

Fruit	Fruits to choose:	Fruits to avoid:	Tips:
Apples	Firm, well-colored, feels crisp; scald (tan spots) is okay, hardly affects the taste.	Shriveled, bruised, yields slightly to pressure, or lacks color.	Store in perforated plastic bag in refrigerator. Apples soften fast if left at room temperature.
Apricots	Plump, juicy-looking, golden-orange and uniform in color; yields slightly to pressure.	Under ripe: pale, greenish-yellow, very firm; Over-ripe: soft, mushy, dull-looking.	Ripe: store in refrigerator for up to 1 week. Unripe: ripen in closed paper sack at room temperature.
Avocados	Slightly soft when pressed if want to use at once; firm if want to use in 3-5 days.	Cracked, broken, or patched with sunken spots.	Ripe (soft): use immediately. Unripe: ripen at room temp. for 3-5 days or until soft. Refrigerating slows down ripening process.
Bananas	Firm, without bruises or other injury; tasty when peel is speckled with brown.	Bruised, discolored, or grayish (exposed to cold and won't ripen properly).	Ripen green bananas at room temp. May refrigerate, uncovered, for a few days once ripe. Peel will turn black, but banana still tastes good. Green tipped fruit is not ripe.
Blueberries	Plump, firm, deep blue berries with their natural waxy silver coating; dry, uniform.	Mushy, soft, or leaky berries or ones with leaves or stems still attached.	Store in a loosely covered, shallow container in refrigerator for up to 10 days.
Cantaloupe	1) Stem removed leaving smooth shallow base. 2) Thick, coarse, corky netting that stands out from skin. 3) Yellow cast to rind. 4) Nice scent of cantaloupe. 5) Yields slightly when pressed on non-stem end.	Distinctly yellow and soft over entire rind, watery, largely bruised (small, occasional bruises usually won't affect melon), or moldy.	Store at room temp. until it ripens (juicy, soft, sweet aroma). Then store in a tightly sealed container in refrigerator away from other produce. Store cut melon, covered, for up to 2 days in refrigerator.
Cherries	Very dark in color (deep maroon to black) glossy, plump, with fresh looking stems.	Shriveled with dry stems and dull sheen; decayed (brown spots, mold, leaky, soft).	Store in a covered shallow container in refrigerator for up to 3 days.
Cranberries	Plump, firm, lustrous red colored berries.	Brown, dark, leaky, spongy berries.	Sort out any brown or leaky berries and discard. Store good fruit in covered container in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.
Grapefruit	Firm, heavy for its size; smooth, thinner skin = more juice; thick skin (pointed end) = less juice.	Soft, waterlogged, with a peel that breaks easily when pressed with finger; rough, rigid, wrinkled skin.	May store at room temp. for up to 1 week, or in refrigerator for up to 1 month.
Grapes	Green, pliable stems, firmly attached fruit. Green grapes: yellow or amber hue. Red grapes: most or all berries should be red.	Soft, wrinkled, leaky grapes with brown, dry stems; grapes with bleached stem ends.	Store, unwashed, in covered container in refrigerator for up to 5 days. Wash just before serving.
Honeydew Melon	Creamy (yellow-white) soft, velvety in texture; slightly soft on blossom end, faint fruit aroma.	White, greenish; hard, smooth in texture; largely bruised, sunken, or punctured rind.	Store in a tightly sealed container in refrigerator away from other produce. Store cut melon, covered, for up to 2 days in refrigerator.
Kiwifruit	Plump, unwrinkled; firm. Ripe when slightly yields when pressed (not soft).	Wrinkled, moldy, or excessively soft	Ripen at room temp in paper bag, adding a banana to speed up process. Store, covered, in refrigerator for 1-2 weeks.
Guava	Thin-skinned, light yellow blushed with pink; yields slightly when pressed; strong, sweet aroma.	Hard, all green fruit.	Ripen at room temp. Then, refrigerate for up to 2 days. May freeze the pulp and eat the rind, which is full of vitamin C.
Lemons	Firm, heavy for its size; smooth-textured, rich yellow skin that is slightly glossy. Pale or greenish yellow = very fresh fruit = high acid.	Dark yellow or dull; shriveled, moldy, soft, or punctured. Coarse skinned fruits = less pulp.	Store at room temp. for up to 1 week and covered in refrigerator for up to 1 month. To release juice, "nuke" for 10 sec., or roll on counter top while applying hand pressure.
Limes	Plump, heavy for its size, with a glossy rind	Dull, dry rind; moldy, has soft spots, or is punctured.	Store at room temp. for up to 1 week and covered in refrigerator for up to 1 month. To release juice, "nuke" for 10 sec., or roll on counter top while applying hand pressure.
