



5 STEP APPLE STORAGE

1. KNOW YOUR APPLE

Early apple varieties, such as Beauty of Bath and Worcester Pearmain, don't tend to keep well and are best eaten straight away. Later apple varieties, such as Winter Melrose and Ashmead's Kernel will last throughout the winter months if they're stored correctly. If you are not sure what type of apple you have, tart, thick-skinned apples tend to keep well while sweeter, thinner-skinned apples are best eaten within a couple of weeks of harvest.

2. REMOVE THE BAD APPLES

Only store firm, unblemished apples. Apples with soft spots or bruises give off a lot of ethylene gas, which can cause nearby apples to go off faster than normal. The saying, "one bad apple can spoil the whole bunch" – it is true! To protect the crop, check your stored apples regularly and remove any damaged ones immediately.

3. KEEP THEM COOL

Apples stay fresher for a longer when kept cool. Store apples in the salad drawer or crisper drawer of your fridge. If you don't have a salad drawer, place the apples in a paper bag near the back of the refrigerator, where it tends to be coldest. If you have a temperature control dial, set it to a between -1.1 to 1.7 degrees. This is the ideal temperature range for storing apples. Storing them in colder conditions will cause the cells to break down, leading to mushy, inedible apples, and storing them in conditions that are warmer can cause the apples to go off more quickly. Apples kept in a fridge also need a small amount of moisture to stay their freshest. Laying a damp paper towel over the apples provides just enough moisture. Do not keep apples in a fridge in an airtight container if you have covered them in a damp towel. Stored this way, apples can keep well for 3-4 weeks.

4. STORING FOR LONGER

To store apples over winter, wrap each one in a single sheet of newspaper and place them in single layers on a tray. It is important to wrap apples individually. Even apples that are in good shape give off a little ethylene gas. If one apple starts to rot it could contaminate the other apples it touches, causing the entire bunch to spoil faster. Wrapping each apple individually prevents contact damage.

Only use newspaper pages with black ink as coloured ink can contain poisonous heavy metals. This is less common with modern print methods, but it is better to be safe than sorry. Place each apple in the middle a sheet of newspaper. Bring the corners to the middle and twist, to enclose the apple. Don't do this too tightly as the idea is to prevent apples touching each other, it is not meant to keep the air out.

If you have more apples than you can store on a tray, line a cardboard box with newspaper (for insulation). Insulating the box also helps regulate the temperature of the apples and the airflow. Place the wrapped apples in the box side by side, making sure that the newspaper wrappings do not come undone.

Store the tray(s) or cardboard box in a cold location, an unheated garage, cellar or attic works well. Do not allow to freeze, as the thawing process will turn the apples to mush!

Check the apples regularly, discarding any apples that show signs of damage and keeping an eye out for any signs of pest damage. If you do see gnaw holes on the box, move it to a different location as mice love apples!

Stored this way, apples can retain their freshness for several months.

5. APPLE RACKS

If you have a lot of apples to store, you may want to invest in an apple rack. Apple racks can store a large quantity of fruit and enable air to circulate between the layers. These can be easily purchased online. It is important to keep the rack in a pest free location as rodents love apples and will be on the hunt for food over the winter. If mice are a problem, you can buy racks that have already been fitted with mice proof mesh.