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FREEZING COOKED AND PREPARED FOODS\*

With the coming of the Home Freezer there has been a lot of interest on the part of homemakers in freezing cooked or prepared foods. Since one of the main reasons for freezing these foods in the home is to have them ready to serve when needed, it is important to have the food nearly ready to serve when needed. For this reason, it is wise to freeze only those foods that require little time or attention between freezer and table. If the time and attention required for final preparation cannot be short, the chief objective of freezing is defeated. It is practical to freeze foods that are seasonal, dishes that require long preparation, foods that require very little more work when prepared in quantity than they do when prepared in small amounts, leftovers, dishes that require only slight thawing before serving and dishes that require little time and attention between the freezer and the table.

It is possible to freeze any cooked foods but with varying degrees of success. The homemaker must decide whether freezing of cooked foods is practicable in her home.

## Breads

FOOD	CONDITION WHEN FROZEN	PREPARATION AND PACKAGING	MAXIMUM STORAGE TIME	HOW TO PREPARE FOR SERVING
Baking powder biscuits	Baked	1 or 2 dozen in folding waxed cartons, label and over-wrap, or in moisture proof cellophane bag and heat seal.	Possibly 2 to 4 months	Do not remove wrappings until warmed nearly to room temperature. Thaw and heat in oven at temperature of 250° F.
	Unbaked	Round containers in which they just fit. Place 2 layers of cellophane or waxed paper between each 2 biscuits.	2 or 3 weeks	May be baked on a greased baking sheet while still frozen or may be partially thawed.
Muffins	Baked	Moisture-vapor-proof bags or cartons.	6 months	Do not remove wrappings until warmed nearly to room temperature. Thaw and heat in oven at temperature of 250° F.
	Unbaked	Batter may be frozen in pint size waxed containers; or to prevent loss of leavening gas in containers in which they are to be baked, such as, paper muffin cups. Use a double-acting baking powder. Wrap after freezing same as baked.	2 weeks	Best to thaw before baking



FOOD	CONDITION WHEN FROZEN	PREPARATION AND PACKAGING	MAXIMUM STORAGE TIME	HOW TO PREPARE FOR SERVING
Quick loaf breads	Baked	Those served cold, such as, nut breads, orange bread, etc. Wrap in moisture-vapor-proof cellophane and heat seal.	4 months	Do not remove wrappings until they have warmed. Thaw at room temperature for 3 hours.
		Those served hot, such as, Boston brown bread, etc. Wrap in moisture-vapor-proof cellophane and heat seal.	6 months	Thaw at room temperature then reheat in oven in wrappings 15 to 20 minutes at 300° F.
Yeast bread	Baked, preferred	Cool quickly, package in moisture-vapor-proof paper and freeze.	6 months	Thaw at room temperature in original wrappings to prevent moisture on crust.
	Unbaked	Use little more sugar. Let dough double in bulk. Roll to thickness of about 1 inch. Package as a sheet and seal paper. Freezes and thaws quickly	2 to 4 weeks	Transfer thin sheet of bread dough to greased baking sheet and place in 200° F. oven with oven door open. Place pan of steaming water beside it to prevent drying out and hasten thawing. As edges of dough thaw, keep turning them to center. When thawed, knead and shape into ball, grease the surface and let rise. Shape into loaves and <u>bake in usual way.</u>
Yeast rolls	Baked, preferred	Moisture-vapor-proof paper.	6 months	Reheat in sealed wrappings in a 250° to 300° F. oven for 15 minutes or remove to a roll warmer and heat.
	Unbaked, too long storage may inactivate yeast and weaken gluten.	Permit dough to double in bulk. Shape rolls, grease surface, place close together in shallow packages. Put layer of cellophane or waxed paper on top. Wrap in moisture vapor-proof cellophane. May be frozen before it is shaped.	Few weeks	Place in warm greased muffin tins over hot water to rise. (1 to 2 hours.) Bake at 400° F.



FOOD	CONDITION WHEN FROZEN	PREPARATION AND PACKAGING	MAXIMUM STORAGE TIME	HOW TO PREPARE FOR SERVING
Butter cake	Baked	Remove from pan and cool to room temperature. If icing cake, use confectioner's sugar icing or cooked candy type with sirup or honey in the latter. Box cake, cover with cellophane and heat seal or wrap cake in cellophane, seal and then box.	4 months	Thaw baked, unfrosted cakes in original wrapping at room temperature. Thaw frosted cakes in original package in the refrigerator.
	Unbaked	If frozen in pan use any baking powder. If frozen in carton use double action baking powder. Fill pan 1/2 to 2/3 full. Wrap pan in moisture-vapor-proof cellophane and heat seal. If frozen in carton, package and freeze.	2 weeks	Thaw loaf cakes in pan at room temperature. If in cartons, thaw only until soft enough to transfer to pan to prevent loss of gas. Layer cakes frozen in the pan usually thaw so fast that they need not be thawed before baking.
Sponge cake	Baked, preferred	Thoroughly cool cake. Place in sturdy outer package to prevent it from being smashed. Freeze. (Use proportion of 1 1/2 cup or 1 cup sugar to 1 1/2 cup egg whites.)	6 to 8 months	Thaw baked, unfrosted cakes in original wrapping at room temperature. Thaw frosted cakes in original package in the refrigerator.
	Unbaked	Freeze in pan in which cake is to be baked.	2 weeks	Put in oven solidly frozen or partially thawed.

