



How (and Why) to Freeze Tofu

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For tastier [tofu](#) that's easier to work with, freezing is the secret weapon you didn't know you needed. Read on to learn why this super-simple hack works and how to do it—plus, we'll cover a few instances in which it's best to stick with fresh tofu.

How Freezing Transforms Tofu

When regular (not silken) tofu is frozen, its water content forms ice crystals that simultaneously draw out moisture and break down the bean curd's protein structure. Then, as the tofu thaws, the ice crystals melt, and much of the water drains away. The now-drier tofu has a denser consistency and a slightly buttery hue due to the changes in the proteins.

Richer Flavor, Better Texture

Frozen tofu's altered state offers lots of delicious potential in the kitchen. The tiny air pockets left behind after thawing improve absorption of sauces and marinades. The firmer consistency makes it easier to slice and gives it a distinctly chewy texture. And that extra dryness equals crispier outsides for tofu.

No More Pressing!

You know how tofu recipes often call for pressing to remove excess moisture? Freezing tofu eliminates this step. Simply blot away any surface moisture with a clean kitchen towel.

How to Freeze Tofu

The simplest way to freeze tofu is to stash an unopened package of regular tofu in the freezer for at least six hours and up to five months. When ready to thaw, unwrap the package and place the tofu in a bowl to thaw in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours. Drain, blot dry, and get cooking.

Alternatively, you can prep the tofu before freezing: Cut it into slabs, then freeze them on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Store the slabs in an airtight container for easy access—and quicker thawing.

How Long Can You Freeze Tofu?

In an unopened package or airtight container, tofu will last for up to five months in the freezer.

When *Not* to Freeze

Anytime tofu needs to be creamy, it's best to use fresh, not frozen. So don't freeze your tofu if you're making:

- Sauces, dips, spreads, and [recipes that call for silken tofu](#)
- Recipes that involve blending
- Desserts that require a smooth, mousse-like texture
- Scrambles and frittatas that should be tender and jiggly

To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#). For meal-planning support, check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.