

# FORMULA

## how long you can keep it

Unopened cans of powdered, ready-to-feed, and concentrated liquid formula

Keep up to the "sell by" or "use by" date printed on the container. Store at room temperature, out of direct sunlight.

**Opened cans of powdered formula** Keep for up to one month (or according to the manufacturer's guidelines). Store at room temperature, out of direct sunlight, and covered with their plastic lids.

**Opened cans of ready-to-feed and concentrated liquid formula** Keep for up to 48 hours. Store in the refrigerator, tightly covered.

**Prepared bottles of powdered formula** Keep for up to 24 hours. Store in the refrigerator.

## formula safety secrets

- Don't buy any can of formula that has dents or bulges.
- Give the top of the formula can a quick wipe before you open it to get rid of any dust or dirt. Clean the can opener before you use it, too, to avoid contamination.
- Read the manufacturer's mixing instructions on the label, and follow the exact water-to-formula ratio.
- You can prepare enough bottles for a whole day and take them out of the fridge as needed. Toss any leftovers.
- Store the formula in the back of the fridge to minimize its exposure to warm air when you open the door.
- Never freeze formula.
- If you need to take prepared formula on an outing or trip, keep it in an insulated bag with a cold pack unless you know you'll definitely be using it within two hours of taking it out of the refrigerator.
- Don't save formula in a bottle left over from a feeding to use another time; germs from your baby's mouth can contaminate the liquid and cause bacterial growth.
- Don't rely on the sniff test to let you know if formula is still safe to drink; it may be odorless even if bad.

## warm it up!

Bottles of formula are best heated up in a bowl of warm water or in a bottle warmer. **Though it's**

**dangerous to microwave bottles (it can create hot spots in the liquid that may scald your baby's mouth), let's be honest:**

**Many moms still do it.** If you do resort to zapping, make sure the bottle is microwave-safe, and remove the nipple or cap before heating for no more than three to five seconds per ounce. Shake the bottle and put some formula on your wrist to test the temp. Avoid nuking breast milk; it can damage its immune properties.



# SOLID FOOD

## how long you can keep it

Some new types of organic and/or flash-frozen baby foods are sold in stores' freezer or refrigerator sections and must be kept cold, open or not. But most unopened jarred solids can be kept at room temperature. Once opened, here's how long you can store them:

**Strained fruits and vegetables** Keep in the refrigerator for up to two to three days or in a freezer compartment with a separate door for as long as six to eight months.

**Strained meats** Keep in the fridge for one day or in a freezer compartment with a separate door for up to one to two months.

**Meat/veggie combos** Keep in the fridge for one to two days or in a freezer compartment with a separate door for one to two months.

## solid food safety secrets

- Don't purchase sticky, cracked, or rusty jars, and make sure the safety button on the lid is down.
- Give the top of the jar a quick wipe before you open it to get rid of any dirt.
- Inspect the inside rim of the jar after opening for cracks or chips, and throw it away if you spot any; tiny shards of glass could be in the food.
- Never nuke baby-food jars. If you need to heat the food, spoon it into a microwave-safe container first. After heating, stir well, then put a drop on your wrist or taste it yourself with a clean spoon (use a different spoon to feed your baby) to test the temp.
- Don't serve food straight from the jar if you plan on saving part of it for later. Your baby's saliva can contaminate it. Spoon the amount you plan on feeding your baby into a separate bowl, and save the rest.
- Store food in the back of the fridge/freezer to reduce its exposure to warm air when you open the door.
- Freeze homemade baby food in an ice-cube tray, then store the frozen cubes in plastic freezer bags. ●