

CROP DROP Vegetable Freezing Guide

The freezer really is your friend when it comes to halting unnecessary food waste. If you've got a glut of veg and you're short on time, freeze it. Always wash veg thoroughly first and separate into portion sizes so you can easily defrost the amount you need. Avoid confusion later on by labelling and dating your items.

Blanching helps preserve produce before it's frozen by destroying enzymes that can increase how quickly foods go off.

How to blanch: Submerge veg in boiling water for one to three minutes then plunge immediately into cold water. Pat dry and store in plastic bag, tupperware or glass jar. Use within six to 12 months.

Unblanched freezing: This is the fastest, easiest method. But some vegetables don't fare too well when frozen from raw e.g. most squash, once thawed will be soft and watery, so for the most part, cooking/blanching first gets you best results. However there are still lots of veg can be frozen raw (see table below) but must be used within two months.

How to freeze herbs: Use frozen herbs in cooked meals rather than salads as they go limp when thawed. Strip the leaves of **woody herbs** or keep sprigs whole before packing in bags or jars. Ice cube trays are great for **soft herbs**, such as basil and coriander. Once frozen, you can take them out of the tray, store in a bag, and enjoy as needed.

Freezing guide

Veg	Blanch details	Time	Suitable for unblanched freezing?
Beans	Blanch whole, podded or chopped into short lengths	3-4 mins	Yes
Beetroot	Trim leaves but keep tops & tails intact to prevent bleeding. Removed skins & chop into chunks	Boil for 30-45 mins	No
Broccoli	Cut into florets	2 mins	Yes
Cabbage	Cut 1 cm thick	1 min	Yes
Carrots	Cut into rounds, matchsticks or dice	3 mins	No
Corn on the cob	Remove husks and stalks, blanch whole	5 mins	Yes
Courgettes	Slice into 1cm discs	1 min	No
Celeriac	Add 1 Tbsp lemon juice to blanching water. Sliced or diced - 3 mins. Grated - 1 min	1 - 3 mins	No
Greens	Remove tough stems. Blanch for 1 min. Drain & squeeze out as much moisture as possible. Chop or leave whole.	1 min	No
Onions	Slice or dice, blanch for 1 min, drain & pat dry. Seal in portion sizes	1 min	Yes
Squash/marrow	Cut into cubes, blanch for 3 mins	2 mins	No
Swede	Chop into chunks	2 mins	Yes

