

PEACHES: FREESTONE VS CLINGSTONE

When it comes to peaches, most eaters think of juicy and sweet as the two most important attributes, but have you considered the stone?

Peach varieties are described as either *freestone* or *clingstone*.

Freestone varieties are ideal for canning, baking, or slicing in half and caramelizing on the grill, as the flesh separates easily from the stone.

Clingstone peaches are phenomenal for eating fresh out of hand and are often bred with flavor in mind versus ease with which the stone can be removed.

There's a peach for every purpose!

FRUIT STORAGE & RIPENING TIPS

In most cases, stone fruit is plucked from the tree when it is not quite ripe to allow for easier transportation from farm to produce department.

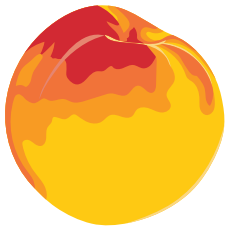
Here are tips for ripening and storing delicate stone fruit so it's perfectly delicious each time!

- 🍑 **Want to eat it soon?** Store unripe stone fruit at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. Expect fruit to ripen in 2-4 days.
- 🍑 **Bought a lot?** Store unripe fruit in the fridge and take out a piece or two at a time to ripen on the counter.
- 🍑 **Too much ripe fruit?** Once ripe, store fruit in the fridge to suspend it at peak ripeness.

IS THIS PEACH RIPE?

Here are key indicators that your peach is ripe and ready to eat!

- Gently press your thumb into the peach's shoulder. Soft shoulders are a good indicator your peach is ripe.
- Check the tip (opposite the shoulder). Is it also soft? Eat your peach!
- If the shoulder is soft, but the tip feels significantly more firm, give your peach one more day!



IS THIS NECTARINE RIPE?

Here are key indicators that your nectarine is ripe and ready to eat!

- Gently press your thumb into the nectarine's shoulder. Soft shoulders are a good indicator your nectarine is ripe!
- Look at the shoulder. Is the skin starting to wrinkle? Don't be alarmed; wrinkling indicates your nectarine is ripe and that the sugars have developed nicely.
- Check the tip (opposite the shoulder). Is it also soft? Eat your nectarine!
- If the shoulder is soft but the tip feels significantly more firm, give your nectarine one more day!

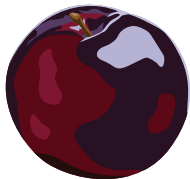


IS THIS PLUM OR PLUOT RIPE?

The skin and flesh of plums and pluots tend to be firmer than that of peaches and nectarines. Meaning, you don't have to wait until they're soft at the shoulder to enjoy them.

These stone fruits are also more shelf-stable than other stone fruit, so they may take more time to get very soft. Plum and pluot ripeness can be a matter of personal preference.

- Like a firmer fruit? Eat it when the shoulder starts to soften. Check by gently pressing your thumb into the shoulder.
- Like your plum or pluot extra soft and juicy? Keep it on the counter until the body is soft to the touch.



IS THIS APRICOT RIPE?

Unlike peaches, nectarines, plums and pluots, many apricots ripen from within. While you can use many of the same tips for determining apricot ripeness as used with other stone fruit, it pays to pay close attention!

- Gently press your thumb into the body of the apricot. Does it gently yield? Eat it!
- Give it a smell. Apricots are delightfully aromatic when ripe. Soft and smells good? It's ready!
- If your apricot has a mealy texture, that means it has been left too long and has over-ripened.
- **Remember:** Too many ripe apricots to eat all at once? Suspend them in their perfect state by storing them in the fridge.



WHAT IS A PLUOT ANYWAY?

Intensely flavored and incredibly sweet, pluots come in a striking array of color combinations.

Pluots were developed by crossing a plum with an apricot. Through trials, the magic ratio for the fruit with the best attributes revealed itself to be 75% plum and 25% apricot.

As a result, pluots share the smooth skin, texture and shape of plums, with some phenomenal taste and aroma influenced by their apricot genes.

