

Cookie Storage & Shelf Life Chart

How long eight cookie types keep, and how to wrap them

Standard drop cookies (baked, unfrosted: chocolate chip, oatmeal)

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
3–4 days	7 days	Raw balls or baked, 3 months

Rule: Flash-freeze raw scoops on a sheet pan before bagging. It keeps the dough from freezing into one mass.

Undecorated cutout sugar cookies

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
Up to 2 weeks	Baked, sealed: up to 1 month	Raw dough or baked, 3 months

Rule: The most stable cookie here: low fat-to-flour ratio, no fresh fruit, no dairy fillings.

Decorated cutout cookies

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
Royal icing: 2 weeks. Glaze or buttercream: 1 week	Not recommended decorated	3 months, carefully packed

Rule: Decorated cutouts can go in the freezer for 3 months, but only if they are packed carefully so nothing presses on the icing.

Browned butter cookies (salty sweeties, brown butter chocolate chip)

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
4 days	7 days	Raw balls or baked, 3 months

Rule: No cheap plastic. Browned butter absorbs plastic odors and dish soap residue through the container.

Wrap: Short term: airtight glass jar or parchment-lined tin. Frozen baked: individual plastic wrap plus a heavy-duty freezer zip bag with the air squeezed out. Frozen raw dough balls: flash freeze 1 hour on a sheet pan, then bag, and double bag after 1 month.

Thaw and bake: Baked from frozen: thaw at room temperature 20–30 minutes, or 300°F oven for 3–5 minutes. Raw dough balls: bake from frozen and add 2–3 minutes.

Stuffed or filled cookies (PB&J stuffed)

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
3–4 days	Raw: 4 days. Baked: 7 days	Dough only, 3 months

Rule: Separate with parchment. Jelly filling can bleed into the dough, so keep the layers apart.

Wrap: Layered between parchment in a rigid plastic container.

Thaw and bake: Bake from frozen: add 2–3 minutes to the original bake time. Do not thaw raw.

Marshmallow-topped cookies (s'mores)

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
3 days	Not recommended	Dough only, 2 months

Rule: Do not stack. Toasted marshmallow draws moisture fast and softens the cookie base. Cold air makes marshmallow rubbery.

Wrap: Individually wrapped in plastic wrap, then placed in a tin.

Thaw and bake: Freeze the dough only, not baked cookies. Add the marshmallow on top in the final 2 minutes of baking.

Slice-and-bake logs (Chinese almond, rainbow)

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
Do not store raw	3–5 days, raw log wrapped tightly	Raw logs or baked, 3 months

Rule: Double-wrap raw logs. Dough absorbs fridge odors instantly.

Wrap: Double-wrap in plastic wrap and seal inside a zip-top bag.

Thaw and bake: Thaw the log in the fridge 1 hour or on the counter 15 minutes, then slice and bake normally.

Cream cheese-based cookies (gooey butter)

Room temp	Refrigerator	Freezer
3–5 days	Baked undecorated or raw: 7 days	Baked or raw, 3 months

Rule: Press plastic wrap directly on the cookie surface to prevent a skin.

When storage goes wrong

Problem	The cause	The fix
Cookies turned rock hard	Lost moisture to ambient air.	Drop a slice of fresh white bread in the container for 24 hours. The cookies absorb its moisture and soften back up.
Crisp cookies went soggy	Humid environment, or stored with high-moisture cookies.	A 300°F oven for 3–5 minutes crisps the edges back up. Never store crisp and soft cookies together.
Cookies taste like garlic or onion	Absorbed fridge or freezer odors through cheap plastic.	Use glass containers or freezer-grade bags. Cheap plastic lets savory kitchen odors pass into the fats.
Frosting melted into a blob	Packaged while still warm.	Cool completely, at least 2 hours on a wire rack, before wrapping. Residual steam destroys toppings.

Guidelines from my own kitchen notes. If you sell what you bake, follow your local food safety rules for anything with dairy, and when in doubt, throw it out. © 2026 Violet Wexley