

The Shelf Life of Spices

How you store them depends on whether you buy them dried or fresh. Dried spices can lose their potency over time, so be sure to check labels for expiration dates and throw away anything past its prime.

Under ideal conditions, spices will keep for about a year and whole spices for two or three years. However, for medicinal purposes, only keep for six months after they have been ground. Do not keep any spices that are over two years old.

Each fresh spice will have a different life span. So, become familiar with the lifespan of the ones you use the most. Most spices can be frozen to increase the time in which they can be used effectively.

In the next page you will find the shelf life of some of the most common fresh spices:





Shelf Life of Commonly Used Fresh Spices

- Chili pepper: 1 week, refrigerated in the crisper in a paper bag
- Cilantro leaves: 2 weeks, refrigerated, standing in water, covered with a plastic bag (change the water when it becomes discolored)
- Fennel stalks: 1 week, refrigerated, in the crisper, covered with a moist kitchen towel
- Garlic bulb: 6 months, unpeeled, stored in a cool, dry, dark, ventilated place, not refrigerated; unpeeled clove 3 weeks
- Ginger root. 1 month, unpeeled, refrigerated in crisper in an airless plastic bag or container
- Onion: several months, unpeeled, in a cool, dry place, not in a plastic bag. 7 – 10 days peeled, refrigerated in a sealed container in the crisper