

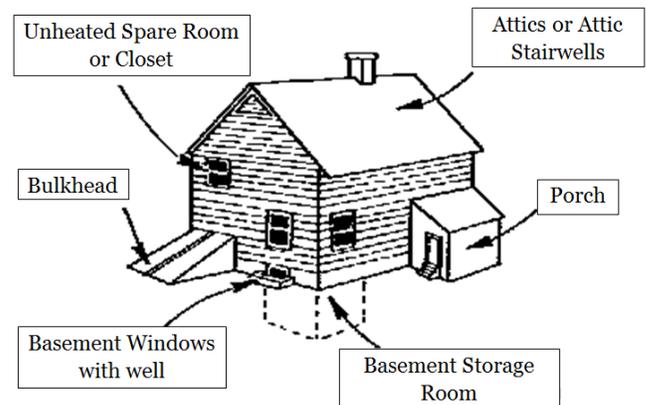
Dry Storage

Dry storage is storing fresh fruits and vegetables in a cool space in your home without using electricity.

- **Experiment:** If you have a dark, cool place in your house that's fairly dry and has good ventilation, chances are that you will be able to store many produce there
- If this is your first time, buy small quantities and try out different spaces in your homes with different methods so that you can store bigger quantities next year with confidence
- Ask other people, neighbors, farmers at the market, etc, how they store produce. What are their experiences, what kinds of foods do they store, and how do they store them?
- **Check-in:** By checking in on what you've stored, you can monitor which places are best in your house for storing which crops (maybe the upstairs closet with shelves is a great place to squirrel away some squash, but the basement is too cold). Regular check-ins will allow you to experiment but still catch foods before they rot so that you can use them
- If something starts to spoil, take it out, look for other things that are rotting, and salvage what you can

Pick your space: cool, dry, dark, and ventilated

- Most crops store well around 40°
- Winter squash and pumpkins like a warmer environment (above 50°)
- A steady temperature is beneficial—if your space drops below freezing and comes back up, this can cause premature spoilage
- If the space is getting too cold, an incandescent light bulb is often enough to warm it up a couple degrees
- Dry conditions will help prevent some produce from spoiling; others, such as most root crops—beets, carrots, turnips— benefit from being packed in a container with moist sand or soil to keep them from getting dried out
- If your space isn't dark, baskets, boxes, and mesh bags can be used to keep out light, as long as they allow for ventilation
- Fruits and vegetables should be store in separate locations: fruits naturally emit ethylene gas, which can cause vegetables to over-ripen and then spoil



Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension, "Storage Guidelines for Fruits and Vegetables"

Pick your produce

- Ask your farmer if he/she offers bulk purchases
- Choose produce that you know you use on a regular basis— that way, you will check it more often because you're using it
- Peak Maturity—choose produce that is ripe enough to eat Pears are the exception, which should be picked unripe and ripen nicely in storage
- Store produce that's bruised, diseased, or nibbled by insects separately from pristine fruit because it will need to be watched more closely for spoilage
- Choose late maturing vegetable and fruit varieties well-suited to storage. Ask your farmer about this; he/she will probably know if a certain variety is good for storage
- Don't purchase until later in the season when temperatures are cooler. If you buy too early, warm temperatures will make it easier for stored produce to spoil
- Handle food carefully after harvest so as to not bruise it

Produce	Temp (F°)	Notes
Apples	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late season varieties are best Tart, thick-skinned varieties keep better than sweet Can be stored piled in boxes, but better in flats 2 layers deep Commercial foam, cardboard, or paper inserts to separate layers. Wrapping apples individually; if you have time for this, it will keep rotting apples from infecting neighbors and will slow spread of ethylene gasses that speed up ripening. Expect apples to get softer/mealy the longer they're kept. Be prepared to make apple sauce, smoothies, pie, etc. with softer apples
Cabbage	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrap in clean newspaper or towels to store in boxes Can also be buried in soil, sand, etc or hung by their root Keep outer leaves on and take them off before eating
Winter Squash and Pumpkins	50° - 60°	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shouldn't touch each other—they need air circulation Don't cut stem completely off—leave a few inches Cure at 85° for 10 days to heal nicks in the skin—ask your farmer if it's already cured when you buy it Do not store on a cold concrete floor Will degrade rapidly under 50°
Potatoes	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cure <i>in darkness</i> at warm temperatures for 7-10 days to develop thicker skins Don't wash—keep a layer of dirt on them Don't allow them to be exposed to any type of light Can be stored piled up in a box They will start sprouting above 45°
Carrots Beets Turnips Kolhrabi	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut the tops off up, leaving 1 inch—if you leave the greens on, they will suck nutrients and moisture from their root Layering them in moist soil or dirt (sawdust is also recommended) in a box inside will keep them from drying out
Pears	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pears often must be picked unripe and will ripen in storage; pears picked ripe will generally spoil quickly and should be eaten right away Pears bruise easily; it can be beneficial to wrap them all individually in paper
Onions	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be cured before storage; if onions are golden brown and layers are flaky, they are cured. If their tops are green and they've still got a shiny luster, they're meant to be eaten right away, not stored If you've grown them and it's dry out, leave them on the ground for a few days to allow them to cure Check varieties—some do not store well Hang in a mesh bag to keep out light and allow ventilation Onions go off fast; braiding them makes it easier to keep an eye on them
Green Tomatoes	Cold; room temp to ripen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single layered in covered boxes Green tomatoes that show signs of ripening (spots of yellow or pink) can be kept in the basement and ripened on the counter over time You can also hang entire tomato plants by the root in a cool space
Garlic	Cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freshly picked garlic must be cured by hanging it in a dry, dark, well-ventilated place for 3 weeks Ask your farmer when buying if it is already cured

***Cold:** Above freezing (32°) is necessary (when things freeze and unfreeze, rotting will be set off) and below 40° is best. Things will still keep up to 45°, but colder is better

Sources

Cornell Cooperative Extension, "Storage Guidelines for Fruits and Vegetables"
 Get Your Pitchfork On! The Real Dirt on Country Living by Kristy Athens
 OSU Extension Food Preservation Hotline
 OSU Extension, "Storing Pumpkins and Winter Squash at Home" and "Picking and Storing Apples and Pears"
 University of Alaska Fairbanks Extension— "Vegetable Storage in Root Cellars"



Dry Storage: Local produce all winter long