

LONG TERM STORAGE FOR BAKING SODA and POWDER

Baking soda and baking powder should be part of your short-term and long-term food storage. These items are necessary for baking, but they also have many other uses for personal hygiene, cleaning household items, and first aid.

BAKING SODA

Baking soda is good indefinitely past its best by date, but it can lose potency over time.

A good rule of thumb is to use your baking soda within two years of purchase. Once the baking soda is opened, use it within six months.

However, baking soda has an indefinite shelf life when stored properly. It should not be thrown out without first testing its potency.

Even if baking soda is past the expiration date, it is still safe to consume. However, you may not want to bake with it as it may not have the same results as new baking soda.

STORAGE OF BAKING SODA

If you purchase your baking soda in smaller cardboard boxes, be aware that they will attract moisture. It is best to place baking soda in a Ziplock bag or plastic storage container to keep out moisture. Store in a cool, dry area.

A plastic pouch of baking soda is a better moisture barrier, and unopened should last up to three years. If you want to extend the shelf life of the baking soda in plastic pouches, place them in a food-grade plastic bucket with a tight lid for another layer of protection.

Once you have opened your baking soda, place it in an airtight container to keep moisture out and prevent other odors from entering your baking soda container. Remember to write the date it was opened and try to use it within six months.

TEST FOR BAKING SODA POTENCY

To test your baking soda's potency, simply place a small amount of baking soda into a bowl and add some vinegar. If the baking soda bubbles and reacts aggressively, it is still good to use for baking.

If you don't have much of a reaction, it is time to open a new box.

SHOULD YOU THROW OUT YOUR OLD BAKING SODA?

NO! Baking soda does not go bad; it just loses its potency. Here are some uses:

Around the house:

- There are still many uses for the less potent baking soda.
- Place the container in the fridge to absorb odors.
- Mix baking soda with liquid soap to form a paste to clean bathrooms.
- Scrub hard to clean kitchen pots and pans with baking soda.
- Use as a fire retardant on small fires.
- Add to fresh-cut flowers.
- Sprinkle on the carpet before vacuuming to freshen the rugs and vacuum cleaner.
- Sprinkle in stinky shoes.
- Sprinkle in the litter box.

Health:

- Mix one teaspoon of baking soda with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water and use it as an antacid. (Careful: do not use more than one teaspoon.)
- Add one cup of baking soda to the bath to soften the skin.
- Use baking soda as a body scrub.
- To relieve canker sores, mix $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda with water and swish around the mouth. Do not swallow.
- Use as a deodorant under your arms.
- Relieve itchiness from bee stings, bug bites, or rashes with a mixture of baking soda and water. Make a paste and place it on the infected area. Let dry and rub off after several minutes.

Outdoors:

- Sprinkle baking soda around the garden to deter rabbits.
- Sprinkle around tomato plants for sweeter tomatoes.

BAKING POWDER

Baking powder is another necessary item for our food storage, but it does not have a long shelf life.

Baking powder has a shelf life of 12 – 18 months based on how it is stored. Because it is sensitive to moisture and humidity, it should be stored in a cool, dry place.

TEST FOR BAKING POWDER POTENCY

You can test your baking powder to see if it is still active by placing about ½ teaspoon in a bowl and pouring ¼ cup of boiling water on it. The mixture should bubble up aggressively if the baking powder is still active. If it doesn't, you should open a new container.

ALTERNATIVE USES FOR BAKING POWDER

There are some other uses for baking powder:

- Add one teaspoon of baking powder to the washing machine with your clothes to help remove odors.
- Sprinkle some baking powder on a grease stain and let it soak up the grease. Wash as usual.
- Mix equal parts of baking powder and salt and sprinkle outside of doors and windows to deter ants.
- Freshen up your shoes by filling a sock with baking powder and tying off the end. Place inside the shoe to absorb odors.
- Clean your microwave by placing 2 TBS of baking powder with 2 cups of water in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat in microwave for 2 minutes and wipe clean.