



Things Cooks Know

STRATEGIES, TECHNIQUES,
AND TIPS—FROM THE *REAL SIMPLE* TEST
KITCHEN TO YOURS



ABOUT FROZEN PRODUCE

ABOUT OLIVE OIL

ABOUT CORN KERNELS

Choosing the Best Olive Oil

We asked Nicholas Coleman, the “oleologist” (that’s an olive oil-tasting expert) from Grove and Vine, for his tips on selecting a good one. First thing: Ignore the color. Evaluate on smell and taste alone. If the store doesn’t let you sample, you may have to endure some trial and error at home. Freshly pressed olive oil will have a plethora of aromas, from cut grass to almonds to tomato vines. Avoid oil that smells like wax, wine, or vinegar. Opt for extra-virgin, which has passed both a chemical and a sensory test, and avoid “light” olive oil—typically a blend of inferior and virgin olive oils. Store in a cool, dark place away from the stove, and be sure to use within three months of opening.

How to Freeze Fresh Summer Produce

Freezing is great for those times when you overpurchase at the farmers’ market—and way easier than canning. Follow these steps and ta-da: sweet summer peaches (and snap peas and strawberries) in the middle of January.

1. Wash and prepare produce however you plan to use it (slice stone fruit and melon, pit cherries, trim green beans). Blanch and shock veggies; let dry.
2. Freeze items in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet to prevent clumping. Once the produce is frozen, pack it into freezer bags, squeezing out excess air, and return to freezer. (It’ll taste best if you use it within one year.)

PRO TIP!

All fruit will be soft when it defrosts—great for topping pancakes, not for fruit salad—but packing it in sugar syrup keeps it firmer. Mix 3 cups sugar with 4 cups lukewarm water until clear. Chill, then pour over washed and prepped fruit in a freezer bag, just until covered. Freeze.

Go to realsimple.com/freeze for how long you can store (almost) anything in the freezer.

No More Flying Kernels!

A smarter way to cut them off the cob. Finally.



STEP 1 Shuck corn, removing all the silk from the cobs.



STEP 2 Lay cob flat on a cutting board and cut kernels from one side.



STEP 3 Rotate a quarter turn so cut side is flat on the board; repeat with three other sides.