POWER OUTAGE · STICK THIS ON YOUR FRIDGE

Keep or toss? Fridge & freezer food card

Intelipicks

Keep the doors closed. Every peek lets the cold out. Rules from FoodSafety.gov, USDA and CDC.

4 h	48 h	24 h	40°F
A closed fridge keeps food safe	A full freezer, door closed	A half-full freezer, door closed	The line: above it for 2+ hours, perishables go

The rule: after 4 hours without power, throw out fridge perishables, unless an appliance thermometer shows 40°F or below. **Never taste food to test it.** When in doubt, throw it out.

Fridge food	Usually keep	Toss (above 40°F for 2+ hours)
Meat, poultry, fish	—	Raw or cooked, thawing meat, deli meats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, opened canned meat or fish, meat and egg salads
Leftovers	—	Casseroles, soups, stews, pizza, cooked pasta, rice and potatoes, gravy, stuffing
Dairy & eggs	Butter, margarine	Milk, cream, sour cream, yogurt, eggs and egg dishes, custards, puddings, opened baby formula
Cheese	Hard cheese (cheddar, Swiss, Parmesan, provolone), processed cheese, grated Parmesan in a jar	Soft and fresh cheese (brie, cream cheese, mozzarella), shredded cheese, low-fat cheese
Fruit	Whole fresh fruit, opened juice, opened canned fruit, dried fruit	Cut fresh fruit
Vegetables	Whole raw vegetables, fresh mushrooms, herbs	Cut vegetables, pre-washed greens, cooked vegetables, baked potatoes, garlic in oil, potato salad
Sauces	Ketchup, mustard, relish, pickles, olives, peanut butter, jelly, soy, Worcestershire, barbecue, hoisin, opened vinegar dressings	Opened creamy dressings, opened spaghetti sauce, fish and oyster sauce. Opened mayo, tartar sauce, horseradish if above 50°F for 8+ hours
Bread & baking	Bread, rolls, muffins, tortillas, bagels, fruit pies	Refrigerator biscuit and cookie dough, cheesecake, cream-filled pastries, pies with egg or milk filling

Freezer

- Still has ice crystals or is at 40°F or below: **refreeze or cook**. Texture may suffer.
- Thawed ice cream and frozen yogurt: **toss**.
- Thawed and above 40°F for 2+ hours: **toss**.

Away from home? Check for clues

- Ice cubes melted into one block, frozen drips on the freezer floor, peas frozen into a brick: it thawed.
- Next time: freeze a cup of water with a coin on top. Coin at the bottom = it thawed and refroze. A cheap warning sign, not an official test.

Medicines in the fridge

- FDA: insulin can generally stay at 59–86°F for up to 28 days.
- Everything else: check the label or call your pharmacist before you use or toss it.

Generator safety

- Outdoors only, at least 20 feet from the house, exhaust away from doors and windows.
- Never in a garage, basement or shed. Keep a working CO alarm inside.
- Never plug a generator into a wall outlet.

Full guide: intelipicks.com/is-food-in-fridge-safe-after-power-outage
How much backup power would your fridge need? Free calculator: intelipicks.com/outage-calculator

General information, not medical advice.
Sources: FoodSafety.gov, USDA FSIS, CDC, FDA · © 2026 InteliPicks