recommended for spreading varieties like mint and lemon balm
- **Kale** – a very versatile veg for cut and come again
- **Salad Leaves** – a great range
- **Lettuce** – Cos types as they are so upright
- **Leeks** – if growing for baby leeks use a variety such as Porvite
- **Spring Onions** – no problem!
- **Peppers** – dwarf varieties are best
- **Radish** – all summer cropping types
- **Spinach** – a great supply of leaves
- **Strawberries** – require a little time but well worth it once established
- **Salad turnip** – make turnips more fashionable with a spicy taste in the salad
- **Tomatoes** – basket types and Losetto F1 can even be sown right up to early-July for cropping until the first frosts
- **Beans** – dwarf runners, broads and French beans are all possible!
Quick Storage Guide
Storage Chart & Index

Never store fruits and vegetables together. Fruits that give off high levels of the ripening agent ethylene will speed up the decay of ethylene-sensitive surrounding fruit and vegetables. Get rid of any bad produce immediately as mold grows rapidly and will contaminate anything near it.

Before storing vegetables, trim any leafy ends, remove any rubber bands and ties. Make sure the bag to store the veggies in has some holes punched in to allow for good air flow. Pack vegetables loosely in the refrigerator. The closer the vegetables are to each other, the quicker they will rot. Leafy greens can be washed before storing by soaking them in a sink full of water, while soft herbs and mushrooms should never be washed until they are to be used.

Before storing fruits, non-cherry stone fruits, avocados, tomatoes, mangoes, melons, apples, and pears will continue to ripen if left sitting out on a countertop, while items like bell peppers, grapes, all citrus, and berries will deteriorate quickly and should be refrigerated. Bananas in particular ripen very quickly, and will also speed the ripening of any nearby fruits.

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Storing vegetables using a clamp

A clamp is a means to store harvested vegetables using a technique of insulating the vegetables with straw and soil. This method has been used for hundreds of years and could save you lots of money by eliminating waste from your home grown crop harvest.

If you don’t have room or ground space for a ground clamp, there are many ways of improvising.

• Vegetables can also be stored in trays of sand.

Step 1
• Choose a spot where rainwater doesn’t collect and dig a small pit.
• Line the pit with a thick layer (several inches) of straw.

Step 2
• Fluff up the straw to trap air for insulation.

Step 3
• Pile the vegetables on top of the straw.

Step 4
• Layer more straw over the top of the vegetables 6 to 8 inches thick
• Then carefully add a thick layer of dry soil over the straw.

Step 5
• Leave a tuft of straw exposed at the top of the clamp for ventilation.
• Remove what you need, when you need it and simply rebuild the clamp afterwards.

• Here we have fashioned a container clamp using a black plastic bin.

The cut-out sides are for illustration only!