## Cookies

Cookies	Baked	Cool thoroughly, package in top-opening box or tubular carton. Use pieces of crumpled waxed paper in any air-space to keep cookies from breaking. Soft cookies may need waxed paper between them.	2 months	Place on serving plates as soon as removed from freezer or thaw in original containers.
Drop cookies	Unbaked	Pack dough in tub-type containers.	2 weeks	Thaw at room temperature until just soft enough to drop by spoonfuls on <u>cookie sheets</u> .
Refrigerator cookies	Unbaked	Pack in tubular or square containers to slice and bake.	3 months	Slice as soon as removed from freezer, using sharp knife and a board.



Cookies, continued

FOOD	CONDITION WHEN FROZEN	PREPARATION AND PACKAGING	MAXIMUM STORAGE TIME	HOW TO PREPARE FOR SERVING
Refrigerator cookies, continued	Unbaked	Or form dough into a roll of desired diameter, wrap in moisture-vapor-proof cellophane, seal, protect by stockinette and freeze. Or chill to firm dough in refrigerator, slice and stack slices with a piece of cellophane between each 2 slices and package.	3 months	If too hard soften slightly in refrigerator. Dough that has been sliced and packaged may be separated and baked at once.

Pies

Pies	Baked	Cool and package in cellophane and stockinette.	4 months for fruit pies 6 months for mince pies	Place in moderate oven for 30 to 40 minutes, just long enough to defrost and heat through.
	Unbaked, preferred	Fruit pies or mince pies freeze best. Prepare pastry as usual. Put filling into pastry-lined pie tin, put on top crust. Seal the edges well. Do not cut vent holes in top crust before freezing. Package in paper pie plates with metal rims. Cover pie with paper plate, wrap in moisture-proof cellophane; heat seal and place in stockinette or paper box. Freeze. Stack right side up in freezer.	2 months for fruit pies 4 months for mince pies	Best to bake without thawing. Cut vent holes in top crust just before baking. Bake in hot oven (450° to 475° F.) for from 15 to 20 minutes then at 375° F. until golden brown.

Other foods

Main Dishes Baked beans	May be cooked until nearly done.	Cool to room temperature. Package in waxed tubs or glass jars.	1 year	Heat food rapidly to prevent loss of flavor.
Chicken a la King	Cook until nearly done.	Cool to room temperature. Package in waxed tubs or glass jars.	6 to 8 months	Thaw in refrigerator or at room temperature if it tends to become stringy. Otherwise re-heat without thawing. Use a little fat to prevent sticking.



FOOD	CONDITION WHEN FROZEN	PREPARATION AND PACKAGING	MAXIMUM STORAGE TIME	HOW TO PREPARE FOR SERVING
<u>Main Dishes,</u> French Fried potatoes	Fry in hot fat until a light brown.	Place in moisture-vapor-proof bags, seal and freeze immediately.	1 to 2 months	Spread potatoes on a cookie sheet and set in oven (400° F.) until they have thawed and become crisp.
Rice and Spaghetti Dishes	Cooked just until hard, white center disappears (about 20 minutes).	Mix with rest of ingredients, cool to room temperature. Package in waxed tubs or glass jars.	6 months	Thaw either at room temperature or in the refrigerator.
<u>Stews</u>	Meat nearly done, vegetable 3/4 done.	Cool to room temperature. Package in waxed tubs or glass jars.	6 months	Thaw in refrigerator or at room temperature if meat tends to become stringy. Otherwise, reheat without thawing. Use a little fat to prevent sticking.
Swedish meat balls, goulashes, or veal birds	May be cooked until completely done.	Cool to room temperature. Package in waxed tubs or glass jars.	6 months	Thaw in refrigerator or at room temperature if meat tends to become stringy. Otherwise, reheat without thawing. Use a little fat to prevent sticking.
<u>Salads</u> Fruit salads	Frozen fruit salads with solid base, such as cottage cheese, most satisfactory.	Package in waxed tubular containers.		Peel off carton and slice salad to desired thickness.
<u>Sandwiches</u>		Cut sandwich in half. Place one half on top of the other, wrap in moisture-proof cellophane and heat seal.	1 to 2 months	Thaw in sealed original package.
<u>Sandwich fillings</u> Cheese; Slice or ground meat; Sliced or ground poultry; Fish; Cooked egg yolk	Do not use mayonnaise.	Package in waxed tubs or cartons or glass jars.	6 months	

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