Mangos	Plump, smooth, dark green skin with patches of red, yellow, or orange color; slightly soft; peachy-pine aroma from stem area = ripe.	Hard, shriveled, mushy with bruises, rot, or black spots, or fruit that is all green.	Ripen at room temp. in a paper bag. After completely ripe, store in refrigerator for up to 2 days.
Nectarines	Plump, slightly soft along "seam"; either orange-yellow or greenish between red-blushed areas depending on variety. Hard, tan stains are fine.	Hard, dull, shriveled; soft, punctured, or cracked skin.	Ripen in paper bag at room temp. Once ripe, refrigerate, covered, for up to 1 week.
Oranges	Firm, heavy for its size; smooth-textured, bright-looking skin. Green color or spots or brown specks have no affect on taste or quality.	Dull, lightweight, rough or thick-skinned; punctured, dry or spongy feel, has soft spots; discolored weak skin at ends of orange.	Store at room temp. for up to 1 week; will yield more juice at room temp. Oranges keep well in refrigerator for up to 1 month, loosely covered.
Papaya	Unblemished. To eat at once: yellow, slightly soft to the touch. To ripen at home: firm, green with some yellow patches.	All green, mushy, bruised or rough-textured. All green, mushy, bruised or rough-textured.	Ripen in a paper bag and dark place at room temp. for 2-3 days. Ready to eat when mostly yellow and soft. Once ripe, store in refrigerator in plastic/paper bag for 1 week.
Peaches	Somewhat firm, becoming slightly soft; red with creamy, orangy base color.	Very hard or firm, red with green base color; very soft, mushy, with flat bruises or pale to dark tan spots.	Ripen in paper bag at room temp. until soft and juicy. Once ripe, refrigerate for up to 1 week, uncovered.
Pears	Firm, just barely beginning to soften. Bartlett's: pale to rich yellow; Anjous/Comices: light to yellow green; Boscs: green to brown yellow.	Dull, shriveled, or wilted; slight withering near the stem; spotted or bruised flesh.	Ripen in paper bag at room temp. until stem yields to gentle pressure. Once ripe, refrigerate for up to 3 days, uncovered.
Pineapple	Plump, heavy for its size; bright orange, yellow, or golden brown; eyes slightly separated; pleasant pineapple fragrance.	Dull yellowish-green, with sunken or pointed eyes; dry looking, bruised, moldy, soft spots, unpleasant odor.	Store in refrigerator, uncovered, for 2-3 days.
Plums	Plump, somewhat firm to slightly soft; healthy color.	Hard, poorly colored, punctured, brown discoloration; too soft, mushy, leaky.	Ripen in paper bag at room temp. Once ripe, refrigerate, covered, for up to 5 days.
Raspberries (and other similar berries)	Plump, tender individual cells on berries; bright, uniform color; clean, no attached stem caps.	Mushy individual cells on berries; moldy, leaky; stained or wet containers.	Refrigerate for up to 2 days in loosely covered, shallow container. Don't wash until ready to use/eat.
Strawberries	Bright red color; fresh green caps; dry, clean. Small to medium size taste = more flavor than large.	Moldy, large seedy or uncolored areas, shrunken in appearance. Check bottom berries in package.	Pick out any soft or mushy berries to use in sauces, etc. Refrigerate remaining berries, loosely covered, for up to 2 days.
Tangerines	Bright, lustrous deep yellow or orange. Because of loose skins, fruit won't feel firm to the touch.	Pale yellow or greenish fruit; punctured skin or very soft spots.	Refrigerate, loosely covered, for up to 1 week.
Tomatoes	Smooth, well ripened, free from blemishes. Ripe: slightly soft, overall rich red color. Less than fully ripe: firm, pink to light red color.	Bruised, soft, sunburnt (green or yellow near stem), deep brown cracks, decayed, moldy, water spots.	If not fully ripe, set in warm place, out of direct sunlight, until slightly soft and red in color. May store at room temp for up to 1 week, uncovered. Only store in refrigerator if fully ripe.
Watermelon	Uncut: 1) Firm, symmetrical, free from bruises, punctures, dents; 2) bright green rind; 3) heavy for its size; 4) creamy-yellow underside (indicates sun-ripened on ground). Cut: Firm, dense flesh; dark seeds.	Uncut: pale rind, punctures, bruises. Cut: pale-colored flesh, whitish streaks or seeds; dry, mealy flesh; stringy, watery flesh.	Whole melons can be stored at room temp for 7-10 days, though 55°F is ideal. May also be stored in the refrigerator, uncut, for 1 week. Once cut, cover tightly with plastic wrap or store in a container and refrigerate for up to 2 days.