



How to Save Food During a Power Outage

If the **power goes out** at your house, it is important to follow basic food safety rules. It is also possible to keep food depending on how long the outage is for and what you have done to prolong its ability to remain safe. Here are some suggestions.

Steps

- 1 Consume perishable food at room temperature within two hours.** Perishable food is safe at room temperature for 2 hours when the temperature is below 25 degrees C (80F). Above that temperature, you only have one hour before bacteria start to grow in unrefrigerated food.
- 2 Keep your refrigerator and freezer closed.** Open the doors as little as possible. An unopened refrigerator should keep foods cold for up to four hours, although you will still have to evaluate each item individually when the power comes back on. A freezer that is half full should keep foods frozen for 24 hours, and a full freezer should keep foods frozen for 48 hours.
- 3 Cover your fridge and freezer with thick blankets to insulate them and keep them as cool as possible.**
- 4 For longer outages, try to find dry ice to pack into your freezer.** However, you must take special precautions handling it. If the power outage lasts longer than 4 hours, remove milk, meat, and dairy products from the fridge and pack them into a cooler with lots of ice.
- 5 Have an instant read food thermometer.** This is crucial to determining food safety after the power comes back on. If refrigerated products are still below 4C/40F degrees, they should be safe. Check to see if frozen foods still have ice crystals visible and that their temperature is below 4C/40F degrees. You can then refreeze these foods, but there will probably be some loss of quality.

Tips

- Consider having an instant barbecue to save some of the food, and have the neighbors over. Feast under candlelight. Cooking outside during a power outage on your charcoal or gas grill is a great way to keep the temperature inside your house cooler in the summer months.
- If it is cold outside, pack items into a cooler and place outside.

Warnings

- And remember the most basic rule: When in doubt, throw it out. Any cost savings you may gain by keeping questionable food will cost you much more in terms of doctor and hospital bills if someone gets sick.

Things You'll Need

- Blankets
- Cooler with ice
- Dry ice

Water

Sources and Citations

- Original source of article VideoJug, FioNate4ever1, [Food Safety](#). Shared with permission.

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