



Ground Beef Basics



Storing Ground Beef

Fresh Ground Beef can be stored in the refrigerator for 1-2 days (3-4 days if cooked) or in the freezer for 3-4 months (2-3 months for cooked).

Thawing Ground Beef

To thaw frozen Ground Beef, refrigerate for 12 hours or microwave using these simple steps.

- Step 1 Remove your pound of frozen ground beef from packaging and place in a gallon size storage bag.
- Step 2 Seal the storage bag, leaving a small opening for steam to escape. *Note: the smaller the opening, the better. Shoot for a 1/2 inch opening or about the width of a pencil.*
- Step 3 Heat the bag in the microwave (on a microwave-safe plate) for 1 minute on HIGH.
- Step 4 Flip the bag over.
- Step 5 Heat on HIGH for 1 more minute then wait 1 minute.
- Step 6 Remove beef from the microwave and massage the bag for 10 seconds.
- Step 7 If needed, heat on HIGH for 30 seconds longer, followed by 30 seconds rest. The leaner your ground beef, the less time in the microwave. *Note: The ground beef should not be hot to the touch. You don't want to cook the meat, just thaw it enough to form it into your desired shape.*
- Step 8 Immediately cook your ground beef to 160°F.

Determining Doneness

Ground Beef should be cooked to a safe and savory 160°F. Color is not a reliable indicator of Ground Beef doneness. Due to the natural nitrate content of certain ingredients often used in meatloaf, such as onions, celery and bell peppers, meatloaf may remain pink even when a 160 degrees Fahrenheit internal temperature has been reached.

Insert an instant-read thermometer into the center of thickest part of a meatloaf or meatball, or horizontally from the side into the center of hamburger patties for an accurate reading.

Looking for meal inspiration?

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