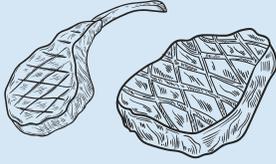


Freezing Meats

Source: National Center for Home Food Preservation

Beef, Veal, Lamb or Pork



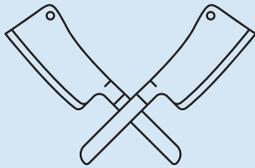
- Select only high quality, fresh meats to freeze. Cured meats such as ham and bacon can only be frozen for a short period of time (1 to 3 months) because the salt in them hastens rancidity.

Chilling and Aging



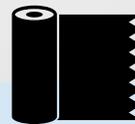
- Freshly slaughtered meat carcasses or primal cuts need to be cooled to below 40°F within 24 hours to prevent souring or spoiling. The meat should be chilled at 32° to 36°F.
- Variety meats (liver, heart, or sweetbreads) are ready to be wrapped and frozen after they are cold. After 24 hours, pork, veal and lamb are ready to be cut, wrapped and frozen. Beef may be left at the 32° to 36°F temperature for a total of 5 to 7 days to age the meat, making it more tender and flavorful. Meat purchased from grocery stores is ready to be frozen as is, or cut into serving-size portions and frozen.

Cutting the Meat



- Depending on individual preferences for the number of servings and cooking methods, the meat can be cut into roasts, rolled roasts, steaks, chops, stew meat, ground meat, etc., before freezing.

Packaging



- Package the meat in freezer paper or wrap, using either the drugstore or butcher wrap. Freezer bags or containers can be used for ground beef, stew beef or other meats frozen in small portions.
- Store-bought meats need to be over-wrapped, since their clear packaging is not moisture-vapor resistant. If you purchase film-wrapped meats from a meat packer, check to see if the wrap is a new heavy-duty film. If so, it needs no over-wrapping.
- Package the meat in meal-size portions, removing as many bones as possible (they take up freezer space). Place two layers of freezer paper or wrap between slices or patties of meat so they are easier to separate when frozen. This will help speed thawing.

Large Game

- Deer, moose, antelope and other large game can be handled for freezing like any other meat or carcass. Trim and discard bloodshot meat before freezing. Package meat, seal and freeze.

Small Game

- Rabbit, squirrel and other game should be skinned, dressed and then chilled. Refrigerate for 24 to 36 hours until meat is no longer rigid. Cut into serving-size pieces or leave whole. Package, seal and freeze.